

Department of Sociomedical Sciences  
Doctoral Student Handbook  
2018 - 2019

 COLUMBIA  
UNIVERSITY

MAILMAN SCHOOL  
of PUBLIC HEALTH

SOCIOMEDICAL  
SCIENCES



*Celebrating 50 years  
of Advancing Health Equity*

**Department of Sociomedical Sciences**  
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## **Overview**

In 1968, the Columbia University School of Public Health, now called the Mailman School of Public Health (MSPH), became the first institution in the country to offer a graduate degree in Sociomedical Sciences (SMS). What began as a collaborative research project on rural health care in 1956, spearheaded by a physician, an epidemiologist, and a sociologist, evolved over a decade's time into a formal doctoral program. Professor Jack Elinson, the first head of SMS, coined the term "sociomedical sciences" to incorporate the social sciences of sociology, anthropology, history, political science, and social psychology into a multidisciplinary study of health and medicine.

SMS faculty are broadly involved in both research and teaching, with the goal of applying social science theory and methodology to health and medical issues. Research projects are focused on such contemporary health topics as sociocultural aspects of drug behavior and alcoholism, tobacco control, sexuality and health, adolescent health, the role of social supports and social networks, aging and health, social aspects of disability, the organization of health care and health care program evaluation, the health professions, stress and coping, the behavioral and ethical impact of AIDS, behavioral and structural approaches to prevention, implementation science, the social roots of public health policy, and gender and health.

Within the teaching program, two doctoral degrees are available: the Doctor of Public Health (DrPH), conferred by the Mailman School of Public Health, and the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), conferred by the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (GSAS) but administered by the Mailman School of Public Health. After completing the program, graduates do research, teach, and/or assume senior positions in the public, non-profit, or private sectors.

### ***Learning Objectives of Doctoral Programs***

#### ***Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)***

The PhD is designed for individuals who wish to combine training in history or in a social or behavioral science discipline with research on questions significant to public health and medicine. Students combine 30 credits of course work in the disciplinary program to which they are admitted with similar length of training in public health. Faculty mentors are drawn from the Department of Sociomedical Sciences, as well as other MSPH faculty with social science training, and faculty from social science Departments from the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. Upon satisfactory completion of the PhD, students will be able to conduct independent scholarly research that advances knowledge in public health and that both draws on and contributes to theory and methods of the social science discipline of their choice. The successful PhD graduate will be a scholar with a portfolio of independent research, prepared to teach students in either a social science department, an interdisciplinary program (such as global health or gender studies) or a school of public health.

Upon satisfactory completion of the PhD degree in SMS, graduates will be able to:

- Identify and explain problems in public health and health care from the perspective of both public health and the theory and empirical findings of a social or behavioral science discipline:
  - Summarize and critically analyze theoretical principles and positions in three of the following five disciplines - anthropology, psychology, history, political science, and sociology - as they have been applied to research problems in public health and medicine, and
  - Restate, critique and synthesize the general theory and methods in one of the following disciplines: Anthropology, History, Political Science, Psychology, and Sociology;
  
- Identify the major qualitative and quantitative methods in the social and behavioral sciences and assess their major strengths and limitations:
  - Identify and explain core theoretical principles and methods in biostatistics and epidemiology;
  - Select the social science method or methods appropriate to addressing a research question specific to population, time and setting, and
  - Demonstrate an in-depth proficiency in data collection, research design and data analysis for two narrowly defined areas of social science methodology, one of which should include the major methodological traditions of the student's disciplinary concentration;
  
- Undertake independent and original research:
  - Conceive, formulate and conduct original empirical research that applies or tests theory from a social science discipline to a research problem on health, illness, health behaviors among individuals and groups or the organization of public health and health care, and
  - Communicate in written and oral form the results of research findings to other scholars in both the selected social science discipline and public health; and
  
- Apply current standards for conducting ethical research with human subjects:
  - Identify principles and requirements for the protection of human subjects in public health research, and
  - Write and implement a research protocol that follows guidelines of the Institutional Review Board, and that protects the confidentiality of study subjects, minimizes their exposure to physical, social and psychological harm and, as appropriate, compensates subjects for their participation in a research study.

## ***Doctor of Public Health (DrPH)***

The DrPH is designed to train individuals who wish to build academic, policy, or program-oriented careers in public health, drawing on the theory and methods of the social and behavioral sciences. The DrPH in SMS prepares students to assume positions in academic and practice settings where they apply their expertise in evidence-based public health practice. Students must enter the program with an MPH or its equivalent. Students follow a course of study that brings the theory and methods of multiple social science disciplines to bear on a public health topic of the student's choosing. Students are encouraged to select topics that fall within the research expertise of faculty in the Department of Sociomedical Sciences (SMS), but other School of Public Health faculty with social science training may mentor DrPH students. Departments outside of SMS with faculty who participate in the training of DrPH include, but are not limited, to Health Policy and Management, Population and Family Health, and Epidemiology. Upon satisfactory completion of the DrPH, students will be able to conduct independent research that will advance knowledge in public health or will apply social science research and methods to advance public health practice and policy. The successful DrPH graduate will be a scholar who has acquired sufficient expertise in a specific area of public health so that he or she is prepared to train the next generation of public health masters and doctoral students in the current state of social science knowledge, or a public health professional whose work draws from the social sciences to advance programs, policies, and services aimed at addressing population health.

Upon satisfactory completion of the DrPH degree in SMS, graduates will be able to:

- Critically analyze the extent to which theories and empirical findings in the social and behavioral sciences can be applied to develop cutting-edge and novel research and programs, interventions, policies, services, and other solutions to address key issues in public health:
  - Critically analyze and apply theoretical principles and positions in three of the following five disciplines – anthropology, psychology, history and sociology – to research problems, programs, policies, or services in public health;
  - Integrate behavioral and social science knowledge, approaches, and methods and potential contributions from other professions and health systems to address public health problems; and
  - Critique and synthesize key social and behavior science theories and empirical findings to develop research, programs, policies, and services aimed at addressing key public health issues;
- Explain and identify the major qualitative and quantitative methods in the social and behavioral sciences and assess their major strengths and limitations in public health research and practice:
  - Select social and behavioral science methods that are appropriate for addressing a significant public health research question, and for evaluating programs, interventions,

- or policies in public health
- Drawing from the methods and tools of the social and behavioral sciences, design a qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods, policy analysis or evaluation project to address a key public health issue; and
- Explain and critique qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods research and evaluation methods to address public health issues at multiple levels: individual, group, organization, community and population.
- Undertake independent research that contributes to public health practice, programs, interventions, or policies:
  - Develop and conduct original research drawing from the behavioral and social sciences
  - Communicate in written and oral form the results of research findings and, based on findings, propose strategies for health improvement to other scholars, public health practitioners, community leaders, and other partners; and
  - Communicate public health science to diverse stakeholders

### ***Department of Sociomedical Sciences Central Office***

The Department of Sociomedical Sciences is located on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> floor of 722 West 168th Street. The SMS Central Office, located on the 9th floor, serves as a center of information for its students and faculty. Housed in the Central Office are the Department Chair, the Associate Director of Academic Programs, administrative support staff, and the Business Office. The Department has designated a Deputy Chair responsible for directing the doctoral programs. The Deputy Chair for Doctoral Studies is located on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor, as is the Graduate Research Assistant room. The Deputy Chair consults with the Department Chair regarding procedures that require Departmental approval, e.g., examination and dissertation committees, waivers and substitutions for course requirements. The Deputy Chair also works with other faculty on admissions, review of student academic performance, and curriculum. Jennifer Hirsch is the Deputy Chair of the Doctoral Program as well as the Chair of the SMS Subcommittee in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences; during the 2018-19 academic year, when she will be on academic leave, the responsibilities of doctoral program leadership will be held by Kim Hopper.

To assist the Deputy Chair, SMS faculty members have been designated as liaisons with each of the downtown Departments and a Director for the DrPH program. Among their roles are to monitor program requirements for their respective concentrations and to advise students on course requirements. For 2018-2019, the faculty liaisons are:

- Anthropology: Kim Hopper (kh17)
- History: Kavita Sivaramakrishnan (ks2890)
- Psychology: Patrick Wilson (pw2219)
- Political Science: Ron Bayer (rb8)
- Sociology: Connie Nathanson (can2003)
- DrPH Program Director: Marni Sommer (ms2778)

## ***Faculty Advisors***

Doctoral student advisement and mentoring occurs at multiple levels and evolves during the course of doctoral study. Upon matriculation to SMS, each student is assigned a faculty advisor. The advisor is responsible for guiding the student through the initial years of the program. The faculty advisor is often, but not always, the disciplinary liaison or DrPH Director. The faculty advisor assists students in planning course work to meet their needs and research interests. During the course work phase of their doctoral studies, students should meet with their advisors at least once a semester. If the advisor does not reach out to the student to schedule this meeting, the student should contact the advisor to do so. In addition, all first-year students should meet at least once with the Director of the Doctoral Programs.

Most students change advisors as their specific research focus develops. Once the student has begun to work with a faculty member on developing the dissertation proposal, that faculty member is referred to as the student's 'sponsor', which also encompasses the responsibilities of the advisor (such as signing off on the annual report). All Department faculty members are eligible to serve as advisors; many students select an advisor whose discipline matches their own disciplinary concentration, but it is not required that students do so. Students may find it helpful to discuss the selection of a sponsor with the Deputy Chair for Doctoral Studies. Students are encouraged to reach out directly to any faculty member with whom they would like to work. Students should inform the Associate Director of Academic Programs when contemplating any change of advisor or when selecting a sponsor.

The Associate Director of Academic Programs is knowledgeable about the rules and facilities of the University and serves as a resource person to both students and faculty. Students should meet with the Associate Director of Academic Programs at registration time and should consult with her about questions regarding the fulfillment of requirements or any other administrative or program-related matter.

## ***Minimum Performance Standards***

To remain in good standing, students must 1) receive grades of B or higher in all required courses; 2) maintain an overall grade point average (GPA) of B+ (3.3) or higher; and 3) have no incompletes. Students who receive a grade of B- or lower are placed on academic notice and must develop a remediation plan in collaboration with his or her advisor. Students receiving B- or lower in two or more courses will be placed on Dean's Hold until a plan of remediation, approved by the student's advisor, is submitted to the Office of Student Affairs. The written plan should be placed in the student's file and a copy sent to the Dean of Students.

## ***Annual Academic Progress Review***

Doctoral students' academic progress is assessed annually via the annual progress report completed each spring. These reports are the basis for review by the Department to identify possible academic difficulties in terms of progress towards completion of the program. For

students who are beyond the seven-year limit for doctoral study established by the school, the reports provide a basis for the Director of the Doctoral Program to make a recommendation to the Department Chair and the Dean as to whether progress has been sufficient to merit a one-year extension (for more information on this, see section below, “Program Time Limits”).

Students must complete the annual report form, consult with their academic advisors/dissertation sponsor for review and signature, respond to their advisor or sponsor’s comments, and submit the completed form to their student dropbox on Sakai Courseworks by the deadline ([courseworks.columbia.edu/welcome/](http://courseworks.columbia.edu/welcome/)); students who fail to submit the form on time will not be considered ‘in-good-standing’. **Students engaged in any form of human subjects research as part of the dissertation process, whether it is preliminary research or dissertation research, must submit evidence of current IRB approval with the annual report.**

### ***First Year Student Review***

First year students’ academic performance is reviewed by SMS faculty in January and June. The goals of these additional reviews are to assess whether students are adjusting well to doctoral-level training, to identify areas of potential concern so that appropriate means of remediation can be taken and, in very rare cases, to identify students whose academic performance leads to a recommendation to withdraw from the program. After the January review, students receive a written evaluation that takes into consideration grades in courses and on assignments as well as GRA or TA-related work.

At the end of students’ first academic year, the Doctoral Committee evaluates and recommends whether the student is in good academic standing, is required to do additional work, or should not be permitted to advance in the program. The review will be based on the overall portfolio of the student’s performance, which includes the student’s first year course grades, assistantship-related work, the student’s annual report, and other faculty input regarding the student’s overall performance and transition to doctoral-level work.

The Doctoral Committee will recommend whether the student 1) has finished the year in good academic standing; 2) requires additional or remedial work in the second year, or 3) should not be permitted to advance in the program. If a recommendation is made for additional or remedial work, the student shall meet with the committee who graded the comprehensive exam to develop a plan of action. The student will meet quarterly with his or her advisor in year 2 to assess progress on that plan of action.

### ***International Students***

The International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO) ([www.columbia.edu/cu/isso/isso.html](http://www.columbia.edu/cu/isso/isso.html)) provides other informational and social resources for international students.

Under United States immigration law, it is your personal responsibility to maintain lawful F-1 or J-1 student status. That is, ***you are responsible for finding out, knowing, and following pertinent***

**regulations.** If you take time early on to familiarize yourself with your obligations to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), you should find it easy to maintain your legal status. If, however, you allow yourself to fall “out of status” it may be extraordinarily difficult to be reinstated to legal status.

If you have valid academic or health reasons for requiring more time to complete your program than that which is authorized on the Columbia I-20 or DS-2019, you must request a program extension through the International Students and Scholars Office. Contact the ISSO as soon as you know that you will need an extension and at least 30 days before the completion date noted on your I-20 or DS-2019 in order to have enough time to obtain any necessary documents.

### ***Financial Aid and Funding (Scholarships, Fellowships, and Assistantships)***

Students should refer to the funding letter they received from the department, as well as, in some cases, the school, for specifics. Funding awards may include all or a portion of the following: tuition & fees; stipend; teaching, research or other assistantship. Renewal of the funding package specified in each student’s letter will depend on academic performance and on appropriate progress through milestones towards the degree.

Assistantships and their assignments are made in consultation with department faculty taking into account the requirements for specific positions. While every effort is made to match the interests of individual students to those of the assignment, the overall goal is to cover the greatest number of students. Students can decline the offer of funding, but only under the most extreme circumstances would a request for a change in assistantship position be considered.

Most assistantships are for a 9-month period from the first day of class through last day of exams for both fall and spring semesters. Students are assigned to work 20 hours per week. Continued work over the summer is left to the discretion of the student and faculty supervisor. If the student continues to work over the summer, the student will be paid as a part-time casual worker.

Students have off all Medical Center Campus holidays, as well as spring break. Students should meet with their faculty supervisors at the start of their programs to arrange their work schedule. Students may request to rearrange hours in order to attend meetings scheduled by the Department related to their academic training. If students need time off to study for exams, they should request it well in advance and arrange to make up the hours missed.

Each semester, there are a limited number of Teaching Assistants positions available to doctoral students. The Department appoints TAs for classes offered through the Department; TA positions in the MPH core are handled through the Dean’s office.

### ***Seeking External Funding***

All students are strongly encouraged to apply for fellowships and grants from government agencies and private foundations. Students interested in exploring these funding possibilities

should consult with the Deputy Chair for Doctoral Studies or with the liaisons or program director for the program in which they are enrolled; more advanced students are also a good source of information about funding opportunities. The partial list in Appendix E may be helpful, and students may also wish to consult the list of funding opportunities for graduate students found at [www.mailman.columbia.edu/information-for/research-resources-r2/graduate-students](http://www.mailman.columbia.edu/information-for/research-resources-r2/graduate-students).

Below is a timetable that lays out the overall sequence of milestones and suggests the moments at which different types of funding applications should be considered. Students should note that they are expected to take no more than 18 months to move through the sequence of post-coursework exams (the methods exam, oral examinations, and the dissertation proposal defense). Moreover, students entering with a Master’s degree are expected to have defended the dissertation proposal by their sixth semester in the program. Students entering without a master’s degree are expected to have defended the proposal by their eighth semester in the program. Students who fail to meet this expectation will not be considered in good standing, which may compromise their ability to apply for certain external funding sources.

<b>Phase of Training</b>	<b>Duration, Timing or Funding Sources</b>
<b>Coursework</b> <i>DrPH: 1.5-2 years</i> <i>PhD: 2-3 years</i>	General Recommendation: students should meet with their faculty advisor or sponsor at least annually to discuss opportunities for securing external funding and to map out a long-term strategy.
<i>Fall semester of first year</i>	NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program (Available only to PhD students who are US citizens)
<i>Early spring of first &amp; second year</i>	Summer research/travel grants for pre-dissertation exploratory research. <b>If this work is considered ‘human subjects research’, students will need to submit a protocol for review to the Institutional Review Board (IRB).</b>
<b>Methods &amp; Theme Essays</b>	Students preparing for the methods exam should also be thinking about additional milestones listed below. Students should seek funding for support of dissertation research.
<b>Pre-Proposal</b>	By this point students should have identified a sponsor and begun to draft the dissertation proposal in order to apply for external funding, and preparation of dissertation research protocol for submission to IRB.
<b>Dissertation Proposal Defense</b>	The dissertation proposal should be prepared and defended no more than two semesters after completing coursework. Students must have completed ALL OTHER program requirements before defending the dissertation proposal.
<b>During Dissertation Research</b>	Students should seek funding for support of dissertation writing 6-12 months before completing dissertation research.

## ***Email & Accessing Information***

### ***Columbia UNI & Email***

An official Columbia University email address is required for all students. The University has the right to send official communications to the University email address, which is based upon the University Network ID (UNI) assigned to the student.

The University expects that every student will receive email at his or her Columbia University email address and will read email on a frequent and consistent basis. A student's failure to receive and read University communications in a timely manner does not absolve that student from knowing and complying with the content of such communications.

Students may elect to redirect (auto-forward) email sent to their University email address. Students who redirect email from their official University email address to another address do so at their own risk. If email is lost as a result of forwarding, it does not absolve the student from the responsibilities associated with communications sent to their official University email address. [policylibrary.columbia.edu/student-email-communication-policy]

### ***SMS Listserv and E-weekly***

The department regularly sends information for master's students such as program announcements, practicum opportunities, and job postings for students. We also have a department weekly newsletter, sent Monday afternoons, with department announcements, shout-outs, and upcoming events and programs for all SMS faculty, staff, and students.

### ***Mailman Public Health and Columbia***

The MSPH website, [www.mailman.columbia.edu](http://www.mailman.columbia.edu), provides information on academics, financial aid, career services, and other important topics. Important announcements are shared with students in a weekly e-mail produced by the Office of Student Affairs every Thursday by means of "Transmission Action."

On the Columbia University home page (<http://www.columbia.edu>), under "Students," are quick links to schedules of classes, schedules of finals, grades, registration holds and bulletins. Students can also access this information directly through Student Services Online (SSOL), [ssol.columbia.edu](http://ssol.columbia.edu).

Students can access scholarly information and reference materials through the Columbia Libraries website, [www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb](http://www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb). In addition to the collections, Columbia University Libraries/Information Services provides many services to support graduate students - [library.columbia.edu/services/grad-students.html](http://library.columbia.edu/services/grad-students.html).

## ***Columbia Transportation Services***

Columbia Transportation provides travel options and information that allows the Columbia community to make safe, efficient, and timely travels to, from, and between Columbia's campuses.

### ***Campus Shuttle Service***

A free campus shuttle bus service is available between the Columbia University Medical Center Campus, the Morningside Campus, and Harlem Hospital. A valid Columbia University identification card is required. The shuttle runs between from early morning until late at night, except in the summer, when there is no evening service between the Health Sciences and Morningside Campuses. For up to date information about this and other shuttle bus services operated by Columbia University please check the Transportation Web site at [transportation.columbia.edu](http://transportation.columbia.edu).

### ***Campus Safety Escorts***

During the school year, the Department of Public Safety at the Morningside Campus provides a Walking Safety Escort Service performed by trained Columbia University students. Two trained students, equipped with a Public Safety radio, will be sent to accompany students or staff to their door any time from 7pm to 3am, seven nights a week.

