Graduate Student Handbook

Department of Consumer Science
University of Wisconsin

PhD in Human Ecology: Consumer Behavior and Family Economics

Students Admitted After Jan 1, 2020

This handbook is a resource for current and prospective students. It provides an overview of the program and the process for students in the program to follow once admitted.
THE CONSUMER SCIENCE PH.D. DEGREE FROM THE SCHOOL OF HUMAN ECOLOGY

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

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

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

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

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

- The Graduate School: The Graduate School administers all University of Wisconsin-Madison graduate programs (see https://grad.wisc.edu). The Graduate School grants the Ph.D. in Human Ecology: Consumer Behavior and Family Economics.

- School of Human Ecology (see https://sohe.wisc.edu), or SOHE (or “the SoHE”) has four major programs: Human Development and Family Studies, Design Studies, Civil Society and Community Studies and Consumer Science. SOHE administers graduate programs through these departments, coordinated by the Graduate Program Committee (GPC). This committee administers admissions, awards, funding and changes to curriculum.

- The Consumer Science Graduate Committee: The Graduate Committee consists of tenured and tenure-track faculty in the Department of Consumer Science. This committee administers the program and oversees student assessments. Each student will have a main advisor who will report progress to the Graduate Committee. The chairperson of this committee also serves on the SOHE GPC.
What Makes This Program Unique?
There are fewer than a dozen doctoral granting consumer science programs in the United States, and fewer internationally. The Ph.D. program in Human Ecology: Consumer Behavior and Family Economics at the University of Wisconsin-Madison has many positive attributes relative to other programs:

- In-depth skills and training for professional researchers, including:
  - Empirical methods, experimental methods and causal inference
  - Analysis of major public datasets as well as administrative data
  - Understanding of consumer and household well-being theories and applications
  - Understanding of decision-making theories and models
- An emphasis on applications and applied research for strategy and policymaking in the public and private sectors
- Access to the extensive courses, faculty, resources and expertise of disciplinary departments and centers across the UW-Madison campus
- The potential for an intensive, four-year time to degree
- The ability to develop disciplinary or field sub-specialties, certificates and minor designations
- A focus on teaching, teaching experiences, outreach and presenting findings for the public
- An emphasis on publication and dissemination of research as a graduate student, including support to attend professional conferences
- Access to facilities including a behavioral decision making lab, high quality statistics servers and unique datasets
- Opportunities to conduct research with centers and institutes across campus
- Multi-year funding available, including tuition and stipends
- A small program with a high faculty-to-student ratio. Every year approximately 3 to 6 students are admitted, with about 20 to 24 students total
The Program
A primary advisor, or “chair” is someone whose research program is compatible with the student and with whom the student has a positive working relationship.

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

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

1. Preliminary Exam
2. Field Paper
3. Dissertation Proposal
4. Teaching Fellowship (teaching as a Lecturer SA)
5. Dissertation Defense

Table 1 shows a typical progression for a four-year program. This is a pathway that is feasible for most students but may not fit every student’s academic and personal circumstances. Student are required to complete at least 9 credits of Consumer Science courses, however the exact courses and experiences for each student should be customized based on each student’s academic and career goals.

Table 1 Typical Pathway for Four Year Program

| FIRST YEAR: Theory Development; Intro to Methods; Explore Research Interests; Professionalization |
|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| **Fall Term**                                      | **Spring Term**                                   | **Summer**                                       |
| CS Courses & Electives: Mix of substantive and methods | CS Courses & Electives: Mix of substantive and methods | Pre-dissertation research                        |
| Teaching Assistantship                           | Teaching Assistantship                           | Additional methods training                      |
| Professionalization: Attend workshops, meet speakers, read journals and books | Professionalization: Attend workshops, meet speakers, read journals and books | Work on papers                                   |
| Meet with advisors and faculty                   | Meet with advisors and faculty                    | Read journals and books                          |
| Complete IRB Training                            | Complete initial IDP (individual development plan) using ImaginePhD | Prelim exam                                      |

