

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON  
Madison, Wisconsin 53706

*DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY  
1180 OBSERVATORY DRIVE*

*8128 SOCIAL SCIENCE BLDG  
PHONE (608) 262-4863*

May 9, 2001

Dear

I am delighted to hear that you will be joining us in the fall. This letter is about what happens next.

First, please KEEP US INFORMED about your contact information (address, telephone, email) during the summer. This is most easily done by sending email to or calling Sandy Ramer (262-3805, [ramer@ssc.wisc.edu](mailto:ramer@ssc.wisc.edu)) or Mary Powers (262-4863, [mpowers@ssc.wisc.edu](mailto:mpowers@ssc.wisc.edu)). ALSO report your current address to the Graduate School ([gradadmiss@mail.bascom.wisc.edu](mailto:gradadmiss@mail.bascom.wisc.edu)). You need to do both: the Graduate School does not have access to our records, and we do not have access to theirs.

Registration information is not mailed to International applicants. Nevertheless, if you have email please get in touch with me, since we can reserve places in some courses if necessary. You may pick up your information at the A.W. Peterson Building after you arrive. If you have not completed course selection before you arrive, you should meet with Professor Oliver in August before making your final selections. If you have not received your I-20 form or need information on that, please contact the Office of Graduate Admissions, 228 Bascom or call (608)262-2433.

1. You may register for fall classes by touchtone (telephone) after July 9. You will be able to change your mind after you are here, but it will be helpful to give you some advice in the next few weeks so that we can reserve a seat for you in classes that may close out. Do not worry if your situation is too complex for long-distance advising; we can work things out once you are here.

2. There are three different resources you should consult for choosing fall classes. The course schedule is still changing and evolving for a variety of reasons, including the hiring of new faculty and the recent adoption of university scheduling software which still has a number of glitches. If things seem confusing or inconsistent, keep asking questions until we get it worked out.

A. A photocopy of the printed Timetable for sociology. This is out of date in places, as it went to press many months ago, but contains some information not available elsewhere.

B. A list of fall sociology courses which I have prepared which gives information on the appropriateness of particular courses for new graduate students with various backgrounds.

C. The on-line University timetable, which gives the latest information about seats available and times/places of course sections. NOTE: to learn the details for a particular course, click on the brackets [] under "Go to Sections." The specific URL for sociology's listing is:

**<http://timetable.doit.wisc.edu/cgi-bin/TTW3/TTW3.navigate.cgi?20011+crses/d900.html>**

You can also navigate to this site by following links from <http://www.wisc.edu>: click on "timetable" on the home page, "timetable" again on the next page, "fall timetable" on the next page, then "departments." then "S", then "sociology."

3. Some principles about choosing courses.

A. You are required to take Soc 700, 1 credit. This will be taught on Thursdays 4-6:00 PM. Each week, a different faculty member will give a lecture summarizing a research area in sociology. Attendance is the only requirement. This is an important orienting experience.

B. The typical student takes three “regular” (3 credit) courses (not reading courses or “brownbag” training seminars) besides Soc 700. Usually they end up with 10 credits in all. You are not allowed to enroll in more than 12 credits as a graduate student.

C. Most of you will want to attend one or more of the area training seminars or "brownbags" listed on the course descriptions pages. However, except for a few of you who have formal traineeships who need to take a particular course to keep your funding, it is not necessary to enroll in these for credit. You may **not** enroll in these for more than one credit in your first year.

D. We previously communicated with most of you by email regarding your statistics placement. We are including another copy of the statistics information in case you need it. Please communicate with me or Prof. Charles Halaby if you have any questions about your proper placement; we can also fine tune this when you arrive. NOTE: If you are waived out of 361 or 362, you will need to execute a formal waiver form for your file, which you can do after you arrive.

E. Sociological theory, 773, is required for new grads and you should plan to take it this fall. If you have had a graduate sociological theory course and believe you should be waived out of 773, you will need to consult with Prof. Charles Camic. He will need to see a copy of your syllabus and possibly of papers you have written. He can be reached by email at Camic@ssc.wisc.edu. A study of primary sources (the theorists themselves, not just books about the theorists) is required for a waiver. If you do receive a waiver, you will need to execute a formal waiver form for your file, which you can do after you arrive.