#### ***Morningside Campus Escort Service***

This service is available from West 108th Street to West 110th Street between Amsterdam Avenue and Riverside Drive, and from West 111th Street to West 122nd Street between Morningside Drive and Riverside Drive. Please allow 5 to 15 minutes to arrive and ask them to show a Columbia University ID. For more information on the Walking Escort Service, contact the Department of Public Safety's Operations Desk at (212) 854-SAFE (7233).

#### ***Medical Center Escort Service***

On the Medical Center Campus from 6:00PM until 6:00 AM escorts are provided by Public Safety personnel on foot; vehicles may be used if available. The escort area is West 163rd Street to West 168th Street, Riverside Drive to Amsterdam Avenue and from West 168 Street to 178 Street, Broadway to Haven Avenue. A valid Columbia ID Card is required to obtain an escort. Please call 212-305-8100 to request an escort. Allow 10-15 minutes for the escort to arrive.

## ***Gender-Based Misconduct Policies for Students***

Students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with [university resources and policies](#) regarding sexual assault, sexual violence, sexual harassment, and gender-based misconduct. Students who believe they have been subjected to gender-based discrimination or harassment are encouraged to report these incidents. Upon receiving a report, the University will respond promptly, equitably, and thoroughly. In addition, the University will take steps to prevent the recurrence of the discrimination or harassment and correct its effects, if appropriate. The complete Columbia University Gender-Based Misconduct Policies and Procedures for

Student is available for download at [www.columbia.edu/cu/dpsa/pdfs/Gender-Based\\_Misconduct\\_Policies\\_Students.pdf](http://www.columbia.edu/cu/dpsa/pdfs/Gender-Based_Misconduct_Policies_Students.pdf).

To report an incident of gender-based or sexual misconduct, please contact Student Services for Gender-Based and Sexual Misconduct at (212) 854-1717.

### ***Resources for Parents***

Beginning in fall 2016, the following will be available to all Sociomedical DrPH and PhD students who have enrolled in 14 or less semesters (i.e., no more than seven years):

#### ***Parental Leave***

Students who give birth, adopt, or become legal guardians or foster parents, as well as students whose spouse or partner gives birth, can have responsibilities associated with their doctoral program suspended for twelve calendar weeks without loss of funding. In addition, students may elect to take a semester of unpaid accommodation after their paid leave concludes.

#### ***Childcare Subsidy***

Students may receive a \$2,000 subsidy per year for each child who is: 1) under the age of five, and 2) not attending kindergarten. If both parents are doctoral students eligible for funding at Columbia, each of them may apply individually for the child-care subsidy.

#### ***Adoption Assistance Program***

This benefit is available to a doctoral student who: 1) is in years one through seven in their doctoral program, 2) is fully funded, 3) has adopted a child who is under the age of 18, and 4) has finalized the adoption process within the past six months. This benefit provides a one-time reimbursement of up to \$5,000 for expenses incurred on or after the parent's first day of enrollment in their SMS doctoral program. There is a limit of one \$5,000 reimbursement per adopted child, even if both parents are Mailman students.

#### ***Filing for Graduation***

Degrees are granted three times a year by the University: October, February and May. Students may file an application for graduation when they anticipate fulfillment of all degree requirements by the graduation date. An application must be filed with the school in which the student is enrolled (MSPH for DrPH students; GSAS for PhD students). The filing deadlines are absolute and are the strictest in the University. It is the student's responsibility to file for graduation on time.

MA	<a href="http://registrar.columbia.edu/registrar-forms/application-degree-or-certificate">registrar.columbia.edu/registrar-forms/application-degree-or-certificate</a>
MPhil	<a href="http://gsas.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/inline-files/GSAS-master_phil_app_2.pdf">gsas.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/inline-files/GSAS-master_phil_app_2.pdf</a>
DrPH	<a href="http://www.mailman.columbia.edu/people/current-students/academics/policy-and-procedures/graduation/graduation-application">www.mailman.columbia.edu/people/current-students/academics/policy-and-procedures/graduation/graduation-application</a>

Degrees	Application Deadline	Degree Conferral
MA*	August 1	October
MPhil**	December 1	February
DrPH	February 1	May
PhD	Please consult the GSAS Dissertation Handbook for current deadline dates.	

\* Students who are granted two RUs of transfer credit are not eligible to receive the MA degree from Columbia; however, a student awarded one RU may earn a Columbia MA degree. (See Master of Arts Degree section of this handbook for more information)

\*\*Candidates who have completed all the necessary requirements apply through their departments in order to receive the MPhil degree. Applications for the MPhil degree can be filed at any point in the calendar year. Students receiving an MPhil only do not participate in the Convocation ceremony, but may participate in the Commencement ceremony.

### ***Participating in commencement ceremonies***

As of January 1, 2017, the following MSPH policy took effect: The Mailman School Doctoral Committee understands that it can take some time to arrange a defense date. We want to preserve the GSAS guidelines of allowing a student to walk if they expect to receive their degree by the University October deadline. We want to operationalize this to mean that a student would be allowed to walk in May commencement ceremonies if their thesis committee has agreed that they are ready to defend their dissertation. This means that the candidate has to distribute their thesis to their dissertation committee prior to the University deadline for them to be included in the University Convocation or Mailman Graduation Ceremony. We use the GSAS deadlines below as a guide for all our doctoral students, both PhD and DrPH.

### GSAS 2018-19 Distribution Deadlines

<b>Fall 2018 Semester</b>	Friday, January 18, 2019
<b>Spring 2019 Semester</b>	Friday, May 24, 2019
<b>Summer 2019 Semester</b>	Friday, August 30, 2019

## PHD PROGRAM

### ***Administration and Subcommittee***

The Graduate School of Arts and Sciences is the only School within Columbia University that confers the PhD degree. The SMS PhD program is formally administered by the Doctoral Program Subcommittee on Sociomedical Sciences within the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. Members of the Subcommittee hold appointments in different Departments and Schools of the University and share a scholarly interest in health issues and research. In addition to Sociomedical Sciences, the Departments and Schools currently represented on the Subcommittee include:

- The Departments of Anthropology, History, Psychology, Sociology, and Political Science\* in the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences (GSAS).  
*\*The Department is not currently admitting students into the political science concentration.*
- Mailman School of Public Health
- College of Physicians and Surgeons, Faculty of Medicine

A listing of current members of the Subcommittee is included at the back of this Handbook (see Appendix A).

Faculty members serving on the Subcommittee are available to students for advisement and may serve as examiners. The student's dissertation sponsor is usually drawn from the Subcommittee members. All PhD dissertation committees must include some subcommittee members.

Administrative details of the Sociomedical Sciences program are handled by the Deputy Chair for Doctoral Studies, Professor Jennifer Hirsch, who chairs the doctoral program subcommittee, and by the Associate Director of Academic Programs, Ms. Andrea Constancio. She is also the students' first point of contact to address administrative matters.

### ***Degree Requirements & Registration***

#### ***Required Courses and Credits***

Students may not take required courses pass/fail (unless this is the only grade option available for the course as set by the instructor). Each student is responsible for ensuring that his/her course selection is consistent with timely completion of all course requirements as stated in this handbook. (Students may satisfy course requirements through successful completion of equivalent graduate level courses. Students seeking a waiver of any requirements should consult the procedures outlined on page 21.) Please allow reasonable time for review of any waiver request.

All students in the PhD program must complete a minimum of 30 points in public health courses and 30 points in their social science disciplinary focus. Each social science has its own specific

course and language requirements (see page 39). Descriptions of social science courses are found in the Bulletin of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences.

During their first year, all doctoral students are required to take a social theory course sequence” P8788 Theoretical Foundations of SMS in the fall, and P8789 Contemporary Debates in SMS in the spring. Waivers are not permitted for these courses.

SMS PhD students are also required to demonstrate competence in epidemiology and basic statistics. This requirement may be satisfied by taking the Mailman School core courses in Epidemiology and Biostatistics, or by passing an exam (administered by the respective departments) demonstrating mastery of the content of these courses. In addition, a course in quantitative methods and one in qualitative methods are mandatory. Public Health course descriptions are listed in the Mailman School of Public Course Directory. There are numerous social science methodology courses taught throughout the University and the Consortium (see page 22) that also meet the methods requirements. Check with your academic advisor or with the Associate Director of Academic Programs to confirm that courses meet this requirement.

SMS doctoral students must further demonstrate competence in approaching public health and medical research from the perspective of social science disciplines other than the one in which they are concentrating. The requirement may be fulfilled by successfully completing two of the following seven disciplinary courses: P8701 Medical Sociology; P8755 Medical Anthropology; P8767 Health Psychology; P8773 Social History of American Public Health; P6503 Health Economics, which is offered in the Department of Health Policy and Management during the spring semester for non-HPM students; G8545 Anthropology of Affliction, and GR5201 Principles & Applications of Social & Cultural Anthropology, both offered at Morningside Anthropology. Students may also substitute other courses that cover a broad survey of a social science discipline’s approach to public health and medicine. The course does not have to be an SMS course, but it must be taught at a graduate level for either masters or doctoral students and should focus on a discipline other than the one in which the student is concentrating. Students wishing to substitute one or both discipline courses should submit their request through existing process for waiver of course requirements (see page 21).

Students who are fellows in the Department’s Gender, Sexuality and Health Training Program and other training programs may be required to complete additional course requirements. The GSH additional courses are outlined on page 43.

### ***Residence Requirements***

A Residence Unit (RU), equal to full-time registration for one semester at the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, provides the basis for tuition charges; six RUs are required for the PhD degree. RUs may only be earned during fall and spring semesters, not during the summer.

PhD students must register for 1 RU each semester up to the total required 6 RUs. After the student has satisfied the residency requirement they must register for Matriculation & Facilities

(M & F) or Extended Residence (ER) (see Continuous Registration page 18).

### ***Expected Timeline for Completion of Coursework***

For students in the PhD program entering with a Master's degree, the expectation is that they will complete coursework in their first two years in the program. Students who enter the PhD program without a Master's degree are expected to complete coursework in three years.

### ***Transfer Credit***

**Doctoral Students Entering with a Master's Degree:** All doctoral students are required to complete a total of six Residence Units. Doctoral students who have completed the requirements either a) for an appropriate MA degree, conferred in another division of Columbia or by another regionally accredited institution (or the international equivalent), or b) (occasionally) for an appropriate professional degree taken at Columbia or elsewhere, may be granted, upon entrance to the Graduate School, two Residence Units toward the required total of six. Departments decide whether the previously completed MA is appropriate: it must meet Columbia departmental standards and contribute directly and substantially to the fulfillment of the requirements for the MPhil and PhD degrees at Columbia.

Students who have been granted two Residence Units toward the total of six Residence Units are not eligible to receive an MA from the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences.

**Doctoral Students Entering without a Master's Degree:** PhD students who have taken graduate-level courses at Columbia before joining their current doctoral program, but have not completed an appropriate MA degree program or the equivalent (or an appropriate professional degree), may receive up to 30 points of transfer credit.

PhD students who have taken graduate-level courses outside Columbia, but have not completed an appropriate MA degree program or the equivalent (or an appropriate professional degree), may receive up to 15 points of transfer credit. In this case, MA coursework requirements may be shortened by the amount of transfer credits, subject to approval by the department. For example, if the MA degree requires 30 credits and the student transfers 10 credits, he or she may need to fulfill only the remaining 20 credits.

Students who registered previously in a graduate program at Columbia without receiving a master's degree must register in six RUs while matriculated in the PhD program.

Students may not apply for transfer credit until they have successfully completed at least one semester of work in the doctoral program. The student is responsible for initiating the process of obtaining transfer credit. To initiate the process, the student should contact the Associate Director of Academic Programs and the discipline liaison for a review and evaluation of the prior graduate coursework. The Associate Director of Academic Programs will file the Transfer Credit Form, which must be submitted with a transcript for final approval.

Important Note: Transfer credit does not exempt students from taking courses required by the program or from courses which the student's advisor considers essential to his or her training, i.e., even though the student is awarded 30 credits/2 RUs of transfer credit s/he may have to take more than the nominally 30 additional credits to complete SMS coursework requirements.

### ***Continuous Registration***

Continuous registration is required of PhD students until all requirements (including dissertation defense) have been completed. Continuous registration means that the student must be registered each and every semester for one of the following: A Residence Unit (RU), Extended Residence (ER), Matriculation and Facilities (M & F); or, he or she must be on an official leave of absence. If continuous registration is not maintained, the student must apply for readmission to the Graduate School. 'Continuous Registration' does not include summer sessions.

Once the mandatory six Residence Units have been completed, students must register for Extended Residence (ER) for any term in which (a) they hold a fellowship or University appointment, or (b) they are completing a degree requirement such as course work, language and comprehensive exams. Students planning to defend must register (M & F). Students who do not fall into the above categories can satisfy the continuous registration requirement and maintain their current status by registering for Matriculation and Facilities (M & F), allowing them access to all University facilities.

### ***Leaves of Absence & Readmission***

Because of the continuous registration requirement, it is important for students to request leaves of absence in writing for any term in which they will be away from the University. This may be for reasons of ill health, maternity or paternity leave, military service, or other reasons deemed to be acceptable for leave by the University. **If a student does not officially request a leave of absence and do not register for a semester, the student MUST apply for readmission to the University before registration is allowed.**

Prior to submitting the leave of absence form, students must meet with their advisor to discuss academic progress, plans, and leave. Students should understand that taking a leave during the period in which the Department has offered support may result in a loss of funding. To request a leave of absence, submit the completed Leave of Absence form, available online at [https://gsas.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/inline-files/GSAS-leave-of-absence\\_1.pdf](https://gsas.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/inline-files/GSAS-leave-of-absence_1.pdf) along with a letter of intent to the Chair of the Department for consideration. For further details, and information regarding leaves of absence and readmission, consult the GSAS Bulletin.

### ***Program Time Limits***

As noted above, PhD students are expected to complete course work within three years, to have defended the dissertation proposal within eighteen months of the completion of coursework, and to have completed the program no more than seven years after matriculation. After those

seven years, a student may apply for two one-year extensions.

These time limits are part of a set of policies established by the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. They apply to PhD students matriculating in 2011 and after, and are available at <http://gsas.columbia.edu/content/nine-year-policy-time-phd-degree>. Students should attend particularly to the following:

“Students who enter a Ph.D. program in the Arts and Sciences beginning in Fall 2011 are allowed nine years of continuous registration to satisfy all requirements for the doctoral degree. Students who do not complete all requirements for the doctoral degree by the end of the ninth year will no longer be considered GSAS Ph.D. degree candidates and will be notified accordingly in writing by GSAS. Students so notified may appeal this determination within 30 days of receipt of notification.”

### ***Registration Process***

Registration for classes is held at the beginning of each semester and at the beginning of each summer session. You will receive information about these registration periods from the Office of Student Affairs. Students should check SSOL for any holds on their accounts and to view their next registration appointment times.

Each semester, course schedules for the entire university are published online in the Columbia Directory of Courses ([www.columbia.edu/cu/bulletin/uwb/](http://www.columbia.edu/cu/bulletin/uwb/)). The Mailman School of Public Health publishes a separate course schedule available online at <https://www.mailman.columbia.edu/people/current-students/academics/course-directory>.

Although students may take courses offered in any school in the University, their registration must be processed through the school in which they are enrolled (DrPH students in the Mailman School of Public Health, and PhD students in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences). All students register through the Medical Center Campus registrar. Students should note that semester start and end dates, as well as holiday schedules, may not be the same for all schools in the University, so please consult the calendars for each school.

Students are not required to meet with the assigned academic advisor to sign up for classes, but it is strongly recommended that they do so. Students should keep in close contact with both their social science and public health advisors.

Some courses require obtaining the instructor's or department approval. If approval is required, it will be noted in the Mailman course listings and the Columbia Directory of Courses. Students who encounter difficulty registering for courses in their disciplinary departments on the Arts and Sciences campus should seek help from their disciplinary liaison rather than try to resolve these issues on their own.

### ***Holds***

The Office of Student Affairs may prevent a student from registering for classes by placing a hold a student's registration. Examples include academic holds for incomplete courses, library holds for outstanding materials and/or fees, Bursar's Office holds for any money owed, or Health Services holds for failure to comply with immunization requirements. Holds on registration must be cleared before a student will be allowed to register. To clear the hold, the student must settle the outstanding obligation(s) that caused the hold.

### ***Pass/Fail***

No required courses may be taken for Pass/Fail. This option is designed to permit students to register for credit in courses relevant to but outside of their area of study. Elective course work may be taken for Pass/Fail with the approval of the instructor and the advisor.

### ***R Credit***

Two kinds of credit are awarded for participation in a course: E credit (Examination credit) and R credit (Registration credit). Students who wish to be given R credit for a course must receive permission from the instructor.

A course that has been taken for R credit may not be repeated for a letter grade. A student who has been approved to take a course for R credit is not required to take the final examination but is required to meet any other requirements established by the instructor of the course. It is assumed that the student will meet all course requirements other than the final examination unless the instructor states otherwise in writing when the permission for R credit is granted. Courses taken for R credit are applied toward the calculation of Residence Units for billing purposes in the same way as courses taken for a letter grade. The number of points of R credit acceptable for a degree, however, is set by each program in consultation with the Executive Committee of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences.

### ***Change of Program Period - Add/Drop***

Changes in class schedule may be made during the Add/Drop period, usually occurring the first 2 weeks of classes. There are no extra charges for adding and/or dropping courses during this period. However, because it is less than ideal to join a course without having attended the first weeks, it is recommended that students make every effort to register on time and consult with advisors prior to registration.

### ***Incompletes***

There is no automatic grade of "Incomplete" (IN). Students are expected to complete ALL course assignments and exams on schedule by the end of a semester.

An Incomplete (IN) may be given only when a student has met the attendance requirement but certain course assignments have not been completed for reasons satisfactory to the instructor. The instructor may grant an extension, usually for a specified period of time, and usually not more than several weeks. For Mailman School courses students must complete a "Request for Incomplete" form in the Office of Student Affairs and have the faculty agree to and sign the form. After the student has submitted the materials required to complete the work for the class, the instructor will process a change of grade from IN to a letter grade.

Students who carry Incomplete Grades (INs) into a new semester will have the balance of IN credits counted toward the maximum number of credits allowed in the new semester. Because students register for a new semester before the receipt of the prior semester's grades, students may have to drop courses not required in the new semester's academic plan. If the balance of IN credits prevent a student from taking the necessary required courses in the new semester, the student may be asked to take a Leave Of Absence until they resolve all INs. All INs carried into a new semester must be resolved before a student may add credits freed up by completed INs.

If the student has not completed work within one year from the end of the semester of registration, the IN grade will be converted to Unofficial Withdrawal (UW), defined as "student did not complete attendance and/or assignments, but failed to withdraw." A grade of UW will not be changed to a passing grade. In most cases a student will have to register for the course again to complete the course.

### ***Waiver of Course Requirements***

A student may request a waiver or exemption from a specific course requirement if he or she has evidence of having satisfactorily completed a graduate-level course that is comparable in rigor and scope to that of the required SMS course. Students initiate this process by preparing a written request. Include in the written statement the SMS course requirement to be waived and brief description of prior course work that is the basis for the request. Attach to the statement both a syllabus for the substitute course and a transcript indicating the final grade for this course. Submit a signed and dated written request, along with the supporting material, to the Associate Director of Academic Programs.

With the exception of students applying for transfer credit, there is no reduction in course credits towards graduation. The waiver allows the student to substitute an elective course for the course out of which they have been waived.

For PhD students seeking transfer credit based on course work for a completed master's-level degree, waiver and substitution of courses is done in an expedited manner as part of recommending a student for transfer credit. For further information about transfer credit, consult the Associate Director of Academic Programs

This policy refers to substitution of course work completed prior to entering the program. It does not apply to course work taken after the student enrolled in the program.

## ***Tutorials***

A tutorial is an individualized course of study in which a student works with a faculty member in a less structured setting than a classroom course. One-to-one student/faculty tutorials may include, for example, participation in major research or other projects, small individual projects, pilot projects, literature review, and field experience. A tutorial may be taken for one, two, or three credits depending on the amount of work it entails.