January 2020
or Discover PD system through UW Graduate School

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall Term</th>
<th>Spring Term</th>
<th>Summer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Methods and substantive courses</td>
<td>Methods and substantive courses</td>
<td>Submit Field or other paper to journal/conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Assistantship</td>
<td>Teaching Assistantship</td>
<td>Pre-dissertation research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend workshops, meet speakers, read journals and books</td>
<td>Workshop/Speakers/reading</td>
<td>Develop dissertation ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify primary advisor</td>
<td>Continue to meet with faculty</td>
<td>Optional Internship</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Field Paper</td>
<td>Complete IDP</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Attend Conference</td>
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THIRD YEAR: Develop and Defend Dissertation Proposal; Develop Research Portfolio; Prepare for Job Market

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<tr>
<th>Fall Term</th>
<th>Spring Term</th>
<th>Summer</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Fellowship</td>
<td>Teaching Fellowship</td>
<td>Dissertation Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend conferences</td>
<td>Defend proposal</td>
<td>Submit papers for publication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meet with advisors and faculty</td>
<td>Professionalization</td>
<td>Finalize JMP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop JMP (job market paper)</td>
<td>Present Field or other paper at conference</td>
<td>Practice Job Talk/ Mock Interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop JMP</td>
<td>Optional Internship / Field Placement</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Revise IDP</td>
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</tbody>
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FOURTH YEAR: Dissertation research; Present at conferences; Get job, Defense Dissertation and Graduate

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<tr>
<th>Fall Term</th>
<th>Spring Term</th>
<th>Summer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dissertation Research</td>
<td>Dissertation Defense</td>
<td>Submit papers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research/Project Assistantship</td>
<td>Job Market Talks</td>
<td>Deposit Dissertation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend conferences</td>
<td>Attend conference and workshops</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Market Talks</td>
<td>Complete IDP</td>
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Positions and Titles

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

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

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

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

“Research Assistants” (RA) are funded, like PAs, except these positions are for students who have defended their dissertation proposal and are working on their own independent research.

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

UW-Madison students are required to contribute to “segregated fees”. These are the students’ responsibility unless the TA, PA or RA funding includes these fees in addition to tuition remission. Students should understand how fees are treated before taking on a position. International students may also have to pay an additional fee that is not covered in most TA, PA or RA appointments.
Course Work

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

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

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

Examples of Courses for CBFE Students to Consider:

Unless otherwise noted, course are three credits

Prerequisite Courses (UW or equivalent):
  - Math 221 or 211 Calculus (5 credits)
  - Econ 301 Intermediate Microeconomics (4 credits)
  - Statistics 301 Introductory Statistics
  - Intermediate Statistics: Stat 333 or Econ 410

Consumer Science Courses (Minimum of 9 credits)

Theory Courses:
  - CS 748 Economic Organization of the Household
  - CS 888 Advanced Consumer Behavior
  - CS 901 Consumer/Household Finance
  - CS 930 Family Policy

Methods Courses:
  - CS 901: Experimental Approaches
  - CS 901: Methods
  - CS 901: Special Topics
  - Other courses as offered

SoHE Courses
- InterHE 801 Human Ecology Theories and Perspectives
- CSCS 801 Proseminar-Engaged Scholarship
- InterHE 793 Research Methods
- Other courses as offered, including professional development courses

Statistics (Minimum of 9 credits):
Courses should include a computer and data analysis components. Students who have completed one of these or equivalent courses must, in consultation with their adviser, select a more advanced statistics course appropriate to their background and expected research.
- AAE 636 Applied Econometric Analysis I
- AAE 637 Applied Econometric Analysis II
- ED PSYCH 960 Structural Equation Modeling
- SOC 756 Demography
- Other courses in Social Work, Economics, Sociology and other departments may also be offered. Be sure to consult prior students and faculty on options for any given semester.

Research Methods (Minimum of 6 credits):
These courses focus on research methodology and data acquisition. Course components should include research design, survey research methods, or qualitative research. Students may select courses that are consistent with intended thesis methodologies, in consultation with advisor.
- SOC 751 Survey Design (and/or 752)
- AAE 875 Applied Econometrics using Replication
- ED PSYCH 773 Scaling, Factor, and Cluster Analysis
- ED PSYCH 762 Experimental Design
- ED PSYCH 711 (a) Graphical Models for Causal Inference or (b) Quasi-Experimental Design
- Other courses as offered

Field Breadth / Application (Minimum of 9 credits):
- AAE 635 Applied Micro Theory
- RMI Risk/Uncertainty (or equivalent)
- AAE 637 Applied Micro II
- Mkt 972 Marketing Seminar
- PA 871 Program Evaluation (or equivalent applied)
- PA 883 Social Welfare Policy
- PSYCH 703 Social Psychology Seminar
- PSYCH 930 Social Psychology Seminar
- Other courses as offered

Note that courses and course offerings frequently change. Please consult with faculty and existing students when selecting courses to determine which courses are a good fit. You should plan to meet with faculty before registering for classes each term.
Note: All full-time students eligible for support and tuition remission are required to maintain full-time status, or at least 9 graduate-level credits per term in the academic school year. Students may also register for an “independent study” with a faculty in CS.

