MPhil in Sociology and Demography

Student Handbook: 2021-22

A NOTE ABOUT HOW TO USE THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook applies to students starting the MPhil in Sociology and Demography in Michaelmas term 2021. The information in this handbook may be different for students starting in other years.

Please note that your degree is formally governed by the Examination Decrees and Regulations (the Exam Regs). This is published in September each year, and can be found online. The MPhil in Sociology and Demography handbook contains informal descriptions and interpretations of some of the most relevant rules, but any formal question has to be settled primarily by reference to the Examination Decrees and Regulations.

The Examination Regulations relating to this course are available here. If there is a conflict between information in this handbook and the Examination Regulations, then you should follow the Examination Regulations. If you have any concerns please contact the Graduate Studies Administrator at graduate-studies@sociology.ox.ac.uk.

The information in this handbook is accurate as of 4th October 2021. However, it may be necessary for changes to be made in certain circumstances, as explained online. If such changes are made the department will publish a new version of this handbook together with a list of the changes and students will be informed.

This is **version 1.0** and no changes have currently been made.

Other key sources of information for students on the 2021-22 MPhil in Sociology and Demography include:

- the 2021-22 Sociology Student Canvas site – available to log in to here.
  (Canvas is Oxford's Virtual Learning Environment, where the Department and many courses have pages with further information, course assignments, etc.);
- the Exam Conventions, which will be made available on the above Canvas site;
- the course timetable, released by email and on Canvas at the beginning of the academic year;
- the University's website for students;
- the handbooks provided by Oxford colleges, normally available on their websites.

Finally…

We continuously strive to improve our services and welcome any feedback, concerns or suggestions received in connection to the handbook content. These should be sent to the Graduate Studies Administrator, at graduate-studies@sociology.ox.ac.uk

Welcome from the Department

Dear incoming Oxford Sociology MPhil students,

Welcome to the University of Oxford and to the Department of Sociology! We are delighted you have chosen to study and research with us. We hope that you will have an enjoyable and productive time here.

This handbook provides a guide to your degree course and to life as a graduate student in the Department of Sociology. Please read it carefully. If you have a question or need to refresh your memory, please turn back to this document as your first port of call.

If you cannot find the answer to your question then please contact our Graduate Studies Administrator, Hannah Brawn, by email (graduate-studies@sociology.ox.ac.uk). You can also request a meeting if you would like to discuss anything in person.

The Graduate Studies Committee (GSC) is responsible for all the department's degree programmes. It is chaired by the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), Dr Michael Biggs. The DGS focuses on the doctoral programme, while the Taught Course Director (TCD), Dr Man Yee Kan, is primarily responsible for overseeing the MSc and MPhil programmes. Hannah Brawn does the lion's share of the work on everything to do with graduate studies in the department.

The Graduate Joint Consultative Committee (GJCC) provides a forum for students to raise any issues. Meeting each term, the committee is run by students and attended by the DGS and TCD. Please see page 44 for further details, and do let your course representative know if there is anything you wish to discuss.

If there is some question or issue that you want to raise at a senior level in person, please email the DGS (michael.biggs@sociology.ox.ac.uk) or the TCD (man-yee.kan@sociology.ox.ac.uk).

There are, of course, other aspects of student life in Oxford that this handbook does not cover, including information about the Social Sciences Division, the Social Science Library, the wider University, your College, student organisations, etc. Oxford provides abundant opportunities to enjoy while engaging in study and research for your degree.

We look forward to meeting you all in person.