No more than 20 percent of course work may be taken in tutorials and no more than 6 credits of tutorials may be taken with any one faculty member. When registering for a tutorial, please submit a Tutorial Permission Form to Associate Director of Academic Programs.

## ***Consortium***

The Graduate School is a member of the Inter-University Doctoral Consortium (IUDC), which provides for cross-registration among member institutions. Beginning in their second year in the program, (this includes students with transfer credit) full-time matriculated doctoral students may register for courses at the following institutions: New School University, New York University including the Institute of Fine Arts, CUNY Graduate Center, Rutgers, Stony Brook, Princeton and Fordham University.

Information and application forms are available in 107 Low Library. Questions may be directed to the Columbia IUDC Coordinator, Thalyana Stathis, at 212-854-4738 or [ts2980@columbia.edu](mailto:ts2980@columbia.edu) (GSAS Office of Student Affairs, 107 Low Library). The application form can be found at [https://gsas.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/inline-files/2016\\_IUDC\\_registration\\_form\\_2.pdf](https://gsas.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/inline-files/2016_IUDC_registration_form_2.pdf).

Students register at Columbia for the course(s) they plan to take at the visiting institution. It is possible that the host institution will also require you to register there. Tuition is paid to the Graduate School. Classes may be taken for a grade or for audit and will appear on your Columbia transcript. Students will receive a letter or ID card allowing them library reading privileges at the host institution. Columbia students going to NYU may use their CUID card. Students should familiarize themselves with the academic regulations of the host university, including their locations, grading systems and calendars. Please note that this program is available for the fall and spring semesters, but not over the summer.

## ***Master of Arts Degree***

To obtain the MA in Sociomedical Sciences, a student must satisfactorily complete: (a) minimum of 27 points in a combination of courses offered by the Mailman School of Public Health or the student's chosen social science discipline at GSAS and Teachers College, and (b) a Master's Essay in Sociomedical Sciences. The essay may develop from a term paper for a course, from a research project, or as a separate project. The form and content of the project are not rigidly specified as long as the subject is appropriate and the quality is high. (See a full description in the MPH Handbook.) The Master's essay must be completed within the three-year coursework period and

should be submitted to the student's social science liaison (who may not necessarily be the student's advisor) for approval, with a copy submitted to the Associate Director of Academic Programs.

The student initiates the awarding of the MA degree by filing an application with the GSAS registrar. Those students who have been granted transfer credit as a result of prior academic or professional degrees are considered to have completed the MA requirements and are not awarded a Columbia MA. Students who have only received 1 RU of transfer credit may earn a Columbia MA by fulfilling the two requirements listed above (27 points and a Master's Essay).

### ***Language Requirements***

If the Department in which the student takes his or her social science concentration has a foreign language proficiency requirement, the student may write the methods or theme essays before completing language requirements, but they may not defend the dissertation proposal without having completed the language requirement. Check the chart on page 39 for the requirements in your social science.)

To help prepare for the language examinations, which are generally administered through the social science departments or language departments, language courses specifically designed for this purpose are offered at the University. In some cases, taking the preparatory course will exempt you from taking the language exam. Language course listings may also be accessed through the Columbia Directory of Courses. Students planning substantial training in a foreign language may want to explore the Foreign Language Area Studies program, which provides some support for students doing language study: <https://gsas.columbia.edu/student-guide/financing-your-education/flas-fellowship-academic-year>

### ***Methods and Theme Essays***

Before proceeding to the proposal defense, a student must demonstrate his or her readiness to undertake independent research by showing evidence of mastery of i) key substantive and theoretical areas of interest and ii) research methods. Demonstration of mastery in theory and methods has two parts: the theme essay and the methods essays.

- Students are *encouraged* to complete both by the final year in which they are taking courses. They are *required to have completed at least one* (either the methods or the theme essay) by the final semester of coursework and *are required to have completed both by the end of the first semester after completing coursework*. (Students should confer with the Associate Director of Academic Programs to make sure that they understand and comply with the requirements regarding registration status for this period in which they are completing coursework and exams.)
- Students can choose to do both requirements in one semester or to do them in either order over the course of two semesters.
- Students must have completed all required methods courses by the end of the semester

prior to completing the methods essays.

- **The student should inform the Associate Director of Academic Programs of plans to proceed with these milestones so that a formal review of the student's record can be made to verify that all course work requirements have been met.**
- Students in each PhD discipline also have discipline-specific requirements, either written or oral, which they must complete before moving on to the dissertation proposal defense. These are described below in the “Social Science Requirements for the PhD in Sociomedical Sciences”. Language requirements and discipline-specific requirements must be completed before the dissertation proposal defense takes place.

### **Methods Essays**

No later than the semester after completing all required courses, students will write two “methods essays”. Students must complete all required methods courses during the term before the one in which they write these essays, though they may still be taking elective methods courses (or, to be sure, courses not oriented towards methods) in the term in which they take the exam. The Methods Committee is responsible for administering and grading the essays. Faculty members are selected to serve on the committee for their expertise in areas of social science methods (including a variety of qualitative and quantitative research methods) and include faculty who teach the Department’s methods courses.

There are two parts to the methods essays:

#### ***A. The shared question:***

Students must, at the beginning of the semester in which they intend to complete their methods essay, communicate to the Chair of the Methods Committee their intention to do so. For this essay, students will respond to a question developed by the faculty methods committee for students taking the exam that semester. The question will be distributed to students four weeks before the end of the semester and will provide an opportunity for students to demonstrate competence in the range of research methods required of doctoral students trained in the department. (The methods committee will meet, review syllabi of required methods courses, articulate topics and approaches in which students are required to demonstrate mastery, and communicate that to students.)

The question, which will be appropriate for students across disciplines, will require students both to articulate key elements of a methodologically diverse research approach and to demonstrate deep familiarity with some of the particular methodological challenges of research in their major area of expertise. The shared question essay, essay should be approximately 3,500-4,000 words.

#### ***B. The individual question***

Students should begin thinking about and planning for the individual question essay before the term in which they take it. One step of planning for the individual essay question is to meet with

one of the members of the Methods Committee at least one semester prior to taking the exam. At this meeting, the student should discuss with the faculty member his or her preliminary ideas for the student-submitted question and the reading list on which the student will draw in preparing to answer the question. The faculty member will offer suggestions for constructing the reading list and preparing the question, as well as suggest appropriate examination members to review the lists and questions. This meeting is preliminary to and not a substitute for subsequent meetings that review the specific content of lists and questions. The individual question essay should be approximately 3,000 words.

### ***Preparation and Process***

Students should begin thinking about and planning for the exam before the term in which they take it.

The examination covers the knowledge and concepts contained in three reading lists: the core methods list is prepared by the Department, representing material which all doctoral students are expected to have mastered and the second and third are prepared by the student. Students may substitute readings that are comparable or more advanced than the core readings. Students should check with a member of the Methods Committee, however, before making substitutions.

In addition, students will be responsible for preparing two supplemental reading lists that reflect their own professional areas of interest and specialization. One of the areas must be selected from those enumerated in the core list (statistical concepts and analytic techniques, survey research, experimental design, field methods, historical methods, secondary data analysis, and evaluation research). Students will draw on this list, as well as the Department's core methods list, in answering the shared question for the exam.

The second list will cover either methodological techniques and issues that are likely to be utilized in the student's future professional work (including but not limited to dissertation research), another area on the core list, or a well-defined area of methodology not covered in the core list. This is the list on which students will rely in developing and answering the individual question.

Students should prepare the second and third reading lists in consultation with members of the Methods Committee. A methods committee member may approve both lists, or only one list (in which case, the student would get approvals from two different methods committee members), as appropriate. Please review the list of members' specialties (see Appendix B Methods Examination Committee Members) in deciding the most appropriate faculty members to consult with for your lists. Other Columbia faculty may serve on the Methods Committee in an ad hoc capacity if a student wishes to prepare a reading list on social science methods that falls outside the expertise of existing members. Students should seek the approval of the Chair of the Methods Committee for an outside examiner early in the development of the reading lists.

### ***Distribution and Evaluation***

The methods essay questions (shared & individual) will be distributed to students four weeks before the end of the semester and the students' essays are due before the winter break.

The returned methods essays are distributed to members of the Methods Committee, and are graded by at least two readers. All the members of the Methods Committee consider and approve the results (high pass, pass, low pass, or fail), which are conveyed to exam-takers within a month. Students also received written comments on each essay, approximately one month after the exam. Graders will assign a grade to the essay of high pass, pass, low pass or fail. Students whose essay receives a low pass or a fail from more than one grader will be expected to revise and resubmit the essay. In the event that after multiple re-takes the student is unable to develop an essay that earns a passing grade, he or she will be asked to leave the program. The Chair of the Methods Committee reports the results in writing to the Chair of the Department, the Deputy Chair of Doctoral Programs, the DrPH Director, and the Associate Director of Academic Programs.

### **Theme Essay**

In their final year of coursework (or, as described above, in the following semester), students will write and submit a "theme essay", which presents a scholarly overview of the state of knowledge and of the major approaches to research within the student's chosen research area. The focus of the essay is more specific than "public health" or any particular social science discipline, but is broader than the dissertation topic. For example, a student planning on doing dissertation research exploring obesity and the built environment might write a review essay on public health research on obesity; a student whose dissertation would explore the rise of gluten-free eating might review and critique the history of food fads and movements in 20th century America; or a student planning to develop and test a novel approach to sexuality education might write about the development, implementation and impact of sexuality education on sexual practices. A primary function of the essay is to demonstrate the student's breadth of competence beyond the specific questions and approaches of the dissertation. Students are strongly encouraged to choose a topic that will lay the groundwork for the dissertation, but a student who changes the focus of his or her dissertation research after completing the theme essay will not be required to do another theme essay.

The Theme Essay is designed to maximize flexibility and student self-determination, and it can be written in a wide variety of formats. The only formal requirement for format and content is that these features be approved by the student's Theme Essay Committee (which will include the student's intended dissertation sponsor and two additional readers, chosen by the student in consultation with the sponsor). Different formats may be more or less appropriate for different students and projects. Possible formats include (but are not limited to) a review paper or a handbook chapter.

- As part of the process of developing the theme essay, students will submit an outline and

the names of two proposed additional readers to the sponsor by the end of the prior semester.

- Students must submit at least one draft of the theme essay to the sponsor for comments, and the sponsor is expected to return the draft within one month in order to provide time for student to revise before submitting to full committee.
- The theme essay is graded by the three-member committee as either high pass, pass, low pass or fail. Students whose theme essay receives a low pass or a fail will be expected to revise and resubmit the essay. In the event that after multiple retakes the student is unable to develop an essay that earns a passing grade, he or she will be asked to leave the program.

After successfully completing the methods essays and the theme essay, as well as other requirements noted above, a student is ready to defend his or her dissertation proposal.

### ***Oral Examination – PhD/History Concentration Only***

Students in the history concentration of the PhD will prepare four readings lists, one each in consultation with four faculty members who will serve as examiners. At least one of the examiners must hold an appointment in the Morningside History Department.

One of the four lists must deal with the history of public health and medicine. The other three lists must deal with recognized subfields of history and/or ethics. Examples of acceptable subfields for examination include:

- Public health ethics or bioethics
- A defined historical period (e.g., 19th century, colonial, Progressive Era)
- Urban history
- Women’s history
- African American history
- History of consumer movements
- History of U.S. colonialism
- History of bioethics

### ***Master of Philosophy Degree***

The Master of Philosophy (MPhil) is awarded to students who have fulfilled all of the requirements for the PhD except the proposal defense and the dissertation defense. After successful completion of course work, completion of a master’s degree with submission of a master’s essay (or transfer credit), the language and/or statistics requirements, the theme and methods essays, and the fulfillment of the necessary Residence Units, the Chair of the Subcommittee recommends to the Dean of the GSAS for award of the MPhil.

## ***Dissertation and Graduation***

### ***Selecting a Sponsor***

After completing all requirements for the MPhil degree, the student formally designates a faculty sponsor. By the time a student reaches this point in the program, however, he or she should have a well-developed idea for dissertation research and should have identified a faculty member under whose mentorship he or she plans to conduct independent research. It is expected (though not required), for example, that students will have written their theme essay under the supervision of the faculty member with whom they intend to work for their dissertation research. It is at this point, after the student begins drafting the formal dissertation proposal, that the student's primary mentor is referred to as a 'sponsor' rather than an 'advisor'.

Following GSAS rules, the sponsor is generally a tenured member of the Subcommittee or Department. If a student wishes to work with a Columbia University faculty member not on the list of approved sponsors, the student should consult with the Deputy Chair for Doctoral Studies. Students can also approach the Director of the Doctoral Program and ask for help, either in reaching out to a particular faculty member or in figuring out who might be the most appropriate sponsor, given the students' interests and disciplinary focus. The main criterion is to find a faculty member who is willing to devote the necessary time and effort to mentor the student through the dissertation process. In rare circumstances, a tenured faculty member may need to be designated as a co-sponsor. Adjunct faculty are eligible to serve as sponsors, provided that a full-time Columbia faculty member, who is an approved sponsor, serves as a co-sponsor, and accepts that designation as a genuine responsibility. A prospective sponsor or co-sponsor who is neither a member of the GSAS faculty, nor a member of the Subcommittee, nor an SMS faculty member must be approved by the Dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences and the Subcommittee. The co-sponsorship proviso reflects the Executive Committee of the Graduate School of Arts and Science's conviction that all Columbia University dissertations should be supervised or co-supervised by regular full-time faculty members. Students should consult the Deputy Chair if they have any questions as to whether a faculty member can sponsor a PhD dissertation.

There are faculty on the list of approved sponsors who do not hold full time appointments at Mailman (for example, faculty who are emeritus or whose primary appointment is in another school). This CUMC IRB does not permit faculty without a full-time appointment at Mailman to serve as the PI for student research protocols. In those circumstances, students should consult with their sponsor and identify another committee member who is an SMS faculty member and who can serve as PI of the IRB protocol. The sponsor should be included on the protocol as an investigator and should work with the student in the preparation of the protocol.

### ***The Dissertation Proposal***

Although the first formal step in the dissertation process is the selection of a faculty sponsor, preliminary work on a proposal usually starts much earlier, since it develops organically from the

student's prior work in classes, seminars, and term papers; formal approval of the proposal, however, is given upon successful defense of the dissertation proposal, which must take place after completion of the M.Phil. **Students are expected to submit a proposal within six months following completion of the other program requirements. Students who fail to prepare and defend a dissertation proposal in a timely fashion after completing other program requirements may be asked to take a leave of absence or to withdraw from the program.**

The formal approval of a proposal provides assurance that completion of the proposed study will provide the basis for an acceptable dissertation. The dissertation proposal is a description of an idea which is worthy of research, and which has been described in a manner showing the student's ability to plan an independent investigation. The proposal stage should not be a problem if the student has been thinking about and discussing possible topics earlier in the program. Class discussions, readings, and exchanges with faculty and other students contribute to the proposal's development.

Many students (particularly those who intend to collect their own data) spend the summers between the first and second or second and third years engaged in some form of preliminary dissertation research. Students are reminded that all individuals conducting research are required to submit a protocol for review by the Institutional Review Board. This review can take several months and so it is important to submit it with sufficient lead time. In order to be permitted to draw on this preliminary research in one's dissertation proposal, a student must file a copy of the IRB approval for that research with Ms. Andrea Constancio, Associate Director of Academic Programs.

### ***Preparing the Proposal***

The dissertation demonstrates the student's capacity to conduct original research and to present findings in a scholarly manner. The student uses his or her social science knowledge and skills to investigate a problem in the health field. The student's research may involve the collection of data, or may be an analysis, from a new point of view, of data that has been previously collected. The student should view the dissertation as a demonstration of research competence, and not necessarily expect to provide definitive answers to the theoretical questions posed. Students may discuss possible dissertation topics with several faculty members.

Once the student has identified a possible dissertation topic, he or she should secure the support of a faculty sponsor with appropriate research interest. The student, in consultation with the dissertation sponsor, should prepare a proposal on the topic. Development of the proposal requires considerable time and effort; it should include:

- Abstract (1 page)
- A statement of the problem to be investigated
- Research aims of the dissertation
- A synthesis and critique of the literature bearing upon this problem
- A statement of hypotheses or questions

- Description of the research design, including plans for data collection and analysis
- Status of human subjects review
- Timeline

Excluding references and the abstract, **the body of the proposal must not exceed 30 double spaced pages** (using 11 pitch type face or larger). Beyond covering the topics listed above, the Department has no specific expectations regarding the precise format and content of the proposal, which, varies among the social science departments and disciplines. The student's sponsor is responsible for assisting the student in developing a suitable format for the proposal.

### ***Forming the Proposal Defense Committee***

Following GSAS guidelines, **students do not form their committees**. When the faculty sponsor feels that the proposal is ready for a formal presentation, the sponsor requests that the Department form a Proposal Defense Committee and schedule a proposal defense. The faculty sponsor's request is addressed to the Doctoral Program Subcommittee Chair (Jennifer Hirsch). The request includes a working title for the student's dissertation research and recommendations for possible committee members. **Acting on behalf of the Department and after consultation with the student's faculty sponsor, the Chair of the Doctoral Program Subcommittee formally selects the five-member Proposal Defense Committee.**

Although GSAS rules state that the Proposal Defense Committee is composed of a minimum of three faculty members, the Department has elected to appoint the full five-member Defense Committee for the proposal defense. That is, the same committee will be used for both the proposal and dissertation defenses. The composition of the PhD Dissertation Committee follow GSAS rules as summarized below under the Dissertation Defense section.

### ***Proposal Defense***

Once the Department confirms participation of all Proposal Defense Committee members, the Associate Director of Academic Programs schedules the proposal defense. If a proposal defense cannot be scheduled in a timely manner with all five members present, the defense may proceed with a minimum of the sponsor, a member of the Sociomedical Sciences (SMS) subcommittee or Department, and at least one other member from outside the SMS Department. Members not present at the proposal defense are requested to prepare comments on the dissertation proposal and to submit them in writing before or at the time of the defense to the student and faculty advisor, with copy to the Associate Director of Academic Programs and Deputy Chair for Doctoral Study.

There is a great deal of variation in the extent to which students solicit input from members of the dissertation proposal defense committee in advance of the meeting. In some cases, the proposal a student distributes two weeks before the defense will be the first version a faculty member reads. In other cases, in addition to working closely with the sponsor, a student has shared multiple drafts of a proposal with several members of the committee. Although the

primary responsibility for mentoring a student falls to the sponsor, students are encouraged to share their work as it develops, and when the sponsor feels that it is ready, with those members of their committee who are available and willing to provide input at an earlier stage.

It is the candidate's responsibility to distribute **hard** copies of the proposal to all committee members at least two weeks before they meet. **E-mail is not an acceptable means for distribution of the defense version of the proposals to committee member.** Students who reside away from NYC should distribute proposals by US postal services or other mail delivery service. The student is responsible for confirming that all committee members have received proposals in a timely manner. The student may, of course, distribute electronic copies in addition to the hard copy if so requested.

Students are required to attend their proposal defense in person. At the proposal defense, the student should be prepared to make a brief (no more than ten minutes) formal presentation, outlining the project, discussing its methods and substance, and explaining the rationales underlying decisions that were made as the proposal developed. This meeting may be the first time that the sponsor and Proposal Defense Committee have ever come together to discuss the proposal. The meeting should be viewed as a working conference, where the committee takes a critical look at the research plan with the aim of protecting the student from attempting to execute an inadequate or unfeasible plan. Any differences among committee members concerning the adequacy of the plan should be resolved among themselves during the meeting. If committee members agree that there are weaknesses in the plan that are not resolved during the meeting, the student may be asked to revise the proposal and another meeting of the committee may be convened before the proposal is approved.