### Example Course Progression Years 1 and 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Year (26 Credits)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Course #</strong></td>
<td>Course Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS 888</td>
<td>Advanced Consumer Behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS 930</td>
<td>Family Economic Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTER HE 793</td>
<td>Research Methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSCS 801</td>
<td>Proseminar-Engaged Scholarship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTER-HE 801</td>
<td>Human Ecology Theories &amp; Perspectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAE 636</td>
<td>Applied Econometrics I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA 883</td>
<td>Poverty, Inequality, and Social Welfare Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOC 940</td>
<td>Sociology of Economic Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAE 637</td>
<td>Applied Econometrics II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ED PSYCH 711b</td>
<td>Quasi-Experimental Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAE 635</td>
<td>Applied Micro Theory</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Second Year (24 credits)</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Course #</strong></td>
<td>Course Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS</td>
<td>Experimental Approaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA 871</td>
<td>Public Program Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECON 750</td>
<td>Labor Economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ED PSYCH 711a</td>
<td>Graphical Models for Causal Inference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ED PSYCH 773</td>
<td>Scaling, Factor, and Cluster Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAE 875</td>
<td>Applied Econometrics using Replication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTER HE</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>ED PSYCH 762</td>
<td>Experimental Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOC 751</td>
<td>Survey Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS 999</td>
<td>Independent Research</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Transfer Credits:
A request to have prior course work count towards the PhD degree will be considered by the Consumer Science Graduate Committee following the student’s acceptance to the PhD program and, if credits were taken at another institution, upon review of course syllabus and other course documents. Even courses with similar titles may be taught in new and different way at UW-Madison. Taking common courses also facilitates networks with other students and providing a common intellectual foundation. Transferring credits is strongly discouraged and all transfers must have the written approval of the CS faculty.

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

Seminars and Trainings
Courses are only one element of the Ph.D. experience. Seminars and special lectures given by visitors, talks by job candidates, and conferences are equally important. Students are expected to find a seminar series or two in which to participate on a regular basis. Workshops provide an opportunity to become exposed to cutting-edge research and a chance to meet with scholars from other universities. Students in CBFE are expected to be a regular attendee of at least one seminar series and will be evaluated on this annually.

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

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

Examples of External Technical Workshops
- [ESTIMATE Summer Program at Michigan State University](#)
- [Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR)](#)
- [Causal Inference Workshop at Northwestern University](#)
- [Statistical Horizons Training](#)
Consumer Science Graduate Workshop

The Consumer Science department holds a weekly graduate workshop. Students are expected to present and be regular attendees and will be evaluated on this annually.

Professional Development Opportunities
There also programs offered on and off Campus that students are encouraged to engage with:

- UW-Madison Writing Center
- IRP Graduate Research Fellows
- CDE Training
- Mellon-Wisconsin Dissertation Writing Camps

Preliminary Exam
The purpose of the preliminary (prelim) exam is to evaluate the student’s preparation for
conducting dissertation research. All full-time PhD students must take the prelim after their first year.

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

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

### Prelim Exam Evaluation Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>High Pass</th>
<th>Pass</th>
<th>Deficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theory</td>
<td>Shows strong knowledge of 3+ theories and the ability to thoroughly apply to practical problems</td>
<td>Shows solid knowledge of 2+ theories and can apply theory to practical problems</td>
<td>Only shows knowledge of 1 or fewer theories and/or cannot show ability to apply theory to problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods</td>
<td>Shows strong knowledge of 3+ causal inference methods and the ability to thoroughly apply to practical problems</td>
<td>Shows knowledge of 2+ causal inference methods and can only generally apply them to practical problems</td>
<td>Only shows basic knowledge and cannot apply methods to research problems</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No more than one re-take is allowed. Not achieving a pass, or high pass, on both sections after two attempts is cause for removal from the program. Students are encouraged to work with other students in preparing for prelims, but prelim exams are an independent exercise. Old exam questions may be available upon request.