Michael Biggs
Director of Graduate Studies

Man Yee Kan
Taught Course Director

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MPhil at a glance

Overview

The course aims to introduce students to contemporary approaches to research to the study of population change and its consequences. These approaches explicitly join the *macro* approach of traditional demography with the *multilevel*, actor-oriented life course approach. The *macro* approach of traditional demography is epitomised by the decomposition of population dynamics into fertility, mortality, and migration trends and by the measurement of such dynamics and trends. The *multilevel,* actor-oriented life course approach sees individual trajectories and key life course events (including births, deaths and migrations) as embedded in a multilevel factorial model which emphasises the role of the historical and geographical context; the role of kinship and network ties; and the role of human development, therefore generalising the traditional demographic emphasis on period, cohort and age. This idea of bridging the gap between the macro-oriented and actor-oriented approaches in the study of demography is consistent with the direction that Oxford's Department of Sociology has followed in general since its inception. Therefore, the curriculum emphasises:

- population-level analysis and demographic measures;
- the life course approach;
- sociological analysis as the key approach to explanation;
- advanced quantitative methods.

Due to the impact of COVID-19, delivery of the course in 2021-22 will be a combination of online and face-to-face learning.

The course will be assessed on the following elements:

- Three compulsory core courses: Sociological Analysis; Demographic Analysis; and Life Course Research. Sociological Analysis is assessed by an open-book examination at the end of Trinity Term; Life Course Research and Demographic Analysis are assessed by take-home exams and essays. These papers are described below from page 6.
- A compulsory Research Methods course, for which students are examined on a mixture of a formal examination and take-home assignments. The detailed requirements for the Methods course are described on page 7.
- Two optional papers, for which students either sit an examination at the end of Trinity Term, or complete appropriate coursework if there is a practical component. Description of options courses begin on page 10. **Students should note that the options available may vary each year and there may be timetable restraints on the choice of options that may be combined.**
- A Replication Project in which students will be assessed by paper detailing their attempt to replicate published research findings.
- An MPhil thesis comprising original sociological research. The thesis must be the student's own work; and analyse a sociological problem specified jointly by Supervisor and student.

The components of the course are weighted as follows:

Sociological Analysis	11%
Research Methods[1]	11%
Demographic Analysis	11%
Life Course Research	11%
Optional Paper (1)	11%
Optional Paper (2)	11%
Replication Project	6%
Thesis	28%

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[1] Research Methods consists of two equally weighted components: Statistical Methods (assignment plus unseen examination) and Research Design (take home essay).

Year One

Michaelmas Term	Hilary Term	Trinity Term
Sociological Analysis	Research Design	Thesis Workshop
Statistical Methods	Options Course	Life Course Research
Demographic Analysis	Departmental Seminar	Public Examinations
Departmental Seminar		Departmental Seminar

Year Two

Michaelmas Term	Hilary Term	Trinity Term
Replication Project	Options Course	Public Examinations (depending on Option)
Thesis Write-up	Thesis Write-up	Thesis Write-up
Departmental Seminar	Departmental Seminar	Departmental Seminar

Term Dates

Oxford term dates for the 2021-22 academic year:

Michaelmas term 2021: Sunday 10th October to Saturday 4th December
Hilary term 2022: Sunday 16th January to Saturday 12th March
Trinity term 2022: Sunday 24th April to Saturday 18th June

Required Course Work

Class essays, seminar presentations and other assignments form the basis for much of the student's learning and progress throughout the course as well as being the main way in which we can offer flexibility in meeting individual students' special interests. This work is compulsory; and termly Supervisor reports on individual progress are required by the student's college and discussed there as well as at the meetings of the Graduate Studies Committee.

Negative reports or non-attendance at tutorials or classes are taken seriously by the colleges and the Graduate Studies Committee, but do not form part of the formal assessment for the degree.

All assessed coursework is retained in an anonymised form by the department for one year. Retained work is kept for inspection by course providers and external teaching quality inspectors. Samples of non-assessed coursework will also be retained.

All summative coursework will be run through plagiarism detection software called 'Turnitin'. For more information about regulation regarding Plagiarism please see page 35.

Course Descriptions

CORE PAPERS

Sociological Analysis

Course provider: Dr Lindsay Richards

Aims:

This course develops intellectual skills in explaining social phenomena: identifying puzzles, developing theoretical explanations, andevaluating empirical evidence.