Target dates for completion of various future steps should be set when the proposal is approved, not to constrain the student, but to give a standard against which to evaluate satisfactory progress. The approved proposal should provide readers with a sufficient sense of the whole to make later review of drafts of individual chapters valuable. Unanimous approval must be obtained from the Committee before the student can proceed with the dissertation.

A copy of the approved proposal should be given to the Associate Director of Academic Programs to be kept on file in the Sociomedical Sciences Office. Successfully defended proposals will be considered for the Department's Eugene Litwak Prize, awarded annually for the best proposal to help support students while they are completing their dissertations.

### ***IRB Requirements***

All students must submit an application to the Columbia University Medical Center Institutional Review Board (IRB) and obtain their approval for any research involving human participants. Even research that will be using data covered by existing IRB protocols, or that does not involve direct contact with human participants must be submitted for IRB review; the determination of whether dissertation research is exempt is the responsibility of the IRB, not the student researcher. Students should develop the IRB protocol at the same time as they begin to write the proposal.

The proposal defense can be scheduled prior to IRB approval (and it is not necessary to include details of submission [actual or planned] in the proposal narrative), but **students must have IRB approval before commencing research**. The Columbia University Medical Center Institutional Review Board is extraordinarily user-friendly, and students are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the IRB's 'office hours' to seek advice on the preparation of their protocols. These preliminary conversations will make it clear whether the protocol presents any particular challenges regarding human subjects protection, how those challenges might be addressed, and what supplementary materials it is necessary to submit. Seeking this advice in advance of submission can mean the difference between a protocol that is approved in 4 weeks and one that creates major delays in the initiation of research. More information is available at [www.cumc.columbia.edu/dept/irb/](http://www.cumc.columbia.edu/dept/irb/). **Students conducting research outside the United States will be required to submit their project for review within that country as well, and so developing a relationship with a host institution is a critical part of any pre-dissertation preparatory work.**

The IRB application must be submitted by the student's sponsor (not the student) through an online system, RASCAL ([rascal.columbia.edu](http://rascal.columbia.edu)). Students should be prepared for the possibility of a lengthy IRB proposal approval process, although this can be avoided by seeking input in advance from IRB staff. Six to eight weeks, or even longer, is not unheard of, and students should take that into consideration when planning. The student's proposal defense includes a brief presentation of the status on the IRB review. It is possible that recommendations made by the committee during the proposal defense may require changes in the research design that may initiate modifications to approved IRB protocols. In addition, if research involves collaboration with other institutions, approval of the modification by their IRB may also be required.

As noted above, faculty without a full-time appointment at Mailman may not serve as the PI for student research protocols, and there are a number of faculty on the list of approved sponsors who fall into that category. In those circumstances, students should consult with their sponsor and identify another committee member who is an SMS faculty member and who can serve as PI of the IRB protocol. The sponsor should be included on the protocol as an investigator and should work with the student in the preparation of the protocol.

All CUMC students, faculty, and staff must complete HIPAA certification and our students must also complete the CITI Human Subjects Protection training. Students may access information and training from <https://research.columbia.edu/content/compliance-training>.

Students are responsible for renewing the IRB approval annually throughout the course of dissertation research, which includes the period of data analysis and writing. In other words, even when data collection has been completed, it is the responsibility of the student to maintain IRB approval. Students who permit their IRB approval to lapse will not be considered in good standing. As part of the completion of the dissertation, students will be expected to present evidence of continuous IRB approval; if the renewal letters are uploaded annually to Sakai when students submit their annual report, this is considered sufficient evidence of continuous approval. Students are also responsible for 'terminating' the IRB protocol when they complete

the doctoral program.

### ***The Dissertation in Progress***

Once the proposal has been approved by the dissertation proposal defense committee and the protocol has received IRB approval or been determined to be exempt, the student may begin dissertation research. The student should keep in close contact with his or her sponsor for suggestions and advice. Each student should work out arrangements with the rest of the committee regarding how the committee wishes to keep abreast of his or her progress.

Committee members are expected to provide written or oral responses to drafts within a reasonable time period. Generally, three weeks to a month should be sufficient time to permit a detailed response to a single chapter. Six weeks should be sufficient time to review a group of chapters, two months for a full draft of a dissertation. Some supervision should be provided during summers, and special arrangements for continuous guidance should be worked out when faculty are on leave or during the summer. It is appropriate, and can be very useful, for a student to sit down with the sponsor and work out a schedule for the submission, review, and revision of dissertation chapters.

There is a great deal of variation in the extent to which members of the dissertation committee read drafts of dissertation chapters. In order to take maximum advantage of the mentorship provided by the full committee, and to reduce the likelihood that at the time of the defense faculty will see major unaddressed flaws in the dissertation research, it is **strongly recommended** that students share a full draft of the dissertation with all members of the committee well in advance of the dissertation defense, and allow time to incorporate whatever feedback committee members provide. The specifics of how committee members would like to be kept abreast of research in progress and to receive drafts and provide feedback should be discussed at the time of the dissertation defense, and should take into account the preferences of the student and the sponsor as well as the availability and specific expertise of committee members. Students who feel that they would benefit from more mentorship than they are receiving from their sponsor or other members of the dissertation committee should discuss the matter directly with Professor Hirsch.

Students should also note that for both the PhD and the DrPH, the approval of a second reader is required before the dissertation can be distributed to the full committee.

### ***Dissertation Grants***

Students are encouraged to apply for external funding to support dissertation research. A list of dissertation grant opportunities is provided (see Appendix C as well as the list of funding for students at [www.mailman.columbia.edu/faculty-staff/research-resources-r2-office](http://www.mailman.columbia.edu/faculty-staff/research-resources-r2-office)).

When preparing such grants, students should consult with the SMS Grants and Contracts Officer, who will provide assistance with preparing the appropriate grant documentation. **However, the**

SMS Business Office requests that all materials be submitted to them at least 10 business days before the grant is due.

### *The Dissertation Defense*

#### **Nomination and Appointment of the Dissertation Defense Committee**

As previously stated, the full Committee (five members) is usually formed at the time of the proposal defense. The responsibility for selecting and recommending Dissertation Defense Committee members rests with the faculty sponsor and Subcommittee Chair. Students may be consulted on, but **do not select their Dissertation Defense Committees**, and should not be put in the position of having to ask particular faculty members to serve on their Dissertation Defense Committee. The Subcommittee Chair issues a formal invitation to potential committee members recommended by the student's sponsor. The student's sponsor may undertake an informal exploration of willingness of faculty to serve in this capacity.

The doctoral defense will be conducted by a final defense committee that is composed of exactly five members, all of whom are expected to be present for the dissertation defense. **Three** of the members of the final defense committee must be **inside examiners** (holding a formal appointment or approved as a dissertation sponsor in the doctoral candidate's home department or program). The list of approved GSAS sponsors is available online at:

<https://gsas.columbia.edu/student-guide/dissertation/doctoral-dissertation-sponsors#sociom>

- 1) Sponsor: a faculty member who has been named as an approved dissertation sponsor *in the degree candidate's program* (SMS). The sponsor is the person who guides you through the dissertation.
- 2) Chair: a faculty member in SMS and is an approved PhD sponsor. The Chair is responsible for making sure the Dissertation Committee follows the formal requirements for dissertation defense. The Chair convenes the defense and moderates the candidate's presentation and committee members' questions and discussions.
- 3) At least one other member in addition to the Sponsor and Chair must be from the list of approved PhD sponsors. The approved list of PhD sponsors in SMS combines all faculty with primary appointments in SMS and/or appointments to the SMS subcommittee. If the sponsor does not hold a full-time appointment at Mailman, another member of the committee who does should be designated as the PI for the student's IRB protocol, with the sponsor included as an investigator.

In addition to the three insider examiners, at least one (but preferably two) of the five must be an outside examiner, defined as:

- i. a faculty member, clinician or practitioner who holds a position at another university or research institution
- ii. a full-time faculty member at Columbia University outside the student's own

- department or program
- iii. a research scientist at Columbia University outside the student's own department or program
- iv. an adjunct professor at Columbia University outside the student's own department or program
- v. a full-time faculty member whose appointment is at Barnard College, Jewish Theological Seminary, or Union Theological Seminary
- OR**
- vi. a full-time faculty member in the student's interdisciplinary program whose field is outside of the student's dissertation field

*In cases where the "outside" member satisfies the criterion vi. above, the department/program must include with the defense a brief explanation with the defense application to clarify how the fifth examiner's primary field differs from the focus of the student's dissertation.*

A committee may include members from outside of the University if the faculty sponsor believes such outsider members bring an expertise or knowledge of the research topic not available among existing CU faculty. The faculty sponsor must assure the Department that the outside member will be able to be present for dissertation defense. The Department does not have funds to cover the transportation expenses that might be incurred by outside members. The names of outside examiners from other University Departments shall be submitted by the Subcommittee Chair to the Dean of GSAS. Outside examiners from other universities must submit evidence of their qualification, in the form of curriculum vitae, for approval by the Dean.

### **Scheduling the Defense**

No defense shall be scheduled until the dissertation sponsor and a second reader have signified that, in their judgment, the dissertation is acceptable and thus ready for a final defense.

It can be complicated to coordinate the schedules of five faculty members and a student, and so arrangements for the examination can take several months to make; students should plan accordingly. When the student and the dissertation sponsor feel that the dissertation has been completed in a satisfactory manner, and the agreement of the Chair of the Subcommittee is secured, an "Application for Final Examination for PhD" is submitted to the Dean of the Graduate School through the Chair of the Subcommittee. This application form should be submitted at least four weeks in advance of the anticipated date of defense. Filing early in the semester is recommended to ensure approval of the Dissertation Defense Committee. The student should contact the Associate Director of Academic Programs prior to submitting this application about scheduling the defense and related details.

Defense examinations are held throughout the academic year. The exact days and times are arranged to suit the convenience of the faculty committee and the student.

**Students must distribute hard copies of the dissertation to all members of the Dissertation**

**Defense Committee at least four weeks prior to the date on which they plan to defend. E-mail is not an acceptable alternative for distribution of the defense version of the dissertation to committee members.**

In addition to filing the application to defend, and distributing copies of the dissertation to committee members, students must be certain that they have met all other requirements of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, i.e., receipt of the M.Phil. degree, and registration for M & F during the term in which the defense will take place.

Following the defense, the student has no further obligation to register, even though revisions may still be in progress and dissertation deposit does not occur for several months.

### **Conduct of the Defense**

At the dissertation defense, which is approximately two hours in length, the student defends the sources, findings, interpretations, and conclusions of dissertation. The candidate may be asked to begin by summarizing, within ten minutes, the theoretical content of the dissertation and the broader significance of key findings. The defense is a closed gathering with only the candidate and members of the Dissertation Defense Committee present. The candidate is expected to show familiarity with the research and literature pertinent to his or her subject and the knowledge relevant to the research questions and methods.

Points made by examiners will naturally divide into substantive and editorial. Generally, a sheet of notes on editorial matters is handed to the candidate by the readers, thereby leaving examiners time for matters of substance.

### **Results of the Defense**

After the two-hour dissertation defense, the student leaves the examination room, and the Dissertation Defense Committee's votes are taken. The student is called back into the room and informed of the results. The following dissertation defense outcomes took effect on January 1, 2017:

Approved as submitted - The committee may ask that minor revisions or corrections be made before the dissertation is deposited. A written description of those minor revisions should be provided to the candidate at the defense. These minor revisions should be completed to the satisfaction of the sponsor within one month after the defense. If for exceptional reasons more time is needed, the candidate may apply for an additional one-month extension by submitting a letter to [gsas-dean@columbia.edu](mailto:gsas-dean@columbia.edu) with the request.

Approved pending revisions - The committee may ask that revisions be made before the dissertation is deposited. A written description of those revisions should be provided to the candidate at the defense or shortly afterward. These revisions should be completed to the satisfaction of the sponsor within six months after the date of the defense. If for

exceptional reasons more time is needed, the candidate may apply for an additional two-month extension by submitting a letter to [gsas-dean@columbia.edu](mailto:gsas-dean@columbia.edu) with the request.

**Referred** - The committee believes that substantial work must be undertaken on the dissertation by the candidate before it can reach a recommendation to award the degree. A detailed written description of the reservations about the examined dissertation should be provided to the candidate at the defense or shortly afterward. At the time of the defense, a subcommittee composed of at least three unanimously agreed upon members of the original committee (and including the sponsor) will be formed. The specified revisions should be completed to the satisfaction of the subcommittee within one year after the date of the defense. A statement from the candidate indicating the specific changes made in response to the committee's request for revision must accompany the revised version, and both be sent to the sponsor. The sponsor will share the statement and the revised version with the members of the defense subcommittee, each of whom must communicate explicitly to the sponsor his or her appraisal of the revisions undertaken. A majority of the subcommittee must approve the revised version for the candidate to be recommended for the degree. The dissertation will then be recommended for award of the degree.

**Fail** - The committee believes that the dissertation is not acceptable, and the candidate will not be recommended for the degree. No candidate may have a second defense unless the dean of GSAS concludes, upon evidence provided either by the candidate or by a member of the committee, that procedural irregularities occurred during the defense.

### **Final Deposit of the Dissertation**

This is the final step to earning the PhD degree. Complete information regarding the deposit is available through the [Deposit Gateway](#). You should also review the [FAQs](#) about the electronic deposit system.

### ***Guidelines for Publishable Papers format Doctoral Dissertation***

In addition to the traditional monograph or book-style format for SMS doctoral dissertations, there is an alternate format for the dissertation: two analytic chapters written in the format of a publishable papers, preceded by a comprehensive literature review also in a format suitable for publication and followed by an integrative concluding chapter. An appendix may also be added if a more complete description of study methodology is required beyond what would conform to standard practice in the methods section of a journal articles. Since norms of scholarly publication vary across the social science disciplines, a student must obtain the approval of his or her sponsor before selecting the publishable papers option, and the sponsor should consult (well in advance of the defense) with the full committee to make sure that they also find this format acceptable. Students selecting this option must also include at the end of their dissertation proposal a working title and potential target journal for the review article and the minimum of two "publishable papers". Each paper would be expected to conform to the submission journal's

format style for, respectively, literature review and original research articles. The committee convened for the proposal defense will approve the list of articles linked to a “potential submission journal” for each paper. Successful defense of the dissertation is not contingent on either acceptance or submission of the publishable papers prior to the defense. The student may change the “potential submission Journal” contingent on sponsor approval.

The publishable papers option provides students a supervised experience in preparing manuscripts appropriate for submission to a scholarly journal, and is intended facilitate the publication of doctoral dissertation research. This format requires that the review and the empirical papers should be publishable. Though it is difficult to define publishable, the committee should adopt standards similar to those used in reviewing papers for peer-reviewed journals similar to those listed in the dissertation proposal. It should be noted that this alternate format may require greater effort from both the student and faculty sponsor than the more traditional thesis because when prepared in this format the dissertation must be comprehensive and thorough, while at the same time being a great deal more succinct than is required of the standard monograph format.

#### **Format of Publishable Papers Dissertation.**

1. A comprehensive literature review of the research literature to be addressed by the publishable papers that follow. The literature review should be of length, format and quality comparable to reviews published in the annual review series or other journal that accepts review articles. For a literature review of a field that includes quantitative research, a meta-analysis type of literature review may also be appropriate and must be assessed against current standards of such reviews such as those promulgated by the Cochrane Collaborative. The literature review must provide the theoretical and empirical context for the publishable papers that follow. A well-written review article for a dissertation would end with a succinct statement of the research questions or hypotheses to be addressed in the empirically grounded papers that follow.
2. At least two papers of publishable quality consistent with the standards of a peer-reviewed journal in the field.
3. A final chapter that integrates and discusses the findings of the papers. It should include discussions of the conclusions of the research and should make recommendations for policy or further research.
4. Optional: An appendix outlining in detail the study methods that would not fit within the normal constraints of methods section for most journal articles. Tables too long and detailed for the text may be included in the appendix.

#### **Dissertation Review Process.**

The process of evaluating for evaluating the publishable papers option is identical to that followed for the traditional book-style dissertation:

- 1) The student selects a faculty sponsor, who also agrees to the publishable papers option, and the faculty sponsor reaches out to the full committee to ensure that they are in agreement;
- 2) The dissertation proposal follows the same guidelines for SMS doctoral dissertation proposals, with the addition of a Table that lists working titles for each proposed publication along with their “potential submission journal”;
- 3) The dissertation committee composition and selection will be identical to those followed for the book-style format, and
- 4) The standards for assessment of dissertation research will be similar to those applied to a book/monographic format, with the additional requirement that to receive a grade of pass with minor revision, appraisal should take into account whether each article would stand alone as a separate publishable article.

Students are not permitted to ‘retroactively’ prepare a dissertation in this format.

### ***Diploma and Graduation***

Diplomas will not be available until after the degree has been awarded officially. The Registrar will notify the student when the diploma is ready; it can be picked up or mailed. If needed, an interim certificate may be obtained from the Registrar indicating that all requirements have been met.

Notice will be sent to the student regarding the Columbia University commencement ceremonies held each year in May. PhD graduates are invited to participate in the University-wide, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, and Mailman School of Public Health ceremonies.

### ***Social Science Requirements for the PhD in Sociomedical Sciences***

Requirements for each of the social science concentrations available within the Sociomedical Sciences program are determined by the collaborating social science Departments in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (Anthropology, History, Psychology, and Sociology). All concentrations carry a 30-credit minimum course requirement.

Advisement: Members of the interdisciplinary Subcommittee on Sociomedical Sciences serve as advisors to students in the program.

The course requirements for each discipline outlined below are developed by SMS faculty in consultation with the directors of graduate study and subcommittee members from the respective disciplinary departments. The requirements are periodically reviewed and revised to be in step with current requirements and course offerings for the department of specialization. Students should bring to their advisor’s attention courses not being offered or SMS requirements that are no longer in accord with current requirements for doctoral students in the department

of specialization. The disciplinary liaison will work with each student to find suitable course substitutions. Discipline liaisons may recommend to the Deputy Chair of Doctoral Studies permanent changes in social science requirements

### ***Anthropology***

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Language: Competency in the language of fieldwork, as measured by a grade of B or higher in an intermediate level course. Students conducting fieldwork in English must demonstrate a reading knowledge of German, French, Spanish, or other major language of anthropological scholarship.

Coursework: 18 points for E credit, 12 points for R credit. In addition to the SMS doctoral seminar, first year students without a strong background in anthropology are urged to take Principles/Applications of Social and Cultural Anthropology in the Anthropology Department. Because theory in anthropology develops out of substantive field-based engagements, generic survey courses may ill serve a student's needs. In consultation with advisors, then, students are urged to take 2 courses with a pronounced theoretical focus, either downtown or in one of the consortium's schools. Two additional requirements: an advanced course in medical or public health anthropology and one in ethnographic methods. The remaining 18 elective credits should be spread across courses covering specific substantive, methodological and/or geographic topics, with particular attention to the development of those tools of inquiry needed to pursue a dissertation subject.

PhD students in the Anthropology concentration fulfill the disciplinary requirements in terms of other program milestones by writing their theme essay under the supervision of a faculty member who is an anthropologist.

### ***History***

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Language: No language requirement.

Coursework: Students take a minimum of 12 points in the Morningside History Department. During the first year, entering students are required to take an introductory colloquium in historiography, (GR8910 / 4 points), which is designed to introduce them to the history and current state of historical scholarship. In addition, students take a course that deals primarily with 19th century history (4 points) and a course that deals primarily with 20th century history (4 points) in the History Department.

Students must take a minimum of 9 points in courses offered through SMS's Center for the History and Ethics of Public Health. These courses include: P8773 Social History of American Public Health; P8747 Ethics of Public Health; P8746 Coercion and Persuasion in Public Health; P8757 Global Politics of Aging; P6785 Poisoned Worlds: Corporate Behavior & Public Health; and P9740 Privacy, Consent & Politics of Public Health Surveillance.