**Field Paper**

The purpose of the field paper is for the student to provide evidence of independent research scholarship. Upon its completion, the paper’s quality should qualify for submission to a journal or professional conference. The paper should be drafted for review by the student’s advisor and another faculty member selected by the advisor.

The reviewers will provide a conventional “Revise and Resubmit” set of comments as would be provided for a journal article for peer review. The student will then revise the paper, prepare a response to reviewers and re-submit the paper to the advisor. There may be further iterations of revisions until the paper is ready for submission to a journal or
conference. A paper that fails to meet the revise standard or better will be rejected and the student is expected to start the field paper process over. A final paper should have Accept in all categories.

### Field Paper Evaluation Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Accept</th>
<th>Revise</th>
<th>Reject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theory</td>
<td>Paper is motivated by a clear and well-developed theory or model. Clear research question.</td>
<td>Theory or model are weakly developed or present ambiguous predictions without discussion.</td>
<td>No or poorly developed theory or motivation. Research question unclear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods</td>
<td>Methods are well and accurately described, as well as appropriate for the research question.</td>
<td>Methods are generally appropriate but need further development or lack robustness.</td>
<td>Methods are missing or not appropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application</td>
<td>Findings are applied to the research questions and used to discuss policy or practice implications.</td>
<td>Weak connections between findings and research questions and lack of detailed applications of findings.</td>
<td>No direct discussion of finding and implications.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Communication</td>
<td>High quality, academic style writing and formatting.</td>
<td>Paper structure is generally appropriate but writing quality poor.</td>
<td>Multiple mistakes or poor writing quality. Text and format do not convey understanding of materials.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Teaching Fellowship

Students who are serving as a TA should take part in mentored teaching preparation in preparation for becoming a Teaching Fellow (Lecturer SA). Ideally a student would TA for a course for several semesters, then work with a primary instructor to take over the course by their third year as the lead instructor. This is a critical learning experience and will prepare students for a teaching-researcher role in their career.

### Job Market Paper

A crucial activity for any candidate graduating from a PhD program and applying to research or teaching positions is the job market paper (JMP). This paper is the best work that the student has produced, and typically solo authored work. It is a unique paper that spotlights the student’s skills and interests. It should be a paper that is suitable for publication.
Students in this program are expected to develop one high quality paper by summer or early fall of their fourth year. Students should also submit this paper (or an early abstract) to conferences in order to begin to “market” their work. This will also be part of the student’s job applications. This paper should be well prepared and receive extensive feedback from advisors. The JMP should be a substantial component of the student’s discussions with his or her advisors beginning the third year.

Professional Development
Students should also create a website to post their professional CV, working papers, teaching and research statements and JMP. This website is an important part of how students market their work to potential employers and should be created by the end of summer of the third year. The UW Social Science Computing Collaborative is an on-campus free resource to develop and host these sites (see SSCC professional website).

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

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

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

**Review Process:**
Any student who fails to make timely progress may be asked to meet with the CS Graduate Committee. Evidence of any special or extenuating circumstances can be presented to the CS Graduate Committee by the student during the appeals process. Students may further appeal to the SOHE Graduate Committee, in writing, if they feel the Departmental review is inadequate.

**Annual Review Metrics:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Progress</td>
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<tr>
<td>IDP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seminar Attendance</td>
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<tr>
<td>TA Evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prelim</td>
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<td>IRB CITI</td>
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<th>Second Year</th>
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<tr>
<td>Course Progress</td>
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<tr>
<td>Field Paper</td>
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<th>Third Year</th>
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<td>Course Progress</td>
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<td>IDP</td>
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<td>Seminar Attendance</td>
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<td>Proposal</td>
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<td>Teaching Fellowship</td>
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<th>Fourth Year</th>
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<tr>
<td>Job Market Paper</td>
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<td>Dissertation Defense</td>
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**Advisor Designation Process.**
Your primary advisor is a faculty member from the Consumer Science Department. You will typically designate your advisor in your second year. Your advisor will provide advice regarding graduate training, research and your job market. Your primary advisor also serves as chair of your dissertation committee and works with you on your field paper and proposal.
The advisor/student relationship is one of mutual agreement, which may be terminated by either party. If a you want to designate or change your advisor, notify the SoHE Graduate Program Coordinator. During the first year, all incoming students, will be assigned to the Grad Committee chair as their advisor. It is the responsibility of every graduate student to have an advisor.