Topics covered by this course include:

- Instrumental rationality
- Signalling
- Values and norms
- Social networks
- Contextual effects and (social integration)
- Diffusion
- Social change

Content and structure:

Each week a lecture introduces one type of explanation, while a seminar that discusses empirical research on a related topic. The topic illustrates this type of explanation in practice, revealing its strengths and weaknesses. The lectures and seminars are complementary but distinct.

Learning Outcomes:

On completing the course, students will understand the main theoretical tools used to explain social phenomena. They will also be familiar with current debates in various substantive areas of sociology.

Teaching arrangement:

One lecture and one one-hour seminar per week in Michaelmas Term.

Requirements:

- Eight short essays (1000-1200 words each) on the seminar readings; questions will be specified in advance.

- One long essay (2500-3000 words) on a more general question.

Course Assessment:

One 3-hour open-book examination in Trinity Term.

Key references:

These are general texts that provide an introduction and complementary perspectives. The readings for each week will be provided throughout term-time.

- Van Turbergen, F. (2020) *Introduction to Sociology*, Routledge
- Elster, J. (2015) *Explaining Social Behavior: More Nuts and Bolts for the Social Sciences*, 2nd ed., Cambridge University Press.
- Collins, R. (1994) *Four Sociological Traditions*, Oxford University Press.

Research Methods

Statistical Methods

Course Provider: Dr Per Block

Aims:

The course aims to develop the foundations of statistical thinking and to introduce the most important basic statistical models used in social science research. The practical classes aim to give students the skills to undertake simple quantitative data analysis using R.

Content and Structure*:*

This course is taught through a series of classes that are a combination of lectures and in-class group work. Practical application of the acquired skills is taught in hands-on computer classes. The course is vertically structured: later lectures assume knowledge of the foundational material covered earlier in the course. Topics covered include ideas of sampling and probability models, basic methods for inference about a population from a sample, and the use and interpretation of some common types of statistical models, including linear regression.

Learning Outcomes*:*

On successfully completing this course, students should:
- understand the basic principles of statistical thinking;
- be familiar with the most commonly used statistical models;
- be able to implement standard statistical procedures (multivariate analysis as well as descriptive statistics) using R.

Teaching Arrangement*:*

Sixteen one-hour classes (two per week) plus sixteen hands-on computer classes (two per week) in Michaelmas Term.

Course Assessment:

Students will be given take-home assignments over the term. The assignments will involve analysing data independently and writing up the results in a formal manner. The first two assignments are formative and are not counted toward the final grade. The final assignment is summative and will make up half of the final grade. A two hour exam in Week 0 of Hilary Term will contribute the other half of the final grade of this component.

Key Text:

Agresti, A. and B. Finlay (1997/2009/2017) *Statistical Methods for the Social Sciences*, Pearson (3rd, 4th, or 5th edition; any will do).

Research Design

Course Provider: David Kirk and Jonathan Lusthaus

Aims:

The course is concerned with the nature of empirical investigation in the social sciences. It deals with the question of how we establish systematic knowledge about the social world. The course will consider in turn the various stages of the research process, the different types of research strategies that are in use, and some general methodological problems about the conduct of inquiry.

Topics covered by this course include:

The research process; aims of enquiry; relationship between research and theory; measurement; description; validity and reliability; causality and experiments; sampling; the application of research design principles to a range of approaches including surveys, social networks, and ethnography.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, students should:
- appreciate the strength and limits of different research strategies,
- understand how research design considerations should be linked to substantive sociological concerns

Teaching Arrangement:

Eight lectures in Hilary Term led by David Kirk and Jonathan Lusthaus.

Course Assessment:
One "critical essay" of up to 2,500 wordsevaluating a piece of published research.

Key Texts:

- King, G., Keohane, R. and Verba, S. (1994) *Designing Social Inquiry*, Princeton University Press.
- Straits, B.C. and R. A. Singleton, Jr. 2017. *Social Research: Approaches and Fundamentals*. Oxford University Press.

Demographic Analysis

Course Providers*: Dr Ridhi Kashyap and Dr Charles Rahal

Aims:

1. To introduce students to current scientific debates on different components of population dynamics, including mortality, family change and fertility, and migration.
2. To provide technical skills for computing demographic measures and models.