The remaining points consist of electives in history, policy, law, and ethics, and may be taken

throughout the university. It is strongly recommended that at least some of these courses be taken in the History Department to augment the minimum 12 points noted above; however, students should choose these courses in consultation with their advisor in areas appropriate to their research interests.

## ***Psychology***

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Language: No language requirement.

Coursework: 30 points. Students enroll in three required Proseminars during their first year of study (G6001, G6002, and G6003) (9 points); one course in quantitative sciences (this may be Biostatistics, Statistics, Mathematics, or Computer Science and may be taken at the School of Public Health or other CU departments or schools) (3 points); 2 graded advanced seminars at the Psychology Department (6-8 points). Students should enroll in the following courses every semester, barring scheduling conflicts with other required courses:

- PSYC G6600 Supervised Individual Research: pass/fail, 1-4 points per semester. Students are expected to work closely on a research project with a faculty mentor in the Department of Psychology and receive credit for this supervised research apprenticeship. Students should consult with their Psychology Department advisor to determine the number of credits (4 credits are recommended for a “standard” type of research internship with a faculty member in the Psychology Department).
- PSYC G9990 Departmental Colloquium: 0 points per semester.
- PSYC G9397(Fall)/G9398(Spring) Research Seminar in Social & Personality Psychology: pass/fail, 1 point per semester.

Additional electives should be taken as needed to fulfill the 30 point coursework requirement and can be taken in the Psychology Department, other GSAS departments, or Teacher’s College, in consultation with the student’s advisors.

Comprehensive Examinations: Students are required to present a Master’s talk in the Department of Psychology during the Spring semester of their second year of study. The Master’s talk must be based on a research project with data analysis. In preparation for the Master’s talk, students should work closely with their Psychology Department advisor; however, they may present data from either a Psychology or Sociomedical Sciences research project. Students are strongly encouraged to attend the Master’s talk symposium during their first year to become acquainted with the procedure. The Master’s talk provides a forum for students to receive feedback from faculty members and other students on a research project that culminates in a Master’s-type research paper. This research paper should be completed during the third year of study and must be approved by two faculty members in the Psychology Department.

Additional non-academic service requirements: Academic positions require research, scholarship, academic, and service activities. To further prepare students for future academic careers, during their second and third years, they are expected to engage in “service” activities

by assuming a “department job”. This might involve running social activities, meeting prospective students, or mentoring.

Other: Students are not required to complete an annual report with the Psychology Department.

## ***Sociology***

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Language: No language requirement

Coursework: 21 points for E credit, 9 points for R credit. 6 of the points (either for E or R) may be in other Departments of the Graduate School. Courses in the Department of Sociomedical Sciences do not count toward the 30 point requirement, even if cross-listed in the Sociology Department course listings.

### ***Required:***

- Theory: two one-semester courses: G4050 Sociological Theory-Origins and a second to be chosen from G4122, G4165 or G4520.
- Methods: G4097 Design of Social Research. Statistics: 2 one-semester courses for E-credit in Introductory Social Data Analysis (G4076 & G4077) or equivalent. Equivalent courses may be taken at the School of Public Health, other CU Departments or schools, or via the Inter-University Doctoral Consortium.
- Advanced Courses: 2 one semester courses: 1 theory course and 1 advanced methods or statistics course.

Comprehensive Examination: The sociology comprehensive examination is satisfied by preparation of a literature review of the theoretical and empirical research in a subfield of sociology. This is often referred to as the ‘field statement’. Students must submit a brief statement of intent as well as a proposed reading list to two faculty readers, one of whom must have an appointment in sociology. One of the readers chairs the student’s literature review committee. Signed approval of the statement of intent and reading list is required. There are several models for a literature review. It may, for example, follow the traditional format of articles in the Annual Review of Sociology. It may follow the format for a meta-analysis or research synthesis. It may inform, but not constitute, the student’s dissertation proposal or a chapter of the dissertation. It must be broad enough to cover the core ideas of the subfield of specialization. It should demonstrate knowledge about how the subfield is related to both classic and contemporary social theory. The literature review is distinguished from the masters essay (required only of students who come in without a Master’s Degree) by its in-depth attention to the sociological literature. Upon completion of the lit review, the student must submit a statement signed by the first reader signifying successful completion of this requirement. Forms are available from the Associate Director of Academic Programs. The master’s essay demonstrates the student’s mastery of empirical research, the subject matter need not be tied to sociological literature. Constance Nathanson should be consulted for questions regarding satisfying this requirement.

## ***Requirements for the Pre-Doctoral Training Program in Gender, Sexuality and Health (Fellows Only)***

The Department of Sociomedical Sciences supports pre-doctoral training fellowships in Gender, Sexuality, and Health. The program is funded by the Population Dynamics Branch of the National Institute of Child Health and Development. The fellowships are available only to PhD candidates, and eligibility is limited to U.S. citizens and permanent residents. Fellowships will usually be awarded at the time the student enrolls for PhD studies in SMS. Applicants to the PhD program who indicate an interest in the training program are considered for fellowships after they have been accepted for admissions through the normal PhD admissions process.

Fellows must satisfy course requirements in addition to those required for their disciplinary concentration. These include:

- 1) P9719 Critical Perspectives on Research in Gender, Sexuality, and Health
- 2) One of two courses in conceptual and research approaches to sexuality:
  - P8709 Seminar in Sexuality, Gender, Health, and Human Rights
  - P8736 Theories and Perspectives on Sexuality and Health”
- 3) A course in research ethics (usually POPF P9630: Research Ethics & Public Health)
- 4) Attendance at the ongoing faculty-trainee Seminar in Gender, Sexuality, and Health
- 5) A research apprenticeship supervised by program faculty
- 6) Doctoral research focused on a topic in gender, sexuality, and health.

All course work requirements (1, 2, and 3) must be completed prior to or in the semester the student elects to take the methods examination. Students should consult Professor Constance Nathanson or Jennifer Hirsch about specific courses that satisfy requirements 3 and 6.

The training fellowship covers tuition, an annual stipend, health insurance, computer fees, two trips each year to professional meetings, and a nominal amount for other expenses (books, etc.). Support is guaranteed for five years. However, trainees will be encouraged to apply for other funding as soon as possible following their matriculation at Columbia and will be expected to apply for other funding to cover dissertation research and writing.

## ***Summary of PhD Requirements after Course work***

It is the expectation of the Department that students will progress through the entire sequence of milestones within two semesters of completing coursework. Either the theme essay or the methods essay should be completed no later than the final semester of coursework, and so these milestones in total should be completed over the course of three semesters.

### **1. *Methods Essays***

- Meet informally meeting with a Methods Examination Committee faculty member at least one semester before taking the examination.
- Communicate formally to the Chair of the Methods Committee at the beginning of the semester the intention to write the methods essays
- Develops two reading lists with assistance of Methods Examination Committee faculty members.
- Submits reading lists to one or two Methods Committee member(s) for approval by the deadline.
- Submits approved lists to the Associate Director of Academic Programs by the deadline.
- Develops an individual question that will illustrate knowledge of methodological issues and challenges related to supplemental reading list area.
- Submits essay question to one Methods Committee member for feedback, and revises question accordingly.
- Student submits approved question to the Associate Director of Academic Programs, with faculty signature.
- Student writes methods essays:
  - the shared question essay, 3,500-4,500 words long, is distributed to students four weeks before the end of the semester and is due on the last day of exams
  - the individual question, which draws on both readings lists developed by students, is 3,000 words long and is also due on the last day of exams; it can be completed earlier in the semester should a student choose to do so.

### **2. *Theme essay***

- Student chooses a faculty member to work with for the theme essay, and the student in consultation with the faculty member selects two additional members of the Theme Essay Committee

- Students must submit at least one draft of the theme essay to the primary faculty member for comments
- The faculty member is expected to return the draft within one month in order to provide time for student to revise before submitting to full committee.
- The theme essay is due on the last day of exams in the semester in which the student is writing the essay.
- The theme essay is graded by the three-member committee as described above.

### **3. *Additional Social Science Requirements***

- Student consults with social science liaison to determine what additional requirements must be fulfilled.
- In consultation with faculty advisor, student prepares for and completes those requirements.

### **4. *Language Requirement***

- Student consults with social science department to determine language requirements.
- Student arranges for fulfillment of the language requirement in compliance with the specific Department regulations.

### **5. *Dissertation Proposal***

- The dissertation proposal should be defended within 6 months of completing the M.Phil. Students are expected to defend the dissertation proposal by the eighth semester if they enter the program without a Master's degree, and by the sixth semester if they enter the program with a Master's degree.
- Student proposes a dissertation topic and identifies/contacts a faculty sponsor.
- Student develops research topic and writes research proposal, with guidance of sponsor
- Student submits proposal to sponsor for approval.
- Student investigates future steps for IRB application and approval and, when sponsor feels that the dissertation question and methods are sufficiently settled, student submits IRB application under sponsor's name (see notes above about what to do if the sponsor does not hold a full-time appointment at Mailman).
- Department forms Committee.

- Department arranges a proposal defense date.
- Student distributes copies of proposal to Proposal Defense Committee members at least two weeks before defense.
- Student defends proposal. Committee provides comments and suggestions that were made during the defense.
- Once proposal is successfully defended, a copy of the proposal is given to Associate Director of Academic Programs.
- Student awaits IRB approval. Students **may not** initiate data collection for dissertation research until IRB approval is received. Students are responsible for ensuring that the research protocol fulfills IRB requirements and for renewing IRB approval annually until they complete the program.

#### **6. *Dissertation Defense***

- Student should routinely keep in contact with sponsor, who discusses research process and problems. After data collection, sponsor reads preliminary chapters and offers comments and suggestions. Once dissertation is written and sponsor feels that it is ready for defense, sponsor will contact Department to schedule a dissertation defense date.
- Student circulates hard copies of dissertation to the Dissertation Defense Committee at least one month prior to defense.

#### **7. *Post Dissertation Defense***

- Student makes suggested revisions from dissertation defense.
- When all revisions are completed, deposit of the final thesis copies may be made at the Dissertation Office in 107 Low Library. Normally, the student receives the necessary deposit forms at the time of the defense. If needed, the forms are available at the Dissertation Office in 107 Low. Please contact Esmeralda McCormick at 212-854-2854 or email to [es183@columbia.edu](mailto:es183@columbia.edu).
- The degree is awarded at the next conferral date.

## **DrPH PROGRAM**

### ***Administration***

The Doctor of Public Health (DrPH) degree program is designed for students wishing to prepare for teaching, research or advanced administrative or practice positions in the area of sociomedical sciences within the field of public health and evidence-based public health practice. The degree program is administered by the Standing Doctoral Committee of the Mailman School of Public Health, which carries out faculty policy regarding admissions to the doctoral program and upholds the criteria for granting the degree.

The Department has created a Deputy Chair responsible for directing the doctoral programs. The Deputy Chair of Doctoral Programs consults with the Department Chair regarding procedures that require Departmental approval, e.g., formation of Examination and Dissertation Committees, waivers and substitutions for course requirements. The Deputy Chair also works with other faculty on admissions, review of student academic performance, and curriculum. Jennifer Hirsch is currently Deputy Chair of the Doctoral Program.

To assist the Deputy Chair, a faculty member is appointed as the DrPH Director. Among that person's roles are monitoring program requirements and advising students on course requirements. The Director of the DrPH program is Professor Marni Sommer.

### ***Degree Requirements & Registration***

DrPH students must have earned the MPH degree or its equivalent. Students admitted with other master's or doctoral-level degrees in health-related fields are usually required to take a number of pre-doctoral public health courses as prerequisites to doctoral studies.

All five Public Health core courses – Biostatistics, Environmental Sciences, Epidemiology, Health Policy & Management, and Social & Behavioral Sciences – are required pre-admission. To augment the prior core public health coursework, the School requires doctoral candidates to complete an additional course in their first semester, P9070 Integration of Science and Practice (ISP), which focuses on integrating core public health knowledge with practical application through case-based learning. The cases and discussions are developed to focus on more advanced level core competencies including but not limited to: Advocacy, Communication, Community/Cultural Orientation, Critical Analysis, Leadership, Management, Professionalism, and Ethics.

### ***Required Courses and Credits***

A minimum of 36 credits is required for the DrPH degree. No transfer credits will be applied; in no case will credits earned toward a prior degree count toward the required DrPH course credits. The minimum of 36 credits must be earned while in residence at Mailman.

Students may not take required courses pass/fail (unless this is the only grade option available for the course as set by the instructor). Each student is responsible for ensuring that his/her course selection is consistent with timely completion of all course requirements as stated in this handbook. Students may seek waivers of requirements based on substitution of non-Mailman courses consult and follow the procedures outlined on page 52. Please allow reasonable time for review of any waiver request. Not more than 6 of the 36 course work credits may be taken as tutorials.

During their first year, all doctoral students are required to take a social theory course sequence: P8788 Theoretical Foundations of SMS in the fall, and P8789 Contemporary Debates in SMS in the spring. Waivers are not permitted for these courses. Also, as mentioned in the above section on degree requirements, in their first and second semesters all Mailman DrPH students are required to take P9070 Integration of Science and Practice (ISP).

SMS DrPH students must further demonstrate competence in approaching public health and medical research from the perspective of multiple social science disciplines. The requirement may be fulfilled by successfully completing two of the following seven disciplinary courses: P8701 Medical Sociology; P8755 Medical Anthropology; P8767 Health Psychology; P8773 Social History of American Public Health; P6503 Health Economics, which is offered in the Department of Health Policy and Management during the spring semester for non-HPM students; G8545 Anthropology of Affliction, and GR5201 Principles & Applications of Social & Cultural Anthropology, both offered at Morningside Anthropology. Students may also substitute other courses that cover a broad survey of a social science discipline's approach to public health and medicine. The course does not have to be an SMS course, but it must be taught at a graduate level for either masters or doctoral students. Students wishing to substitute one or both discipline courses should submit their request through existing process for waiver of course requirements (see page 21).

In addition, all students must take three methods or advanced statistics courses. One of these must be a quantitative methods or statistics course, and the second must be a qualitative methods course. Public Health course descriptions are listed in the Mailman School Bulletin. There are numerous social science methodology courses taught throughout the University that also meet the advanced methods requirements. Check with your academic advisor or the Associate Director of Academic Programs to confirm that courses meet this requirement.

### ***Practicum***

All public health students in accredited schools of public health in the United States must complete a planned, supervised and evaluated practice experience as part of their public health professional degree program. The practicum should provide the opportunity to apply the concepts and methods of social science and public health learned in the classroom to actual public health problems. As of fall 2017, all DrPH programs at the Mailman School mandate the practicum in addition to doctoral research requirement.

The settings of student practica may vary and the acceptable content of a practicum is flexible to

meet a diverse range of student interests, educational needs, professional objectives, and career goals. However, in all cases the practicum experience must be consistent with the academic goals and objectives of the Mailman School and the Department of Sociomedical Sciences.

Practica can include, but are not limited to: interpretation/presentation of research findings for the general public or for a specific target audience; creation of practice guidelines for a professional organization; completion of a policy statement; design for a community program; developing a plan for a training component in their discipline; or evaluation of a health program.

SMS DrPH students work with their advisors and departmental DrPH coordinators to identify practicum sites and projects. The practicum and any resulting deliverables must be approved by the student's academic advisor and the DrPH academic director.

Students are encouraged to complete the practicum requirement between years 1 and 2 and before undertaking the qualifying exams.

The Office of Field Practice (OFP) is the central office providing support and an array of resources to support and promote student participation in public health field-practice. All students must complete and submit the Scope of Work (SOW) form to ensure that all parties understand and agree on practicum location, supervisor, objectives, activities deliverables, and credits if applicable. It is important to note the completed SOW must be approved before students may begin the practicum.

### ***Continuous Registration***

DrPH students must be continuously enrolled at the Mailman School. This continuous enrollment requirement will be in effect for the 36 credits of academic coursework. Students who register for additional classes must pay the current Mailman School tuition. To be continuously enrolled, after completion of academic coursework, DrPH students must register for one of the following in all spring and fall semesters:

#### Doctoral Research Registration

- RSRH P0001 - charged one credit of tuition - full time status.
- RSRH P0003 - must have department approval - charged one credit of tuition - part time status.

The continuous enrollment policy begins with the semester in which the student first enrolls in the DrPH program and continues through the semester the dissertation is deposited.

### ***Leave of Absence & Readmission***

Columbia University has overarching policies on leaves of absence (voluntary, involuntary, medical, military and others types) to which the Mailman School community adheres:

<http://facets.columbia.edu/voluntary-leave-absence-policy>  
<http://facets.columbia.edu/involuntary-leave-absence-policy>  
<http://facets.columbia.edu/military-leave-absence-policy>

Additional Mailman School Policies for personal leave:

All students are required to be continuously registered. However, certain circumstances may necessitate a student to request or be asked to take a leave of absence, other than for reasons listed above. Any interruption in continuous registration must be discussed with the student's academic department and the Dean of Students Office. Through this discussion, a leave of absence could be a potential option.

All students who will not continue with their registration but who intend to return to their studies must apply for a formal Leave of Absence. Leaves are offered in other circumstances as well. Any request for a leave must be accomplished by completing the Leave of Absence form and a Request to Deviate from Academic Program

All students must meet with their department, secure department approval, and return the form to the Dean of Students Office. Leave of absence requests are generally approved for two semesters with a maximum of four semesters. Exceptions to the two-semester limit will be considered on a case by case basis through a petition to the student's department and final approval by the Dean of Students. Students at 2 years or more of no registration must reapply to the school.

### ***Program Time Limits***

DrPH students are expected to complete course work within two years. Typically, DrPH students take 27 credits during the first year of the program and 6 additional credits during the 3<sup>rd</sup> semester. There is some flexibility, however, and DrPH students may take fewer credits during the first two semesters -a minimum of 3 courses (9 credits)- and make up the difference in the third semester and must complete all 31.5 credits by the fourth semester.

An overall time limit of **seven years** is set from the date of first registration following admission into the doctoral program. This limit applies to both full and part-time students. Periods during which the student is formally granted a leave of absence will not be counted in the seven-year limit. Leaves of absence must be approved both by the Department and the MSPH Standing Doctoral Committee. In order to adhere to the seven-year limit, students are expected to complete the post-coursework examinations (methods, comprehensives, dissertation proposal defense) in three semesters (eighteen months).

### ***Registration Process***

Registration for classes is held at the beginning of each semester and at the beginning of each summer session. You will receive information about these registration periods from the Office of

Student Affairs. Students should check SSOL for any holds on their accounts and to view their next registration appointment times.

Each semester, course schedules for the entire university are published online in the Columbia Directory of Courses ([www.columbia.edu/cu/bulletin/uwb/](http://www.columbia.edu/cu/bulletin/uwb/)). The Mailman School of Public Health publishes a separate course schedule available online at <https://www.mailman.columbia.edu/people/current-students/academics/course-directory>.

Students are not required to meet with the assigned academic advisor to sign up for classes, but it is strongly recommended that they do so. Students should keep in close contact with both their social science and public health advisors.

Many courses require obtaining the instructor's or department approval before a student registers. If approval is required, it will be noted in the Mailman School of Public Health course listings. Students who encounter difficulty registering for courses in their disciplinary departments on the Arts and Sciences campus should seek help from their disciplinary liaison rather than try to resolve these issues on their own.

### ***Holds***

The Office of Student Affairs may prevent a student from registering for classes by placing a hold a student's registration. Examples include academic holds for incomplete courses, library holds for outstanding materials and/or fees, Bursar's Office holds for any money owed, or Health Services holds for failure to comply with immunization requirements. Holds on registration must be cleared before a student will be allowed to register. To clear the hold, the student must settle the outstanding obligation(s) that caused the hold.

### ***Change of Program Period - Add/Drop***

Changes in class schedule may be made during the Add/Drop period, usually occurring the first 2 weeks of classes. There are no extra charges for adding and/or dropping courses during this period. However, because it is less than ideal to join a course without having attended the first weeks, it is recommended that students make every effort to register on time and consult with advisors prior to registration.