If your primary advisor is not available, for example on a leave or sabbatical, students should designate a co-advisor who is in residence. If your primary advisory leaves the University, you need to designate a new primary advisor.

**The Dissertation**

Good dissertations:

- Are highly interesting to and motivated by the student
- Can be completed in two years or less
- Have theoretical and policy relevance
- Will make a substantive contribution to the field
- Make a substantive contribution to the field
- Serve to promote the student in their job market

The Ph.D. dissertation is an original empirical work that demonstrates the student’s ability to conduct research. This work is completed with frequent discussions with faculty and graduate students and participation in research seminars and presentations.

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

**The Proposal and Proposal Defense**

After passing their prelim and completing all coursework, students develop a dissertation proposal after the start of their fifth semester (fall of the third year or later). The purpose of the proposal defense is to determine the student’s readiness to commence their dissertation research. The proposal should clearly identify the research question or topic, establish the theoretical framework for the proposed topic, reference the relevant literature, and describe in detail the proposed research design and methods. A typical proposal is 20-25 pages in length.

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

The student is expected to present and defend their research proposal, as well as any material their committee feels is necessary for the student to conduct their dissertation research. The dissertation proposal committee will consist of a chair (generally a tenured faculty member in the CS department, unless otherwise approved by the graduate committee) and at least three additional faculty members, of which at least 2 must be CS faculty. The chair of the committee is the student’s advisor. Students should not schedule a proposal hearing until approved by their advisor and all committee members.

It is the responsibility of the student to confer with their committee about their expectations, seek feedback, and obtain permission from their major professor to schedule their proposal defense. Students should provide a draft and seek written and oral feedback from their proposal committee in advance of the proposal date.

Students also will arrange the date and time for the defense agreeable to the committee members, and reserve a room. Committee members should receive a copy of the proposal well in advance of the hearing (at least 7 working days). Proposal defenses are scheduled for 120 minutes, with the first 60 minutes open to the public.

At least three weeks before the proposal defense, students must contact the SoHE Graduate Program Coordinator to request a “prelim warrant” from the Graduate School. This warrant is signed by the student’s committee and returned to the Graduate School. A public announcement must be made to all CS faculty, staff and graduate students. The student is responsible for making this announcement on a bulletin board in Nancy Nicholas Hall. The location and time of the defense should be circulated two weeks in advance (10 working days) for the information of all department faculty and graduate students. All CS graduate students are encouraged to attend the public portion of each hearing.

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

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

Upon the committee's approval, the proposal (including any revisions recommended) constitutes a "contract" between the student and their committee. If the student proposes any major changes to their proposal, the student is responsible for consulting with their committee prior to making those changes.
If a student adds or replaces committee members after the proposal is completed, it is the student’s responsibility to share the defended proposal with the new member(s). New member(s) may request revisions to the proposal, request a new proposal defense or even additional requirements.

### Proposal Evaluation Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pass</th>
<th>Deficient</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theory</td>
<td>Shows strong knowledge of theories and the ability to apply to practical problems proposed</td>
<td>Only shows weak knowledge of theories and/or cannot show ability to apply theory to problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods</td>
<td>Shows strong knowledge of methods and the ability to apply to research question</td>
<td>Only shows basic knowledge and cannot apply methods to research questions proposed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feasibility</td>
<td>The proposed work is appropriate and can be completed within the students timeframe, including work appropriate for the job market</td>
<td>The proposed work is not sufficient, appropriate or achievable towards a job placement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevance</td>
<td>Can apply findings to applications in real world</td>
<td>Has findings but cannot translate into real world significance.</td>
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### The Dissertation Defense

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

It is normal in the defense hearing for the committee to suggest changes to the draft. Sometimes these are editorial and require a few days or less to complete, but can be more substantial, requiring a range of additional work from additional analysis to re-writing. **Committee members may withhold signing off until all work is completed to communicated expectations.** Students cannot receive more than one dissenting vote from their committee on the final degree warrant.

Students are encouraged to present earlier drafts at conferences and the department brown bag seminar. It is in such seminars and NOT in the defense hearing that students can seek advice on research strategy and interpretation of results.