Topics covered by this course include:

1. **Population dynamics and the demographic transition.** Fundamental measures of population dynamics (growth rates, crude rates, discrete and continuous time). The demographic transition as a model of demographic development. Demographic transition, age structure, and demographic dividends.

2. **Periods and cohorts, demographic rates, and micro- and macro-approaches to demography**. The meaning of the three key temporal dimensions in demography: age, period, cohort. Lexis diagrams. Discovery and explanation, micro-foundations of demographic change. Sources of population data.

3. **Mortality and the life table.** The life table and its functions. Cohort and period life tables. Stages of the epidemiological transition. Causes of death. Socioeconomic differentials in mortality. Current debates on human longevity.

4. **Advanced topics in mortality measurement**. Further applications of the lifetable, such decompositions and extensions to cause of death.

5. **Fertility and its measurement**. Measuring the quantum and tempo of fertility. Period and cohort analysis. Unmet need for family planning. Fertility change in poor countries. Low fertility in industrialised societies.

6. **Family dynamics and the Second Demographic Transition**. Demographic measures for household, family formation and dissolution. The dynamics of divorce, cohabitation, and non-marital fertility. The notion of a Second Demographic Transition and related critiques. The Gender Revolution.

7. **Migration**. Measuring migration and its effect on population change. Theories of migration. Replacement migration and homeostasis.

8. **Population policies and projections**. Debates on population policies at the international and national level. Two contrasting fears: the "population bomb" and

"demographic decline". China's one child policy. 'Missing girls' in Asia. Basic techniques for population projections. The cohort-component approach. Uncertainty in population projections. The debate on global population change.

Learning Outcomes:

On successfully completing the course, students should:
- have the skills that allow to access and discuss contemporary research in the multidisciplinary area of demography and be familiar with key contributions;
- be familiar with the most important demographic methods and techniques;
- be familiar with the most important demographic developments and challenges concerning demographic change;
- be prepared to do doctoral work in the areas of demography and life course research;
- have some familiarity with applied demographic analysis using R.

Teaching Arrangement:

The organisation of the course is foreseen as follows: weekly online recorded video lecture, and four formative discussion groups, and four computer labs.

Course Assessment:

Exam is composed of two assignments:

Assignment 1. Essay on a demographic topic, with an abstract agreed with the course provider (max 3,000 words). To be delivered by 12 noon, Friday 0th week, HT

Assignment 2. Applied demographic analysis assignment (using R and population-level data). To be delivered by 12 noon, Friday 8th week, HT

Key Texts:

- Livi Bacci, M. (2012) *A Concise History of World Population*, Wiley-Blackwell.
- Wachter, K.W. (2014) *Essential Demographic Methods*, Harvard University Press.

- Preston, S.H, Heuveline, P., and Guillot, M., (2001) *Demography: Measuring and Modelling Population Processes*, Blackwell Publishers
- A series of articles detailed in the syllabus.

Life Course Research

Course Providers: Dr Charles Rahal
Email: charles.rahal@sociology.ox.ac.uk

Aims:

The course will introduce students to theory and methodological approaches of life course research.

Topics covered by this course include:

Life course methods in social research; family and linked lives; transitions to adulthood; partnership, marriage, and coupledom; ageing, health, and well-being.

Content and structure:

The course will first introduce the field of life course research and methodological approaches to modelling life course processes such as event history analysis, and other longitudinal statistical methods. It will then cover a range of established substantive life course research applications in social and health demography.

Learning Outcomes:

On successfully completing the course, students should:
- understand important concepts and theoretical perspectives in life course research;
- be familiar with recent empirical research in the field;
- be able to critically assess the research design, theoretical approach, and methodology of empirical research in the field;
- be prepared to undertake doctoral research in the area of life course research.
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Teaching arrangement:

The course consists of eight lectures/discussion sessions. In the lectures the key topics are outlined, and students participate in discussion based on readings. In addition, 3 computer lab sessions will be held for application of empirical methods.

