

SENIOR THESIS

Should I write a thesis?

If you like research, enjoyed designing your own projects in methods, or think you want to spend six months exploring sociological questions that excite you, then yes.

How do I get started?

Ideally during Spring of your junior year:*

- **Pick a topic**
Your topic might be general to start with, but think of a topic or question that interests you, builds on your past experience, or makes you want to know more. This could be an off-shoot of a course you took or a chance to further develop a paper you wrote for a course or a project from methods. You should already know something about your topic.
- **Find a faculty advisor who will work with you**
You will need a professor who will work with you as you develop your thesis. This might be a professor with whom you have taken classes or who knows about your topic. You will check in with this person throughout the thesis process, so developing a relationship is important.

Timeline

- **Summer (between junior and senior years)**
 - Read literature. What is known about your topic already? What do we wish we knew? (If you are ready by early spring quarter, you can apply for a summer PINs grant, which will help support this research. You can also apply for a fall PINs grant to support research expenses.)
 - Design study. What will your methodology be?
 - Submit IRB application.
- **Fall quarter of senior year**
 - Depending on where you are, your IRB needs to be approved before you can begin data collection.
 - You need to collect data during fall quarter.
 - Enroll in the 2-credit thesis seminar (if offered); if not, enroll in Research Practicum.
- **Winter quarter**
 - Finish data collection.
 - Organize and analyze your data.
 - Outline your thesis.
 - Identify a thesis committee.
 - Continue in the second part of the thesis seminar (2 credits) or Research Practicum.
- **Spring quarter**
 - Finish writing thesis by 2nd week of Spring quarter.
 - Defend thesis by 5th week of Spring quarter.
 - Recognized at Sociology Spring Awards and Recognition Ceremony at end of spring quarter.

* **Note:** If graduating in Winter—start this process two quarters earlier.