### Dissertation Evaluation Rubric

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<td>Methods</td>
<td>Shows strong knowledge of</td>
<td>Only shows basic knowledge and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevance</td>
<td>Can apply findings to applications in real world; able to articulate the dissertation’s contribution to the field and the appropriate policy implications of the work</td>
<td>Has findings but cannot translate into real world significance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Quality</td>
<td>Writing and oral presentation are consistent with standards of field.</td>
<td>Writing and oral presentation are of poor quality and not acceptable given standards in the student’s desired field.</td>
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</table>

- Pass in all areas: no changes or revisions required. All committee members sign warrant. Deposit may proceed.
- Pass in all areas: minor revisions. All committee members sign the warrant but chair reviews final version before deposit. Deposit may be delayed.
- Deficient in 1 area: No new defense; but changes have to be signed off by defense committee chair and at least one other CS Department committee member after revisions completed and before deposit. Deposit may be delayed by several weeks.
- Deficient in MORE than one area: Committee may request secondary meeting to review revisions. Most or all committee members may not sign warrant until after further review. Committee may call for another public defense. Deposit may be significantly delayed.

**The Dissertation Committee**

The graduate student is responsible for seeking faculty to agree to be on their committee. The final defense committee must consist of at least 4 members and up to 6 members. Four of the members of the committee must be current UW graduate faculty. The chair must be from the CS Department, unless a formal exception is made, and at least two other members of the Committee must be from the CS Department. Other members may be from SoHE, other departments at UW or external to the UW-Madison campus. Only one member maybe external, however. Typically, the proposal committee makes up the dissertation committee, with an additional faculty. The chair usually will be a tenured or more senior tenure-track faculty member. Former UW–Madison graduate faculty up to one year after resignation or retirement may serve on the committee but cannot serve as chair.

At least three committee members, in addition to the chair, must be designated as readers. These faculty members are responsible for providing substantive feedback to the student on their research questions and motivation, conceptual or theoretical framework,
literature, data, methods, analysis, and interpretation. It is expected that the student meet with all “reader” members prior to their defense.

While it is not necessary to identify the additional members at the time of the proposal, it is expected that the student identify them at least a semester prior to their dissertation defense. It is important that students communicate with their advisor and all committee members so that it is clear what each of their roles are.

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

Specific Graduate School guidelines about formatting a dissertation must be followed and can be found here: [http://www.grad.wisc.edu/education/completedegree/Dissertation_options.html](http://www.grad.wisc.edu/education/completedegree/Dissertation_options.html)

Students “deposit” their dissertation electronically with the graduate school. The instructions for preparing your dissertation or thesis can be found here: [http://grad.wisc.edu/currentstudents/degree/](http://grad.wisc.edu/currentstudents/degree/)

**Warrant**

Students must notify the SoHE Graduate Program Coordinator to obtain a warrant from the Graduate School at least three (3) weeks before defending the dissertation. The warrant should be given to the major professor prior to the defense hearing. If the committee requires revisions, they may sign with the understanding that the major professor will supervise and ensure that the revisions are completed. Faculty may also withhold their signature provided they communicate doing they are doing so, and what it required in order for them to sign. When complete, the student will then deliver the signed warrant to the Graduate School and provide a copy to the Graduate Program Coordinator. The form to request a warrant or hearing can be found here: [https://sohe.wisc.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-forms-deadlines/](https://sohe.wisc.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-forms-deadlines/)

**Facilities, Labs, Computing and Offices**

**Offices.** Students may be provided shared or independent work space in Nicholas Hall. Office assignments vary by status. TAs may also have additional spaces for conducting office hours. Students can also reserve meeting rooms using the SoHE scheduling system.

**Computing.** All students should sign up for an account at the UW Social Science Computing Collaborative. This includes secure server space, access to storage, statistical packages and Linux high performance data analysis. SCC also offers trainings and consulting on statistical systems. Students can also access the UW Software Library to download a range of key software packages for free or reduced costs (Stata, R, Matlab, LaTeX, etc.). SCC workshops and trainings occur during the semester, as well as over breaks. It
is up to the student to participate and learn skills on software systems; these generally are not taught as part of formal coursework.

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

**Service Opportunities**
Students can take part in campus and national professional development organizations, including:
- SoHE Graduate Student Organization
- Consumer Science Student Association (CSSA)

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

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

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

Students should identify at least two other recommenders from UW-Madison faculty, in addition to their primary advisor. Recommenders will develop a general recommendation letter, tailoring the letter as needed for certain position. Students should work closely with recommenders so they can write strong letters and meet all deadlines. Students should begin developing a job market website by the 3rd year.