Course Assessment:

One essay + one problem set in Trinity Term.

Key references:

- Mayer, K. (2009). New directions in life course research. *Annual Reviews in Sociology*. 35: 413-433.
- Crosnoe, R. & Elder Jr., G.H., (2015). Life Course: Sociological Aspects, in J. Wright (Ed.) *International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 2nd edition. London: Elsevier.
- Billari, F.C. (2001) 'The Analysis of Early Life Courses: Complex Descriptions of the Transition to Adulthood', *Journal of Population Research,* 18(2): 119-142.
- Blossfeld, H-P, and Drobnic, S., 2001. "Theoretical perspectives on couples' careers." Pp. 16-50 in *Careers of couples in contemporary societies: from male breadwinner to dual-earner families*, edited by H-P Blossfeld and S Drobnic. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Replication Project

Course provider: Prof Colin Mills

Aims:

While scepticism remains regarding whether we are truly deep within the realms of a 'Replication Crisis', the increasing number of high-profile cases of academic fraud across multiple disciplines can no longer be ignored. There exists considerable evidence that several important research findings cannot be replicated, casting a shadow of doubt on the credence and value of social science as a body of scientific study. This module aims to introduce students to the realities of empirical research through the mediums of replication and open science, with the objective being the replication of a piece of recently published academic work.

Content and Structure:

Each week we will meet both as a group and individually (individually from Week Two onwards). The first meeting of the module will be a more conventional lecture which will introduce an open source i) version control system (Git), ii) high-quality typesetting system (LaTeX), and iii) high-level statistical and general-purpose programming tools (R\Python). Weeks Two through Seven inclusive will be discussion sessions which discuss three things each week: i.) Parts of the core text (Christensen et al. 2019, detailed below), ii.) Key readings related to sections of the core text (indicative readings detailed below), and iii.) Papers which might be replicated as part of the student's projects (relative to the appropriate part of the core text). Week Eight will be students presenting their progress on their individual project. The individual sessions each week will be reserved for discussing issues related to students' progress on their own individual replication projects.

Learning outcomes:

Students will appreciate the emerging cynicism surrounding much social science research through a critical approach which examines issues such as publication bias and specification searching. They will also learn best practice in terms of open science and reproducibility for their own ensuing research at both the postgraduate level and beyond.

Teaching arrangement:

Eight group meetings (1hr, Weeks One through Eight) followed by seven individual project meetings (~0.5 hours, Weeks Two through Eight) in MT, and one individual meeting following the submission of a draft in HT.

Course Assessment:

Assessment is through a replication project (100%) which can be one of the six discussed potential projects or another paper of the candidates choosing (potentially relevant to their MPhil or DPhil thesis). The project should be 6,000-8,000 words length in the form of an article which is suitable for

submission to an academic journal either independently or as part of a longer part of analysis.

Key Texts:

- Garret Christensen, Jeremy Freese, Edward Miguel (2019), Transparent and Reproducible Social Science Research, 1ST Edition, University of California Press, ISBN: 9780520296954.

Other Indicative Reading:

- Gerber and Malhotra (2008), *Publication Bias in Empirical Sociological Research: Do Arbitrary Significance Levels Distort Published Results?* Sociological Methods and Research, 37, 1, 3-30.
- John Ionnidis (2005), *Why Most Published Research Findings are False*, Plos Medicine, 2, 8.
- Gary King (2006), *Publication, Publication*, PS: Political Science and Politics, 39, 1, 119-125
- Edward Leamer (1983), *Let's Take the Con Out of Econometrics*, The American Economic Review, 73, 1, 31-43.
- Freese and Peterson (2017), *Replication in Social Science*, Annual Review of Sociology, 43, 1, 147-165

OPTIONS PAPERS

An Option Circus will be held as part of the Induction Week programme, at which Course Providers will describe the courses in detail and be available to answer any questions student may have. Students will then have until the end of Week 6 to select their options. The Graduate Studies Administrator will then send out the schedule as soon as possible after all choices have been made. Three students must choose to take a course for credit for the course to run and individual teachers may place a cap on numbers.