### ***Cross Registration***

One of the advantages of attending Columbia University is the ability to integrate one's educational experience at the Mailman School with coursework from other schools at the University. Depending on degree requirements and in consultation with one's advisor and the Associate Director of Academic Programs, Mailman students are encouraged to take appropriate courses from across the University. Cross registration must be done during the change of program period (add/drop) at the start of the term using a paper form available through the Mailman Office of Student Affairs.

In addition to the Columbia Directory of Courses, students may also find courses of interest at Teachers College ([www.tc.columbia.edu/academics/resources/courses/](http://www.tc.columbia.edu/academics/resources/courses/))

There are a few schools that have their own policies and procedures for cross registration. Additional steps and approvals may be required, in addition to the paper form stated above.

Although students may cross-register and take courses offered in any school in the University, their registration must be processed through the school in which they are enrolled. All DrPH students register through the Medical Center Campus registrar. Students should note that semester start and end dates, as well as holiday schedules, may not be the same for all schools in the University, so please consult the calendars for each school.

### ***Incompletes***

There is no automatic grade of “Incomplete” (IN). Students are expected to complete ALL course assignments and exams on schedule by the end of a semester.

An Incomplete (IN) may be given only when a student has met the attendance requirement but certain course assignments have not been completed for reasons satisfactory to the instructor. The instructor may grant an extension, usually for a specified period of time, and usually not more than several weeks. For Mailman School courses students must complete a "Request for Incomplete" form in the Office of Student Affairs and have the faculty agree to and sign the form. After the student has submitted the materials required to complete the work for the class, the instructor will process a change of grade from IN to a letter grade.

Students who carry Incomplete Grades (INs) into a new semester will have the balance of IN credits counted toward the maximum number of credits allowed in the new semester. Because students register for a new semester before the receipt of the prior semester’s grades, students may have to drop courses not required in the new semester’s academic plan. If the balance of IN credits prevent a student from taking the necessary required courses in the new semester, the student may be asked to take a Leave Of Absence until they resolve all INs. All INs carried into a new semester must be resolved before a student may add credits freed up by completed INs.

If the student has not completed work within one year from the end of the semester of registration, the IN grade will be converted to Unofficial Withdrawal (UW), defined as “student did not complete attendance and/or assignments, but failed to withdraw.” A grade of UW will not be changed to a passing grade. In most cases a student will have to register for the course again to complete the course.

### ***Waiver of Course Requirements***

A student may request a waiver or exemption from a specific course requirement if he or she has evidence of having satisfactorily completed a graduate-level course with a grade of B+ or better that is comparable in rigor and scope to that of the required SMS course. Students initiate this

process by preparing a written request. Include in the written statement the SMS course requirement to be waived and brief description of prior course work that is the basis for the request. Attach to the statement both a syllabus for the substitute course and a transcript indicating the final grade for this course. Submit a signed and dated written request, along with the supporting material, to the Associate Director of Academic Programs.

The Associate Director of Academic Programs will route the request for review to a designated faculty member who is familiar with the course content subject to the waiver, and following review, notify the student of the outcome and final decision.

When a waiver for a required course is approved, it indicates that the student has satisfactorily completed the requirement through alternative means to taking the required course. For example: if a DrPH student's waiver is approved for the Introduction to Medical Sociology course, the student has satisfied one of the seven SMS core courses and need only take one course from the remaining choices. It is critical to understand that there is no reduction in course credits towards graduation. The waiver allows the student to substitute an elective course for one that would otherwise be required.

### ***Tutorials***

A tutorial is an individualized course of study in which a student works with a faculty member in a less structured setting than a classroom course. One-to-one student/faculty tutorials may include, for example, participation in major research or other projects, small individual projects, pilot projects, literature review, and field experience. A tutorial may be taken for one, two, or three credits depending on the amount of work it entails.

No more than 20 percent of course work may be taken in tutorials, and no more than 6 credits of tutorials may be taken with any one faculty member. When registering for a tutorial, please submit a Tutorial Permission Form to the Associate Director of Academic Programs.

### ***Methods and Theme Essays***

Before proceeding to the proposal defense, a student must demonstrate his or her readiness to undertake independent research by showing evidence of mastery of i) key substantive and theoretical areas of interest and ii) research methods. Demonstration of mastery in theory and methods has two parts: the theme essay and the methods essays.

- Students are *encouraged* to complete both by the final year in which they are taking courses. They are *required to have completed at least one* (either the methods or the theme essay) by the final semester of coursework and *are required to have completed both by the end of the first semester after completing coursework*. (Students should confer with the Associate Director of Academic Programs to make sure that they understand and comply with the requirements regarding registration status for this period in which they are completing coursework and exams.)

- Students can choose to do both requirements in one semester or to do them in either order over the course of two semesters.
- Students must have completed all required methods courses by the end of the semester prior to completing the methods essays.
- **The student should inform the Associate Director of Academic Programs of plans to proceed with these milestones so that a formal review of the student's record can be made to verify that all course work requirements have been met.**
- Students in each PhD discipline also have discipline-specific requirements, either written or oral, which they must complete before moving on to the dissertation proposal defense. These are described below in the “Social Science Requirements for the PhD in Sociomedical Sciences”. Language requirements and discipline-specific requirements must be completed before the dissertation proposal defense takes place.

### ***Methods Essays***

No later than the semester after completing all required courses, students will write two “methods essays”. Students must complete all required methods courses during the term before the one in which they write these essays, though they may still be taking elective methods courses (or, to be sure, courses not oriented towards methods) in the term in which they take the exam. The Methods Committee is responsible for administering and grading the essays. Faculty members are selected to serve on the committee for their expertise in areas of social science methods (including a variety of qualitative and quantitative research methods) and include faculty who teach the Department’s methods courses.

There are two parts to the methods essays:

#### **A. The shared question:**

Students must, at the beginning of the semester in which they intend to complete their methods essay, communicate to the Chair of the Methods Committee their intention to do so. For this essay, students will respond to a question developed by the faculty methods committee for students taking the exam that semester. The question will be distributed to students four weeks before the end of the semester and will provide an opportunity for students to demonstrate competence in the range of research methods required of doctoral students trained in the department. (The methods committee will meet, review syllabi of required methods courses, articulate topics and approaches in which students are required to demonstrate mastery, and communicate that to students.)

The question, which will be appropriate for students across disciplines, will require students both to articulate key elements of a methodologically diverse research approach and to demonstrate deep familiarity with some of the particular methodological challenges of research in their major area of expertise. The shared question essay, essay should be approximately 3,500-4,000 words.

## **B. The individual question**

Students should begin thinking about and planning for the individual question essay before the term in which they take it. One step of planning for the individual essay question is to meet with one of the members of the Methods Committee at least one semester prior to taking the exam. At this meeting, the student should discuss with the faculty member his or her preliminary ideas for the student-submitted question and the reading list on which the student will draw in preparing to answer the question. The faculty member will offer suggestions for constructing the reading list and preparing the question, as well as suggest appropriate examination members to review the lists and questions. This meeting is preliminary to and not a substitute for subsequent meetings that review the specific content of lists and questions. The individual question essay should be approximately 3,000 words.

### ***Preparation and Process***

Students should begin thinking about and planning for the exam before the term in which they take it.

The examination covers the knowledge and concepts contained in three reading lists: the core methods list is prepared by the Department, representing material which all doctoral students are expected to have mastered and the second and third are prepared by the student. Students may substitute readings that are comparable or more advanced than the core readings. Students should check with a member of the Methods Committee, however, before making substitutions.

In addition, students will be responsible for preparing two supplemental reading lists that reflect their own professional areas of interest and specialization. One of the areas must be selected from those enumerated in the core list (statistical concepts and analytic techniques, survey research, experimental design, field methods, historical methods, secondary data analysis, and evaluation research). Students will draw on this list, as well as the Department's core methods list, in answering the shared question for the exam.

The second list will cover either methodological techniques and issues that are likely to be utilized in the student's future professional work (including but not limited to dissertation research), another area on the core list, or a well-defined area of methodology not covered in the core list. This is the list on which students will rely in developing and answering the individual question.

Students should prepare the second and third reading lists in consultation with members of the Methods Committee. A methods committee member may approve both lists, or only one list (in which case, the student would get approvals from two different methods committee members), as appropriate. Please review the list of members' specialties (see Appendix B Methods Examination Committee Members) in deciding the most appropriate faculty members to consult with for your lists. Other Columbia faculty may serve on the Methods Committee in an ad hoc capacity if a student wishes to prepare a reading list on social science methods that falls outside the expertise of existing members. Students should seek the approval of the Chair of the Methods

Committee for an outside examiner early in the development of the reading lists.

### ***Distribution and Evaluation***

The methods essay questions (shared & individual) will be distributed to students four weeks before the end of the semester and the students' essays are due before the winter break.

The returned methods essays are distributed to members of the Methods Committee, and are graded by at least two readers. All the members of the Methods Committee consider and approve the results (high pass, pass, low pass, or fail), which are conveyed to exam-takers within a month. Students also received written comments on each essay, approximately one month after the exam. Graders will assign a grade to the essay of high pass, pass, low pass or fail. Students whose essay receives a low pass or a fail from more than one grader will be expected to revise and resubmit the essay. In the event that after multiple re-takes the student is unable to develop an essay that earns a passing grade, he or she will be asked to leave the program. The Chair of the Methods Committee reports the results in writing to the Chair of the Department, the Deputy Chair of Doctoral Programs, the DrPH Director, and the Associate Director of Academic Programs.

### ***Theme Essay***

In their final year of coursework (or, as described above, in the following semester), students will write and submit a "theme essay", which presents a scholarly overview of the state of knowledge and of the major approaches to research within the student's chosen research area. The focus of the essay is more specific than "public health" or any particular social science discipline, but is broader than the dissertation topic. For example, a student planning on doing dissertation research exploring obesity and the built environment might write a review essay on public health research on obesity; a student whose dissertation would explore the rise of gluten-free eating might review and critique the history of food fads and movements in 20th century America; or a student planning do to develop and test a novel approach to sexuality education might write about the development, implementation and impact of sexuality education on sexual practices. A primary function of the essay is to demonstrate the student's breadth of competence beyond the specific questions and approaches of the dissertation. Students are strongly encouraged to choose a topic that will lay the groundwork for the dissertation, but a student who changes the focus of his or her dissertation research after completing the theme essay will not be required to do another theme essay.

The Theme Essay is designed to maximize flexibility and student self-determination, and it can be written in a wide variety of formats. The only formal requirement regarding format and content is that the plan be approved by the student's Theme Essay Committee (which will include the student's intended dissertation sponsor and two additional readers, chosen by the student in consultation with the sponsor). Different formats may be more or less appropriate for different students and projects. Possible formats include (but are not limited to) a review paper or a handbook chapter.

- As part of the process of developing the theme essay, students will submit an outline and the names of two proposed additional readers to the sponsor by the end of the prior semester.
- Students must submit at least one draft of the theme essay to the sponsor for comments, and the sponsor is expected to return the draft within one month in order to provide time for student to revise before submitting to full committee.
- The theme essay is graded by the three-member committee as either high pass, pass, low pass or fail. Students whose theme essay receives a low pass or a fail will be expected to revise and resubmit the essay. In the event that after multiple retakes the student is unable to develop an essay that earns a passing grade, he or she will be asked to leave the program.

After successfully completing the methods essays and the theme essay, a student is ready to defend his or her dissertation proposal.

## ***Dissertation and Graduation***

### ***Selecting a Sponsor***

At some point towards the end of coursework or, at the latest, while developing the reading lists for the theme essay, the student formally designates a faculty sponsor. By the time a student reaches this point in the program, he or she should have a well-developed idea for dissertation research and should have identified a faculty member under whose mentorship he or she plans to conduct independent research. It is expected (though not required), for example, that students will have written their theme essay under the supervision of the faculty member with whom they intend to work for their dissertation research. It is at this point, after the student begins drafting the formal dissertation proposal, that the student's primary mentor is referred to as a 'sponsor' rather than an 'advisor'.

It is expected that the sponsor will be selected from the list of SMS approved sponsors. If a student wishes to work with a Columbia University faculty member not on the list, the student should consult with the Deputy Chair for Doctoral Studies. Adjunct faculty are eligible to serve as sponsors, provided that a full-time Columbia faculty member, who is an approved sponsor, serves as a co-sponsor, and accepts that designation as a genuine responsibility. The main criterion is to find a faculty member who is willing to devote the necessary time and effort to mentor the student through the dissertation process. Students should consult the Deputy Chair if they have any questions as to whether a faculty member can sponsor a DrPH dissertation. Students can also approach the Director of the Doctoral Program and ask for help, either in reaching out to a particular faculty member or in figuring out who might be the most appropriate sponsor, given the students' interests and disciplinary focus.

For DrPH students, the dissertation project constitutes the Integrated Learning Experience.

There are faculty on the list of approved sponsors who do not hold full time appointments at Mailman (for example, faculty who are emeritus or whose primary appointment is in another school). This CUMC IRB does not permit faculty without a full-time appointment at Mailman to serve as the PI for student research protocols. In those circumstances, students should consult with their sponsor and identify another committee member who is an SMS faculty member and who can serve as PI of the IRB protocol. The sponsor should be included on the protocol as an investigator and should work with the student in the preparation of the protocol.

### ***The Dissertation Proposal***

Although the first formal step in the dissertation process is the selection of a faculty sponsor, preliminary work on a proposal usually starts much earlier, since it develops organically from the student's prior work in classes, seminars, and term papers; formal approval of the proposal, however, is given upon successful defense of the dissertation proposal. **DrPH students are expected to submit a proposal within six months following completion of the other program requirements and, as noted above, by the sixth semester of enrollment in the program. Students who fail to prepare and defend a dissertation proposal in a timely fashion after completing other program requirements may be asked to take a leave of absence or to withdraw from the program.**

The formal approval of a proposal provides assurance that completion of the proposed study will provide the basis for an acceptable dissertation. The dissertation proposal is a description of an idea which is worthy of research, and which has been described in a manner showing the student's ability to plan an independent investigation. The proposal stage should not be a problem if the student has been thinking about and discussing possible topics earlier in the program. Class discussions, readings, and exchanges with faculty and other students contribute to the proposal's development.

Many students (particularly those who intend to collect their own data) spend the summers between the first and second or second and third years engaged in some form of preliminary dissertation research. Students are reminded that all individuals conducting research are required to submit a protocol for review by the Institutional Review Board. This review can take several months and so it is important to submit it with sufficient lead time. In order to be permitted to draw on this preliminary research in one's dissertation proposal, a student must file a copy of the IRB approval for that research with Ms. Andrea Constancio, Associate Director of Academic Programs.

### ***Preparing the Proposal***

The dissertation demonstrates the student's capacity to conduct original research and to present findings in a scholarly manner. The student uses his or her social science knowledge and skills to investigate a problem in the health field. The student's research may involve the collection of data, or may be an analysis, from a new point of view, of data that has been previously collected. The student should view the dissertation as a demonstration of research competence, and not

necessarily expect to provide definitive answers to the theoretical questions posed. Students are urged to discuss possible dissertation topics with several faculty members.

Once the student has identified a possible dissertation topic, he or she should secure the support of a faculty sponsor with appropriate research interest. The student, in consultation with the dissertation sponsor, should prepare a proposal on the topic. Development of the proposal requires considerable time and effort; it should include:

- Abstract (1 page)
- A statement of the problem to be investigated
- Research aims of the dissertation
- A synthesis and critique of the literature bearing upon this problem
- A statement of hypotheses or questions
- For DrPH dissertation only: A statement of the implications for public health practice. The statement must describe how findings from the dissertation project can be used to influence public health programs, policies or systems. The DrPH dissertation must include one chapter or section discussing implications for public health practice.
- A description of the methodological approach, including research design and plans for data collection and analysis
- Status of human subjects review
- Timeline

Excluding references and the abstract, **the body of the proposal must not exceed 30 double spaced pages** (using 11 pitch type face or larger). Beyond covering the topics listed above, the Department has no specific expectations regarding the precise format and content of the proposal. The student's sponsor is responsible for assisting the student in developing a suitable format for the proposal.

### ***Forming the Proposal Defense Committee***

**Students do not form their own committees.** When the faculty sponsor feels that the proposal is ready for a formal presentation, the sponsor requests that the Department form a Proposal Defense Committee and schedule a proposal defense. The faculty sponsor's request is addressed to the Deputy Chair (Jennifer Hirsch). The request includes a working title for the students' dissertation research and recommendations for possible committee members. **Acting on behalf of the Department and after consultation with the student's faculty sponsor, the Chair of the Doctoral Program Subcommittee formally selects the five-member Proposal Defense Committee.**

The Proposal Defense Committee for the DrPH is composed of a minimum of five faculty members. At least two of the faculty must hold the rank of Associate Professor or higher, and at least one must be from outside the Department of Sociomedical Sciences. A senior faculty member, who is not the candidate's dissertation sponsor, is designated to be the impartial Chair of the Committee. The slate is presented to the Standing Doctoral Committee for approval.

Special justification must be provided for the inclusion of adjunct faculty, or faculty from outside Columbia. **It is the Department's, not the student's, responsibility to schedule the dates and locations for the dissertation proposals and dissertation defenses.**

### ***Proposal Defense***

Once the Department confirms participation of all Proposal Defense Committee members, the Associate Director of Academic Programs schedules the proposal defense. If a proposal defense cannot be scheduled in a timely manner with all five members present, the defense may proceed with a minimum of the sponsor, a member of the Department and at least one other member from outside of SMS. Members not present at the proposal defense are requested to prepare comments on the dissertation proposal and to submit them in writing before or at the time of the defense to the student and faculty advisor, with copy to the Associate Director of Academic Programs and Deputy Chair for Doctoral Study.

There is a great deal of variation in the extent to which students solicit input from members of the dissertation proposal defense committee in advance of the meeting. In some cases, the proposal a student distributes two weeks before the defense will be the first version a faculty member reads. In other cases, in addition to working closely with the sponsor, a student has shared multiple drafts of a proposal with several members of the committee. Although the primary responsibility for mentoring a student falls to the sponsor, students are encouraged to share their work as it develops, and when the sponsor feels that it is ready, with those members of their committee who are available and willing to provide input at an earlier stage.

It is the candidate's responsibility to distribute **hard** copies of the proposal to all committee members at least **two weeks** before they meet. **E-mail is not an acceptable means for distribution of the defense version of the proposals to committee member.** Students who reside away from NYC should distribute proposals by US postal services or other mail delivery service. The student is responsible for confirming that all committee members have received proposals in a timely manner. The student may, of course, distribute electronic copies in addition to the hard copy if so requested.

Students are required to attend their proposal defense in person. At the proposal defense, the student should be prepared to make a brief (no more than 10 minutes) formal presentation, outlining the project, discussing its methods and substance, and explaining the rationales underlying decisions that were made as the proposal developed. This meeting may be the first time that the sponsor and Proposal Defense Committee have ever come together to discuss the proposal. The meeting should be viewed as a working conference, where the committee takes a critical look at the research plan with the aim of protecting the student from attempting to execute an inadequate and unfeasible plan. Any differences among committee members concerning the adequacy of the plan should be resolved among themselves during the meeting. If the committee members agree that there are weaknesses in the plan that are not resolved during the meeting, the student may be asked to revise the proposal and another meeting of the committee may be convened before the proposal is approved.

Target dates for completion of various steps should be set when the proposal is approved, not to constrain the student, but to give a standard against which to evaluate satisfactory progress. The approved proposal should provide readers with a sufficient sense of the whole to make later review of drafts of individual chapters valuable. Unanimous approval must be obtained from the Committee before the student can proceed with the dissertation.

It is the responsibility of the Proposal Defense Committee to inform the Associate Director of Academic Programs of the approval of the dissertation proposal. A copy of the approved proposal should be given to the Associate Director of Academic Programs to be kept on file. Successfully defended proposals will be considered for the Department's Eugene Litwak Prize, awarded annually for the best proposal to help support students while they are completing their dissertations.