F. Graduate school is about learning to do independent research, and this involves learning some sociology in the areas that interest you, not just meeting course requirements. You should definitely try to take at least one course in a substantive area. You should also consult with the faculty in your areas of particular interest to see if they have recommendations about course sequences or prerequisites. For example, if you are interested in demography, you should take 663 (Population and Society) this fall and take Demographic Techniques (674) in the spring. If you have a strong undergraduate or master's background in sociology, you are probably adequately prepared for many graduate seminars; if your background is not in sociology, you may be better off taking courses numbered below 900. However, the course number is not a reliable guide to course difficulty, so also see the notes about particular courses. Remember, when in doubt, ASK SOMEBODY. We expect students to consult with instructors to determine whether a particular course is a good fit with their experiences and interests. I can suggest people to communicate with for particular issues. Most sociology faculty are easily reached by email; you can find email addresses in the on-line directories available at the university's home page ([www.wisc.edu](http://www.wisc.edu)) or the sociology department's home page ([www.ssc.wisc.edu/soc](http://www.ssc.wisc.edu/soc)). I have included instructors' emails in the fall course list.

G. You CAN take courses in departments other than Sociology, and eventually will have to for a minor. However, we think you should become familiar with as many sociology faculty as possible in your first semester, and recommend you take sociology courses. If you find something from another department that seems particularly important, consult with me.

H. You need to check the TIMES at which courses are offered to see that you don't try to take two courses taught at the same time. We worked very hard to try to eliminate overlaps among courses graduate students would want to take, but there are more courses than time slots, and some overlaps inevitably remain. Please do not ask us to reschedule courses around your needs: I assure you that any change would just create a new conflict. Remember, you check times by clicking the [] under "go to sections" in the on-line timetable.

I. You should not only pick out the three courses (in addition to Soc 700) that you want to take, but you might think of one or two alternatives, just in case.

J. If you have not had an undergraduate (or graduate) level course in sociological research methods or its equivalent (e.g. psychological methods), you will need to take such a course as a deficiency. This should be a course giving an introduction to quantitative data collection and basic research design principles, including

measurement of variables, hypothesis testing, and sampling. We have previously communicated with people whom we believe need to take this course, but you should communicate with me if you have any questions about this, as such a background is almost essential for your first few years of graduate education.

**4. After you have considered your course options for fall, you should communicate with me for advice.** I am very easy to reach by email (oliver@ssc.wisc.edu), and this is usually the best method of communication. However, you are also welcome to telephone me. I work at home a lot, and you are welcome to call me at my home at 608-829-3692; you can also call my office at 608-262-6829. I expect to be out of Madison June 21-24 and August 18-26, and may take other short trips out of town. Messages can be left on the answering machine at home and with a secretary in the office (after 5 rings). I will keep the Graduate Program Assistant, Sandy Ramer, informed of my schedule should unforeseen circumstances arise or in case you have difficulty reaching me. Please call her at 608-262-3805 during business hours (roughly 9 am - 5 pm Monday through Friday) if you are having difficulty contacting me. There are many questions which she can answer without me.

**5.** Once we have decided what is available and what you should take, you are set to formally register. In the middle of June you will receive information from the Registrar's Office regarding how to register by touch-tone phone. New graduate students will be able to register beginning July 9, according to your assigned time.

**6.** Please plan to arrive in Madison by August 28. Please make a commitment to attend our departmental **New Graduate Student Orientation on Thursday, August 30** at 3:30-5:30 in room 8417 Social Science. You will also be receiving information from the Graduate School about other orientation activities on August 28 & 29.

I look forward to seeing you in August. Best wishes and do keep in touch. Do not hesitate to call me or Sandy Ramer (262-3805) or Mary Powers (262-4863) if you have any questions or concerns. And again, do not hesitate to contact me by telephone or email.

Cordially,

Pamela Oliver  
Director of Graduate Studies

Enclosures

**P.S. We may have saved spaces for you in stats and methods courses. However, you must still register for these courses.**

Graduate information can be found at: <http://www.wisc.edu/grad/> and <http://www.ssc.wisc.edu/soc/>

P.S. You can find out information about housing opportunities at this website: <http://www.wisc.edu/grad/gs/students/beyond.html#23>. While some new graduate students will choose to live alone, and others live with spouses/partners/family they come with, we suggest that you also consider shared arrangements, such as cooperatives, shared apartments, or housing. In addition to being more economical, shared housing can provide new graduate students with companionship when they first arrive in Madison, and roommates can make it easier to find your way around. You may want to look for a shared situation with other graduate students, who may be quieter and more studious than most undergraduates.