The Versatile Ph.D. is a web-based resource and online community for exploring non-
academic careers. Thee Graduate School has a professional development series for non-academic career preparation: Beyond the Tenure Track. At UW, the main job posting tool is Handshake, which students can use to identify employment openings.

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

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

UW Graduate School Aid
The Graduate School offers a variety of fellowships, for a range of purposes and disciplines and with various restrictions. For more information, see Graduate School Office of Fellowships and Funding Resources, www.grad.wisc.edu/offr. Of specific interest are Vilas Awards for student travel and research.

SoHE Awards
The school has a number of competitive awards, including but not limited to:
- STAR Award – student research and travel
- Ausman Award – mentored teaching fellowship
- Douthitt Award– mentored teaching fellowship
- BRITE Lab Grant- support for studies in the lab

Benefits
Refer to Graduate School for a detail explanation on graduate student benefits, including on health insurance and UW Health services.

SoHE also may provide limited parental leave benefits. See https://sohe.wisc.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-forms-deadlines/

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

It is the responsibility of the student to track their progress, communicate regularly with their advisor, to make appointments and meet with their advisor on a regular basis, and to follow the Graduate School processes and deadlines. Students are also responsible for
Successful graduate studies require frequent interaction with your advisor, committee, and fellow students. All Ph.D. students are to be based at the UW-Madison. In exceptional circumstances, students may petition the graduate committee for an exemption from this requirement.

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

**Conduct**

Students may not submit work for course credit that they have already written or are submitting for more than one course unless they have prior instructor approval. Doing so is breach of both the university and Consumer Science Department standards for academic conduct.

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

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

**Probationary Status**

A minimum graduate GPA of 3.00 is expected. Any student who received grades of BC, C, D, F, or I in courses numbered 300 or above, or grades of U in research and thesis will be on academic probation. Based on a review by the Graduate Committee, students on probation may be placed on a hold on future enrollment, and the student may be suspended from graduate studies. Incomplete (I) grades should be removed during the subsequent semester of enrollment to avoid probation. All incomplete grades must be resolved before a degree is granted.

Students admitted on probation must satisfy the conditions outlined at the time of admission within 1 year, and probationary status will be removed automatically. All students are expected to make satisfactory progress toward their degree each semester, including enrolling in at least 9 credits and completing TA, PA or RA assignments at satisfactory level as evaluated by supervising teachers or researchers.

**Grading**

Students are expected to fully engage with the coursework. Audited or pass/fail courses do not count for graduate credit. Students must earn a grade of B or better in any Consumer Science department courses.
Parental Rights
See the graduate school for explanations of FERPA and related regulations.
https://grad.wisc.edu/academic-policies/

TA Assignments
In addition to a mentored learning opportunity for PhD students, Teaching Assistants are critical to the Consumer Science Department’s undergraduate teaching mission. TAs are assigned as part of the course planning process in the Department. Courses are assigned TAs based on the size and complexity of the course. All TA assignments are made by the Consumer Science Department Chair.

Appointments will generally be 33% to 50% time, for the academic year, including Winter Break. Students are expected to report and work with their assigned instructor for the full TA contract period (generally the 3rd week in August until the 3rd week in May). Students must discuss and have written approval from the Chair and instructor if they are not on campus and available during these times.

All students will be reviewed by their primary supervisor every semester. Any TA who is not performing at a satisfactory level may not be offered a TA assignment the following semester(s).

Students are always encouraged to seek and receive PA and RA appointments with CS faculty, as well as with any unit at UW Madison, including outside SoHE. If you have an RA or PA appointment, you must notify the CS chair and Graduate Committee Chair as soon as possible, and at a minimum at least 1 week prior to the start of the fall semester so that TA assignments can be completed.

Grievance Procedures

Optional MS in Consumer Science
Students may apply to the Graduate School, in coordination with the Graduate Program Coordinator, to be granted an optional Masters (MS) degree in Consumer Science. Students are eligible for the MS after a minimum of 30 total credits, where at least 16 of were taken as a UW-Madison graduate student and 15 credits were in courses numbered 700 level or above or the 300 – 600 level with the graduate course attribute. To be eligible the student should have completed 9 credits of Consumer Science courses, and 3 credits each from research methods and statistics courses. The program does not require or strongly encourage seeking a masters if the student’s goal is to obtain a PhD.