### ***IRB Requirements***

All students must submit an application to the Columbia University Medical Center Institutional Review Board (IRB) and obtain their approval for any research involving human participants. Even research that will be using data covered by existing IRB protocols, or that does not involve direct contact with human participants must be submitted for IRB review; the determination of whether dissertation research is exempt is the responsibility of the IRB, not the student researcher. Students should develop the IRB protocol at the same time as they begin to write the proposal. The proposal defense can be scheduled prior to IRB approval (and it is not necessary to include details of submission [actual or planned] in the proposal narrative), but **students must have IRB approval before commencing research**. The CUMC Institutional Review Board is extraordinarily user-friendly, and students are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the IRB's 'office hours' to seek advice on the preparation of their protocols. These preliminary conversations will make it clear whether the protocol presents any particular challenges regarding human subjects protection, how those challenges might be addressed, and what supplementary materials it is necessary to submit. Seeking this advice in advance of submission can mean the difference between a protocol that is approved in 4 weeks and one that creates major delays in the initiation of research. More information is available at [www.cumc.columbia.edu/dept/irb/](http://www.cumc.columbia.edu/dept/irb/). **Students conducting research outside the United States will be required to submit their project for review within that country as well, and so developing a relationship with a host institution is a critical part of any pre-dissertation preparatory work.**

The IRB application must be submitted by the student's sponsor (not the student) through an online system, RASCAL ([rascal.columbia.edu](http://rascal.columbia.edu)). Students should be prepared for the possibility of a lengthy IRB proposal approval process, although this can be avoided by seeking input in advance from IRB staff. Six to eight weeks, or even longer, is not unheard of, and students should take that into consideration when planning. The student's proposal defense includes a brief presentation of the status on the IRB review. It is possible that recommendations made by the committee during the proposal defense may require changes in the research design that may initiate modifications to approved IRB protocols. In addition, if research involves collaboration with other institutions, approval of the modification by their IRB may also be required.

As noted above, faculty without a full-time appointment at Mailman may not serve as the PI for student research protocols, and there are a number of faculty on the list of approved sponsors who fall into that category. In those circumstances, students should consult with their sponsor and identify another committee member who is an SMS faculty member and who can serve as PI of the IRB protocol. The sponsor should be included on the protocol as an investigator and should work with the student in the preparation of the protocol.

All CUMC students, faculty, and staff must complete HIPAA certification and our students must also complete the CITI Human Subjects Protection training. Students may access information and training from <https://research.columbia.edu/content/compliance-training>.

Students are responsible for renewing the IRB approval annually throughout the course of dissertation research, which includes the period of data analysis and writing. In other words, even when data collection has been completed, it is the responsibility of the student to maintain IRB approval. Students who permit their IRB approval to lapse will not be considered in good standing. As part of the completion of the dissertation, students will be expected to present evidence of continuous IRB approval; if the renewal letters are uploaded annually to Sakai when students submit their annual report, this is considered sufficient evidence of continuous approval. Students are also responsible for 'terminating' the IRB protocol when they complete the doctoral program.

### ***The Dissertation in Progress***

Once the proposal has been approved by the dissertation proposal defense committee and the protocol has received IRB approval or been determined to be exempt, the student may begin dissertation research. The student should keep in close contact with his or her sponsor for suggestions and advice. Each student should work out arrangements with the rest of the committee regarding how the committee wishes to keep abreast of his or her progress.

Committee members are expected to provide written or oral responses to drafts within a reasonable time period. Generally three weeks to a month should be sufficient time to permit a detailed response to a single chapter. Six weeks should be sufficient time to review a group of chapters, two months for a full draft of a dissertation. Some supervision should be provided during summers, and special arrangements for continuous guidance should be worked out when faculty are on leave or during the summer. It is appropriate, and can be very useful, for a student to sit down with the sponsor and work out a schedule for the submission, review, and revision of dissertation chapters.

There is a great deal of variation in the extent to which members of the dissertation committee read drafts of dissertation chapters. In order to take maximum advantage of the mentorship provided by the full committee, and to reduce the likelihood that at the time of the defense faculty will see major unaddressed flaws in the dissertation research, it is **strongly recommended** that students share a full draft of the dissertation with all members of the committee well in advance of the dissertation defense, and allow time to incorporate whatever feedback

committee members provide. The specifics of how committee members would like to be kept abreast of research in progress and to receive drafts and provide feedback should be discussed at the time of the dissertation defense, and should take into account the preferences of the student and the sponsor as well as the availability and specific expertise of committee members. Students who feel that they would benefit from more mentorship than they are receiving from their sponsor or other members of the dissertation committee should discuss the matter directly with Professor Hirsch.

Students should also note that for both the PhD and the DrPH, the approval of a second reader is required before the dissertation can be distributed to the full committee.

### ***Dissertation Grants***

Students are encouraged to apply for external funding to support dissertation research. A list of dissertation grant opportunities is provided (see Appendix C as well as the list of funding for students at [www.mailman.columbia.edu/faculty-staff/research-resources-r2-office](http://www.mailman.columbia.edu/faculty-staff/research-resources-r2-office)).

When preparing such grants, students should consult with the SMS Grants and Contracts Officer, who will provide assistance with preparing the appropriate grant documentation. **However, the SMS Business Office requests that all materials be submitted to them at least 10 business days before the grant is due.**

### ***The Dissertation Defense***

#### ***Nomination and Appointment of the Dissertation Committee***

As previously stated, the full committee (five members) is usually formed at the time of the proposal defense. The responsibility for selecting and recommending Dissertation Defense Committee members rests with the faculty sponsor and Deputy Chair of the Doctoral Program. **Students** may be consulted on, but **do not select their Dissertation Defense Committees** and should not be put in the position of having to ask particular faculty members to serve on their Dissertation Defense Committee. The Deputy Chair issues a formal invitation to potential committee members recommended by the student's sponsor. The student's sponsor may undertake an informal exploration of willingness of faculty to serve in this capacity.

The Dissertation Defense Committee shall be composed of five members, all of whom are expected to be present for the dissertation defense:

The Sponsor, who is an approved DrPH sponsor, is the person who guides you through the dissertation.

The Chair, who is a tenured or senior faculty with a primary appointment in SMS. The Chair is responsible for making sure that the Dissertation Defense Committee follows the formal requirements for dissertation defense. The Chair convenes the defense and moderates the candidate's presentation and committee members' questions and discussions.

Three committee members must be SMS faculty members and two must be outsiders, either from other Columbia Departments and/or schools or universities. If the sponsor does not hold a full-time appointment at Mailman, another member of the committee who does should be designated as the PI for the student's IRB protocol, with the sponsor included as an investigator.

A committee may include members from outside the University, if the faculty sponsor believes such outsider members bring an expertise or knowledge of the research topic not available among CU faculty. The faculty sponsor must assure the Department that the outside member will be able to be present for the dissertation defense. The Department does not have funds to cover the transportation expenses that might be incurred by outside members. The names and contact information of outside examiners from other University Departments shall be submitted by the Associate Director of Academic Programs. Outside examiners from other universities must submit evidence of their qualifications, in the form of curriculum vitae, for approval by the Dean.

### **Scheduling the Defense**

No defense shall be scheduled until both the dissertation sponsor and a second reader have signified that, in their judgment, the dissertation is acceptable and thus ready for a formal defense.

It can be complicated to coordinate the schedules of five faculty members and a student, and so arrangements for the examination can take several months to make; students should plan accordingly. When the student and dissertation sponsor feel that the dissertation has been completed in a satisfactory manner, the sponsor shall inform the Deputy Chair of the Doctoral Program and the Associate Director of Academic Programs and request that a time and date for the defense be scheduled.

Dissertation defenses are held throughout the academic year. The exact days and times are arranged to suit the convenience of the faculty committee and the student.

**Students must deliver hard copies of the dissertation to all member of the Dissertation Defense Committee at least four weeks prior to the date on which they plan to defend. E-mail is not an acceptable means for distribution of the defense version of the dissertation to committee members.** Students who reside away from NYC should distribute copies by US postal services or other mail delivery service. The student is responsible to confirm that all committee members received the copies in a timely manner. The student may, of course, distribute electronic copies in addition to the hard copy if so requested.

### **Conduct of the Defense**

The student and all committee members are expected to be present in person at the dissertation defense. The dissertation defense is usually two hours in length. At the time of the defense, the Dissertation Defense Committee usually meets briefly in closed session to outline the themes to be covered during the examination. The candidate and public are then invited into the

examination room. The dissertation is defended by the student with respect to its sources, findings, interpretations and conclusions. The candidate is expected to show familiarity with the research and literature pertinent to his or her subject and the knowledge relevant to the research questions and methods. The candidate may be asked to begin by summarizing, within ten minutes, the theoretical content of the dissertation and the broader significance of key findings. Following the overview, the committee members ask the candidate to defend the validity of the research and the importance of the findings.

Points made by the examiners will naturally divide into substantive and editorial. Generally, a sheet of notes on editorial matters is handed to the candidate by the reader, thereby leaving examining time for matters of substance. The public audience does not generally ask questions of the candidate, although the Chair of the Committee may allow questions of clarification to be posed by members of the audience.

### **Results of the Defense**

After the two-hour dissertation defense, the student (and anyone else who is not a member of the committee and who has been present) leaves the examination room and the Dissertation Defense Committee, in closed session, judges the acceptability of the dissertation. To be judged acceptable, the dissertation must meet current standards in the student's dissertation topic, and must add to the existing knowledge or concepts in the field. For those candidates whose dissertations are deemed acceptable pending minor revisions, the Chair of the Committee shall, at the conclusion of the defense, call for a closed vote of committee members as to whether the degree should be awarded distinction. A unanimous vote is required. The student is called back into the examination room and informed of the results. Three outcomes are possible:

Pass - The dissertation is acceptable subject to minor revision (mainly editorial). Upon satisfactory completion of the required revisions, as judged by the Chair of the Dissertation Committee, the student is recommended for the DrPH degree. The student should deposit the revised dissertation no later than six months after the date of the dissertation defense.

Incomplete - The dissertation is deemed acceptable, subject to major revision. Upon satisfactory completion of the required revisions, as judged by three members of the committee, the student is recommended for the DrPH degree. The Chair of the Dissertation Defense Committee shall delegate the responsibility for the revisions to a subcommittee made up of three members of the original committee. All revisions must be completed and the dissertation deposited no sooner than three months, and no later than one year from the date of the dissertation defense.

Fail - The dissertation is **not acceptable**, and the student is not recommended for the DrPH degree. However, the likelihood of this happening is small if the student has worked closely with the faculty sponsor and has received adequate guidance. Only in extraordinary circumstances may a candidate have a second final examination, i.e., the

student may be given the opportunity to present to the Deputy Chair, within ten years, a body of independent and original published scholarly material which, if acceptable to the Deputy Chair, may be defended and, if done successfully, may result in the awarding of the DrPH degree.

### **Final Deposit of the Dissertation**

Dissertations approved with **minor revisions** required must be deposited in the Office of the Dean within **six months** of the defense date. Dissertations approved with **major revisions** required must be deposited within **one year** of the defense date.

Once the student has successfully defended the dissertation, the last remaining academic requirement is to complete your dissertation deposit. The examining committee may have directed the student to make minor revisions to the dissertation. Once these revisions are complete, the student may begin the deposit process. There is a possibility for a processing fee applied to the electronic deposit of the dissertation, and students should check in with the Office of Student Affairs after the defense regarding this fee.

There are three steps to completing the deposit:

1. Obtain verification from sponsor or ad hoc committee (major revisions) that all required revisions have been made and that the dissertation has been approved for deposit.
2. Submit the required Survey of Doctorates online: [sed-ncses.org/GradDateRouter.aspx](http://sed-ncses.org/GradDateRouter.aspx)
3. Upload and submit a PDF copy of the dissertation: [www.etdadmin.com/cumc.columbia](http://www.etdadmin.com/cumc.columbia)

There are specific formatting requirements for the dissertation. Visit the GSAS website to view the guide to formatting: [gsas.columbia.edu/content/formatting-guidelines](http://gsas.columbia.edu/content/formatting-guidelines)

**One final note: students should not leave this process for the last day of a deposit deadline.** Mailman OSA does its best to provide feedback regarding formatting and other matters as quickly as possible, but it is THE STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY to ensure that all parts of the deposit are completed by the deadline, including a correctly formatted dissertation. OSA reviews every dissertation submitted; uploading the file a few days before the deadline ensures feedback on formatting and other matters in a timely manner.

### ***Guidelines for Publishable Papers format Doctoral Dissertation***

In addition to the traditional monograph or book-style format for SMS doctoral dissertations, students may select an alternate format for the dissertation: two analytic chapters written in the format of a publishable papers, preceded by a comprehensive literature review also in a format suitable for publication and followed by an integrative concluding chapter. An appendix may also be added if a more complete description of study methodology is required beyond what would conform to standard practice in the methods section of a journal articles. Since norms of scholarly publication vary across the social science disciplines, a student must obtain the approval of his or

her sponsor before selecting the publishable papers option, and the sponsor should consult (well in advance of the defense) with the full committee to make sure that they also find this format acceptable. Students selecting this option must also include at the end of their dissertation proposal a working title and potential target journal for the review article and the minimum of two “publishable papers”. Each paper would be expected to conform to the submission journal’s format style for, respectively, literature review and original research articles. The committee convened for the proposal defense will approve the list of articles linked to a “potential submission journal” for each paper. Successful defense of the dissertation is not contingent on either acceptance or submission of the publishable papers prior to the defense. The student may change the “potential submission Journal” contingent on sponsor approval.

The publishable papers option provides students a supervised experience in preparing manuscripts appropriate for submission to a scholarly journal, and is intended facilitate the publication of doctoral dissertation research. This format requires that the review and the empirical papers should be publishable. Though it is difficult to define publishable, the committee will adopt standards similar to those used in reviewing papers for peer reviewed journals similar to those listed in the dissertation proposal. It should be noted that this alternate format may require greater effort from both the student and faculty sponsor than the more traditional thesis because when prepared in this format the dissertation must be comprehensive and thorough, while at the same time being a great deal succinct than is required of the standard monograph format.

#### **Format of Publishable Papers Dissertation.**

1. A comprehensive literature review of the research literature to be addressed by the publishable papers that follow. The literature review should be of length, format and quality comparable to reviews published in the annual review series or other journal that accepts review articles. For a literature review of a field that includes quantitative research, a meta-analysis type of literature review may also be appropriate and must be assessed against current standards of such reviews such as those promulgated by the Cochrane Collaborative. The literature review must provide the theoretical and empirical context for the publishable papers that follow. A well-written review article for a dissertation would end with a succinct statement of the research questions or hypotheses to be addressed in the empirically grounded papers that follow.
2. At least two papers of publishable quality consistent with the standards of a peer-reviewed journal in the field.
3. A final chapter that integrates and discusses the findings of the papers. It should include discussions of the conclusions of the research and should make recommendations for policy or further research.
4. Optional: An appendix outlining in detail the study methods that would not fit within the normal constraints of methods section for most journal articles. Tables too long and detailed for the text may be included in the appendix.

### **Dissertation Review Process.**

The process of evaluating for evaluating the publishable papers option is identical to that followed for the traditional book-style dissertation:

- 1) The student selects a faculty sponsor, who also agrees to the publishable papers option, and the faculty sponsor reaches out to the full committee to ensure that they are in agreement;
- 2) The dissertation proposal follows the same guidelines for SMS doctoral dissertation proposals, with the addition of a Table that lists working titles for each proposed publication along with their “potential submission journal”;
- 3) The dissertation committee composition and selection will be identical to those followed for the book-style format, and
- 4) The standards for assessment of dissertation research will be similar to those applied to a book/monographic format, with the additional requirement that to receive a grade of pass with minor revision, appraisal should take into account whether each article would stand alone as a separate publishable article.
- 5) The Publishable Papers option requires the same rules for depositing. Please review the instructions for the DrPH electronic deposit on pg 66.

Students are not permitted to switch to another format after having defended the proposal.

### ***Diploma and Graduation***

The DrPH degree is awarded three times during the academic year - in February, May and October. The student must submit an application for the degree to the Office of Student Affairs by the appropriate date as specified in the MSPH bulletin.

### ***Summary of DrPH Requirements after Course work***

It is the expectation of the Department that students will progress through the entire sequence of milestones within eighteen months (three semesters) of completing coursework. DrPH students are expected to defend the dissertation proposal by their sixth semester in the program.

#### ***1. Methods Essays***

- Meet informally meeting with a Methods Examination Committee faculty member at least one semester before taking the examination.
- Communicate formally to the Chair of the Methods Committee at the beginning of the semester the intention to write the methods essays

- Develops two reading lists with assistance of Methods Examination Committee faculty members.
- Submits reading lists to one or two Methods Committee member(s) for approval by the deadline.
- Submits approved lists to the Associate Director of Academic Programs by the deadline.
- Develops an individual question that will illustrate knowledge of methodological issues and challenges related to supplemental reading list area.
- Submits essay question to one Methods Committee member for feedback, and revises question accordingly.
- Student submits approved question to the Associate Director of Academic Programs, with faculty signature.
- Student writes methods essays:
  - the shared question essay, 3,500-4,500 words long, is distributed to students four weeks before the end of the semester and is due on the last day of exams
  - the individual question, which draws on both readings lists developed by students, is 3,000 words long and is also due on the last day of exams; it can be completed earlier in the semester should a student choose to do so.

## **2. *Theme essay***

- Student chooses a faculty member to work with for the theme essay and the student, in consultation with the faculty member, selects two additional members of the Theme Essay Committee
- Students must submit at least one draft of the theme essay to the primary faculty member for comments
- The faculty member is expected to return the draft within one month in order to provide time for student to revise before submitting to full committee.
- The theme essay is due on the last day of exams in the semester in which the student is writing the essay.
- The theme essay is graded by the three member committee as described above.

## **3. *Dissertation Proposal***

- The dissertation proposal should be defended within six months of completion of exams and by the end of the sixth semester in the program.

- Student proposes a dissertation topic and identifies/contacts a faculty sponsor.
- Student develops research topic and writes research proposal, with guidance of sponsor
- Student submits proposal to sponsor for approval.
- Student investigates future steps for IRB application and approval and, when sponsor feels that the dissertation question and methods are sufficiently settled, student submits IRB application under sponsor's name (see notes above about what to do if the sponsor does not hold a full-time appointment at Mailman).
- Department forms Committee and arranges a proposal defense date.
- Student distributes copies of proposal to committee members at least two weeks before defense.
- Student defends proposal. Committee provides comments and suggestions that were made during the defense.
- Once proposal is successfully defended, a copy of the proposal is given to the Associate Director of Academic Programs.
- Student awaits IRB approval. Students **may not** initiate data collection for dissertation research until IRB approval is received. Students are responsible for ensuring that the research protocol fulfills IRB requirements and for renewing the IRB protocol approval until the program is completed.

#### **4. *Dissertation Defense***

- Student should routinely keep in contact with sponsor, who discusses research process and problems. After data collection, sponsor reads preliminary chapters and offers comments and suggestions. Once dissertation is written and sponsor feels that it is ready for defense, sponsor will contact Department to schedule a dissertation defense date.
- Student circulates full dissertation to Dissertation Defense Committee at least one month prior to defense date.

#### **5. *Post Dissertation Defense***

- Student makes suggested revisions from dissertation defense.
- Once revisions are approved, student arranges for deposit of the dissertation.
- The degree is awarded at the next conferral date.

## **Appendix A**

### **Doctoral Program Subcommittee on Sociomedical Sciences**

Chair: Jennifer Hirsch, Professor of Sociomedical Sciences  
722 W. 168<sup>th</sup>St., 5<sup>th</sup> floor, 212-305-1185, jsh2124

Vice Chair: David Rosner, Professor of Sociomedical Sciences and History  
722 West 168<sup>th</sup> St., 9<sup>th</sup> Floor, 212-304-7979, dr289

Vice Chair: Robert Shapiro, Professor of Political Science  
713 International Affairs, 212-854-3944, rys3

John Allegrante, Professor of Sociomedical Sciences and Health Education,  
Health and Behavior Studies  
530 Thorndike Hall, 212-678-3960, allegrante@exchange.tc.columbia.edu

Ronald Bayer, Professor of Sociomedical Sciences  
722 West 168<sup>th</sup> St., 9<sup>th</sup> Floor, 212-305-1957, rb8

Peter Bearman, Professor of Sociology  
814 International Affairs, 212-854-3094, psb17

Elizabeth Blackmar, Professor of History  
323 Fayerweather, 212-854-3016, eb16

Myron Cohen, Professor, Department of Anthropology  
757 Schermerhorn, 212-854-1739, mlc5

James Colgrove, Professor of Sociomedical Sciences  
722 West 168<sup>th</sup> St., 9<sup>th</sup> Floor, 212-305-1957, jc988

Andrew Davidson, Vice Provost and Professor (Population and Family Health)  
305 Low Library, 212-854-6313, ard2

Bruce Dohrenwend, Professor of Social Science in Psychiatry and Epidemiology  
100 Haven Ave., Tower 3, #19H (P.I. Box 8), 212-795-0211, bpd1

Geraldine Downey, Professor and Chair of Psychology  
402C Schermerhorn, 212-854-8718, gd20

Robert Fullilove, Professor of Clinical Sociomedical Sciences  
Associate Dean for Community and Minority Affairs  
722 West 168<sup>th</sup> St., 9<sup>th</sup> Floor, 212-305-0195, ref5

Denise Kandel, Professor of Sociomedical Sciences  
60 Haven Ave., B-4 (P.I. Box 20), 212-304-7070, Ext. 1, dbk2

Constance Nathanson, Professor of Clinical Sociomedical Sciences  
722 W. 168th St., 5th Floor, 212-305-1593, can2003

Brendan O'Flaherty, Professor of Economics  
807B International Affairs Building, 212-854-2449, bo2

David Rothman, Bernard Schoenberg Professor of Social Medicine and  
Professor of History  
650 W. 168th St., Room 1-138, 212-305-4096, djr5

Lesley Sharp, Professor of Anthropology, Barnard College, Professor of  
Sociomedical Sciences  
411A Milbank, 212-854-5428, lsharp@barnard.edu

Karolynn Siegel, Professor of Sociomedical Sciences  
722 W. 168<sup>th</sup> St., 9<sup>th</sup> floor, 212-304-5578, ks420

**Appendix B**  
**2018-2019 Methods Committee Members & Essay Dates**

Morgan Philbin	Qualitative and ethnographic research methods;
David Rosner <i>(on leave fall 2018)</i>	Historiography and archival methods
Gina Wingood	Evaluation, survey research methods, research design
Patrick Wilson, Chair	Survey research methods, measurement, research design, statistical methods (generally), longitudinal data analysis; Secondary: Grounded theory, mixed methods research

*Note: Additional members may be added for each semester, based on the methodical expertise and students taking the exam.*

**Due Dates**

	Fall 2018	Spring 2019
Methods Overview Meeting	TBD	TBD
Approved lists and question due.	11/2/18	3/29/19
Exam distributed	11/16/18	4/12/19
Exam due	12/14/17	5/10/19

## **Appendix C**

### **Selected Dissertation Grant Opportunities**

This is a partial list. Students may also wish to consult the list of funding opportunities for graduate students provided by the Research Resources Office (R2):

[www.mailman.columbia.edu/information-for/research-resources-r2/graduate-students](http://www.mailman.columbia.edu/information-for/research-resources-r2/graduate-students).

#### **Soros Foundation**

The Paul and Daisy Soros Fellowships for New Americans: Available to US permanent residents, or naturalized U.S. Citizen who are under the age of 30.

[www.pdsoros.org/](http://www.pdsoros.org/)

#### **National Environmental Health Association**

[NEHA/AAS Scholarship Awards](#): Available to applicants pursuing a degree in Environmental Health Sciences and/or Public health (<http://www.neha.org/scholarship/scholarship.html>)

#### **Association of Schools of Public Health**

Internship & Fellowship Programs – various opportunities, see <https://internships.aspph.org>

#### **Public Health Association of NYC**

Goldmann Student Merit Award

Purpose: The Public Health Association of New York City (PHANYC) is calling for papers written by students dealing with public health in New York City. Papers will be reviewed for entry into the Goldmann Student Merit Award Competition, presented annually by PHANYC. The aim of the competition is to foster student involvement in professional public health activities and to promote critical thinking on important health issues. A first prize of \$200 and a second prize of \$100 will be awarded.

[www.phanyc.org/about/awards.html](http://www.phanyc.org/about/awards.html)

#### **National Institutes of Health**

All SMS Doctoral Students who are U.S. citizens or permanent residents should strongly consider applying for a Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award. For pre-doctoral level applicants (that is, for students who are currently working on their doctoral degree). This is known as an F31 award (there is also an F30, which is an individual award specifically for students doing a combined MD/PhD program). There is a great deal of information about how to apply for an NRSA Fellowship on the Mailman School Research Resources page:

<http://www.mailman.columbia.edu/faculty-staff/research-resources-r2-office/funding-resources/funding-resources-graduate-students>

## **Appendix D Student Prizes**

The following are prizes for doctoral students awarded by SMS. Students may submit articles for the Elinson award. Faculty nominate students for the remaining awards.

### **Elinson Prize**

For a published article by SMS students that best exemplifies sociomedical research. To be eligible, the article must be published or accepted for publication in a peer reviewed journal. The student must be the sole or first author. The article must have been written while in the Department and the student's SMS affiliation is explicitly acknowledged in article. A prize winner is not eligible to complete in the year following the award.

### **Litwak Prize**

For the best dissertation proposal submitted by an SMS Doctoral Student. Candidates for the Litwak Prize are nominated by the student's proposal defense committee. They should be in the upper 20% of all dissertation proposals.

### **Benton Prize**

For the dissertation that best exemplifies application of Sociomedical Science Research to Public Health Practice or Policy. Eligible applications are SMS students who successfully defended their Dissertation in the preceding year. Candidates for the Benton prize are unanimously nominated by their dissertation committee as among the top 10% of all SMS dissertations. A member of the committee must submit a brief nominating statement outlining the merits of the dissertation for this prize.

Student work eligible for these prizes must have been completed and nominations submitted during the year **ending March 31**.

## Appendix E

### Faculty Research Interests

**Aidala, Angela (aaa1)**, Associate Research Scientist (Ph.D. - Sociology). Micro (individual dispositions, beliefs, choices) and macro (cultural systems, economic structures) interlinkages in the etiology and impact of drug use, health, and illness behaviors; the family and intergenerational relations; research methodology.

**Bayer, Ronald (rb8)**, Professor of Sociomedical Sciences (Ph.D. - Political Science). Ethical and social policy issues in health; AIDS and screening for AIDS.

**Caton, Carol (clc3)**, Professor of Clinical Sociomedical Sciences (in Psychiatry) (Ph.D. - Sociology). Epidemiology of homelessness, drug use, and severe mental illness, psychosocial and family studies of people with severe mental illness; evaluation of community mental health and substance abuse treatment programs.

**Chowkwanyun, Merlin, (mc2028)**, Assistant Professor of Sociomedical Sciences (PhD, MPH). History of public health; health social movements; racial inequality; environmental health and toxic substances policy; immigration; GIS; oral history, interviewing; archival research; text-mining, databases, cloud/parallel computing methods

**Colgrove, James (jc988)**, Professor (Ph.D. – Sociomedical Sciences), Vaccination; Government responsibility for public health; the relationship between individual rights and communal responsibilities from the 19th century to the present; the role of the law and other forms of coercion in public health; ethical issues in public health; harm reduction and substance use policy.

**DiAquoi, Raygine (rcd60)**, Assistant Professor of Sociomedical Sciences (EdD, Sociology of Education). Critical Race Theory; racism over the life course; racial socialization; racial inequality; interviewing, photo elicitation/visual elicitation methods.

**Fullilove, Robert (ref5)**, Professor at Columbia University Medical Center of Sociomedical Sciences (Ed.D.). AIDS epidemiology effects of racism on health; educational achievement; drug abuse and AIDS risk behaviors.

**Giovenco, Daniel (dg2984)**, Assistant Professor of Sociomedical Sciences (PhD, MPH). Tobacco control policy and disparities in tobacco use; impact of marijuana legalization; population survey data analysis; GIS and community mapping techniques; neighborhood field data collection.

**Gooden, Lauren (lkg2129)**, Assistant Professor at Columbia University Medical Center of Sociomedical Sciences (PhD-Epidemiology). Areas of HIV testing and prevention; HCV prevention and treatment; and access to and engagement in care.

**Hatzenbuehler, Mark (mlh2101)**, Associate Professor of Sociomedical Sciences (Ph.D., Clinical Psychology). Mental health of lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) populations; the influence of laws and social policies (e.g., anti-bullying policies, same-sex marriage policies) on LGB health; structural forms of stigma and discrimination; measuring stigma, prejudice and discrimination in health disparities research; social/ecological determinants of health among stigmatized populations.

**Hernandez, Diana (dh2494)**, Assistant Professor of Sociomedical Sciences (PhD-Sociology). Areas of poverty and social inequality; race, ethnicity and immigration; health, law and public policy and qualitative methods and evaluation.

**Hirsch, Jennifer S. (jsh2124)** - on leave 2018-19

Professor of Sociomedical Sciences (Ph.D. - Anthropology and Population Dynamics). Gender, sexuality, and reproductive health; U.S.-Mexico migration and transnational communities; HIV/AIDS (heterosexual transmission, cultural and political-economic approaches); the application of anthropological theory and methods in public health.

**Hopper, Kim (kh17)**, Professor of Clinical Sociomedical Sciences (PhD - Sociomedical Sciences/Medical Anthropology). Homelessness; the "de facto" public mental health system; recovery from severe psychiatric disorders; ethnographic methods; ethics and research.

**Kunzel, Carol (ck60)**, Professor of Clinical Sociomedical Sciences and Dental Community Health (Ph.D. - Sociology). Clinician behavior; social-behavioral models of clinical decision-making; diffusion of innovation; adherence to clinical guidelines; early oral cancer detection; access of HIV+ patients to dental care; sociology of the professions.

**Markowitz, Gerald (gem67)**, Adjunct Professor of Sociomedical Sciences (Ph.D. - History). History of occupational and environmental health; history of public health.

**Metsch, Lisa (lm2892)**, Stephen Smith Professor and Chair of Sociomedical Sciences (Ph.D. - Sociology).

Health promotion research, social policy research, social/structural interventions, health services research in primary care settings, substance abuse policy research, women's health, public health interventions in oral health care settings. Multi-level intervention development, implementation, and evaluation for moving persons at risk and living with HIV across the HIV treatment cascade/HIV care continuum.

**Nathanson, Constance (can2003)**, Professor at Columbia University Medical Center of Sociomedical Sciences (Ph.D. - Sociology). Comparative cross-national politics and sociology of public health; health-related social movements; gender and sexuality; gender and health outcomes; reproductive health; sociology of health and medicine.

**Oppenheimer, Gerald (go10)**, Professor at Columbia University Medical Center of Sociomedical Sciences (Ph.D. - History; M.P.H. - Epidemiology). History of HIV/AIDS; history of public health; history of epidemiology, particularly heart disease epidemiology; history of social medicine; history of race and research.

**Philbin, Morgan (mp3243)**, Assistant Professor of Sociomedical Sciences (PhD, MHS). Social policies/structural factors; Gender and sexuality; Biomedical HIV prevention; adolescent health; sexual minority health; health disparities; substance use; qualitative and ethnographic research methods.

**Rosner, David (dr289)** - on leave fall 2018

Professor of Sociomedical Sciences (also History) (Ph.D. - History). History of public health; history of urban health; race and mental health; occupational and environmental disease; health in New York City; history of hospitals and medical care.

**Schrimshaw, Eric (es458)**, Associate Professor at Columbia University Medical Center of Sociomedical Sciences (PhD - Psychology). Social relationships and health/well-being; social support and conflict; disclosure and concealment of stigmatized identities; sexual relationships and risk behaviors; adaptation to living with HIV/AIDS; gay, lesbian, bisexual adolescent health and development; behaviorally bisexual men; qualitative and quantitative methodologies.

**Shelton, Rachel (rs3108)**, Assistant Professor of Sociomedical Sciences (ScD- Society, Human Development & Health; MPH). Racial/ethnic and socioeconomic-based disparities in cancer screening and preventive health behaviors; adherence and decision-making regarding HPV vaccine, colorectal, breast, prostate, and cervical cancer screening; development, evaluation, and dissemination of cancer prevention/control interventions, particularly for low-income and medically underserved populations; Lay Health Advisor and Patient Navigation programs; role of social, cultural and contextual factors in influencing health behaviors and outcomes.

**Siegel, Karolynn (ks420)**, Professor of Sociomedical Sciences (also Social Work) (Ph.D. - Sociology). Psychosocial oncology; psychological adjustment to chronic or life threatening illness; AIDS; childhood bereavement; stress and coping; illness and mental health; aging.

**Sivaramakrishnan, Kavita ( ks2890 )** Assistant Professor of Sociomedical Sciences (PhD - History) Global health history; international health and politics of disease surveillance, history of public health and society in south Asia; population health politics; historical and comparative perspectives on age and aging; health and volunteering across cultures; history of chronic disease in colonial and contemporary settings, WHO and history of social determinants of health; nonwestern medicine and traditions of ethics, healing and professionalization

**Sommer, Marni (ms2778)**, Associate Professor of Sociomedical Sciences (DrPH). Gender and sexuality; global health; adolescent health; qualitative and participatory research methods; intersection of puberty and girls' education; Tanzania, Eritrea, sub-Saharan Africa.

**Staudinger, Ursula M. (ums2103)**, Director, Aging Center; Professor of Sociomedical Sciences and Psychology (PhD - Psychology). Opportunities and challenges of increases in average life expectancy; lifespan psychology; positive plasticity of aging (e.g., cognition or personality); aging in the work context; resilience in old age; the development of wisdom over the life span.

**Wilson, Patrick (pw2219)**, Associate Professor of Sociomedical Sciences (PhD – Psychology), community psychology, HIV/AIDS prevention and health promotion in ethnic and sexual minority populations, ecological-level influences to mental and physical health, and program evaluation and community research.

**Wingood, Gina (gw2326)**, Professor of Sociomedical Sciences (ScD- Society & Health; MPH) Research focuses on the design, implementation, evaluation and dissemination of HIV prevention programs for African American women and adolescents in clinical and non-clinical settings (i.e. church settings). Research portfolio in women's health, social justice, dissemination and implementation science and; reduction of stigma associated with HIV and diabetes. Assess efficacy of prevention interventions using self reported outcomes, biological outcomes and social media.

## Appendix F Useful Contacts

### **AIMS (Addiction Illness: Medical Solutions)**

212-305-3989

[www.cumc.columbia.edu/student/health/medical/addiction.html](http://www.cumc.columbia.edu/student/health/medical/addiction.html)

### **Center for Student Wellness**

212-304-5564 and 212-304-5560

studentwellness@columbia.edu

[www.cumc.columbia.edu/students/wellness/aboutcsw.html](http://www.cumc.columbia.edu/students/wellness/aboutcsw.html)

### **CUMC IT Services**

212-305-4357, option 5

5help@columbia.edu

[www.cumc.columbia.edu/it/about/service-desk/index.html](http://www.cumc.columbia.edu/it/about/service-desk/index.html)

### **Financial Aid - GSAS**

gsas-finaid@columbia.edu

### **Financial Aid - Mailman**

212-305-4113

SphFinAid@columbia.edu

[www.mailman.columbia.edu/prospective-students/financial-aid](http://www.mailman.columbia.edu/prospective-students/financial-aid)

### **Housing Office**

212-305-HELP (4357, Option #2)

cumc.housing@columbia.edu

[www.cumc-housing.columbia.edu/](http://www.cumc-housing.columbia.edu/)

### **International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO)**

212-854-3587

isso@columbia.edu

[www.columbia.edu/cu/isso](http://www.columbia.edu/cu/isso)

### **Office of Disability Services**

212-304-7029

disability@columbia.edu

[health.columbia.edu/services/ods](http://health.columbia.edu/services/ods)

### **Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action**

212-854-551

[eoaa.columbia.edu/](http://eoaa.columbia.edu/)

### **Office for Student Affairs**

212-342-3128

### **Ombuds Office**

212-304-7026

ombuds@columbia.edu

[www.columbia.edu/cu/ombuds/contact/](http://www.columbia.edu/cu/ombuds/contact/)

### **Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Program**

212-854-3500

[health.columbia.edu/sexual-violence-response-milestones](http://health.columbia.edu/sexual-violence-response-milestones)

### **Student Health**

212-305-3400

[www.cumc.columbia.edu/student/health/](http://www.cumc.columbia.edu/student/health/)

### **Student Services for Gender-Based and Sexual Misconduct**

212-854-1717

[www.sexualrespect.columbia.edu](http://www.sexualrespect.columbia.edu)

## Appendix G SMS PhD Tracking Sheet

### Program Requirement Checklist (Coursework 60 credit minimum)

Course (credits) - Public Health Requirements (30 total)	Semester Planned	Semester Completed
P6104 Biostatistics (3)		
P6400 Epidemiology (3)		
SMS Doctoral Seminar: P8788 Theoretical Foundations (3)	Fall 2018	
SMS Doctoral Seminar: P8789 Contemporary Debates (3)	Spring 2019	
<b>Core SMS Requirements - Choose 2 of 7</b>		
P8704 Medical Sociology (3)		
P8755 Medical Anthropology (3)		
P8767 Health Psychology (3)		
P8773 Social History of Public Health (3)		
P6503 Introduction to Health Economics (3)		
G8545 Anthropology of Affliction (3)		
GR5201 Principles & Applications Social & Cultural Anthropology (3)		
Qualitative Methods (3)		
Quantitative Methods (3)		
Elective 1 (3)		
Elective 2 (3)		
<b>Social Science Requirements - 30 credits coursework</b>		
Masters Essay or transfer credit: ____ RUs / ____ Credits		
Language Proficiency (Anthropology students only)		
Oral Exam (History students only)		
Masters Talk (Psychology students only)		
Literature Review/Field Statement (Sociology students only)		
<b>Addition Program Requirements:</b>		
Methods Essay		
Theme Essay		
Proposal Defense		
Dissertation Defense		

## Appendix H SMS DrPH Tracking Sheet

### Program Requirement Checklist (Coursework 36 credit minimum)

Course (credits)	Semester Planned	Semester Completed
SMS Doctoral Seminar: P8788 Theoretical Foundations (3)	Fall 2018	
SMS Doctoral Seminar: P8789 Contemporary Debates (3)	Spring 2019	
P9070 Integration of Science and Practice (ISP) (3)	Fall 2018 <u>and</u> Spring 2019	
<b>Core SMS Requirements - Choose 2 of 7</b>		
P8704 Medical Sociology (3)		
P8755 Medical Anthropology (3)		
P8767 Health Psychology (3)		
P8773 Social History of Public Health (3)		
P6503 Introduction to Health Economics (3)		
G8545 Anthropology of Affliction (3)		
GR5201 Principles & Applications of Social & Cultural Anthropology (3)		
Qualitative Methods (3)		
Quantitative Methods (3)		
Methods Elective (3)		
SMS Elective 1 (3)		
SMS Elective 2 (3)		
General Elective 1 (3)		
General Elective 2 (3)		
<b>Addition Program Requirements:</b>		
Practicum	Summer 2019	
Methods Essay		
Theme Essay		
Proposal Defense		
Dissertation Defense		