Students may take one of their two option papers outside of the department. Permission must be sought from the Director of Taught Courses, the supervisor, and the department offering the alternative option. The student must also complete an application form, available here, and return it to the Graduate Studies Administrator by the end of Week 6.

Advanced Quantitative Methods

Course Provider: Prof Jennifer Dowd

Aims:

The application of advanced statistical models to social science data and their interpretation.

Topics covered by this course include:

The precise topics covered will vary from year to year depending on the expertise and interests of the staff giving the lectures. In 2021/2022, topics will include but are not limited to: regression for categorical dependent variables (binary, ordinal and multinomial models), fixed and random effects for panel data, hierarchical/multilevel models, and instrumental variable estimation.

Content and structure:

This course follows on from Statistical Methods in Michaelmas Term with the aim of developing a number of more advanced techniques that are particularly relevant to sociologists. It is primarily an "applied" course and emphasizes the application of advanced statistical models to typical social science data. Most emphasis is placed on the correct

and useful interpretation of parameter estimates rather than on the derivation of the models themselves. The statistical software used in the practical classes is Stata.

Learning Outcomes:

On successfully completing this course, students should have an appreciation of the advantages and pitfalls of different methods and experience of the practical use of the methods taught. To gain any benefit from this course, it is necessary to have demonstrated mastery of the material taught in the Statistical Methods course in Michaelmas Term. A poor or even average performance in that course should suggest to you that you are unprepared for this course.

Teaching Arrangement:

Eight two-hour lectures (weeks 1–8) and three practical classes (weeks 3–8) in which students are introduced to and gain hands-on experience with software for estimating and testing the statistical models outlined in the lectures.

Course Assessment:

The course is assessed by a take home exam consisting of three research questions/ problems. The candidates will analyze data using some of the methods covered and write a short report on two of the three questions. The exam will be made available at noon Monday 1st week of Trinity Term and the deadline for submission will be noon Monday 2nd week of Trinity Term.

Key Texts:

The following texts are indicative, students will receive suggestions for readings in the lectures.

- Firebaugh, Glenn. 2008. *Seven Rules for Social Research*. Princeton: Princeton University Press
- Joshua D. Angrist and Jorn-Steffen Pischke, *Mostly Harmless Econometrics*. Princeton University Press, 2009 [e-book, available from Bodleian through SOLO].
- Paul D. Allison, *Fixed Effect Regression Models*. Sage, 2009 [e-book, available from Bodleian through SOLO].

- Radenbush, Stephen and Anthony Bryk. 2002. *Hierarchical Linear Models: Applications and Data Analysis Methods*. Thousand Oaks: Sage

Stata-related texts:
- Long, J. Scott, & Freese, Jeremy. (2014). *Regression Models for Categorical Dependent Variables Using Stata* (3rd ed.). College Station, TX: Stata Press.
- Rabe-Hesketh, Sophia, & Skrondal, Anders. (2012). *Multilevel and Longitudinal Modeling Using Stata. Volume I: Continuous Responses* (3rd ed.). College Station, TX: Stata Press.
- Rabe-Hesketh, Sophia, & Skrondal, Anders. (2012). *Multilevel and Longitudinal Modeling Using Stata. Volume II: Categorical Responses, Counts, and Survival* (3rd ed.). College Station, TX: Stata Press.

Other useful reading:

- Paul D. Allison (2004). 'Using panel data to estimate the effects of events', *Sociological Methods and Research*, 23(2):174-199.
- Douglas C. Montgomery, Elizabeth A. Peck and G Geoffrey Vining. (2012). *Introduction to Linear Regression Analysis.* John Wiley & Sons [e-book, available from Bodleian through SOLO].
- Richard Breen et. al. (2014). 'Correlations and Nonlinear Probability Models', *Sociological Methods & Research,* 43: 571-605.
- Mark L. Bryan and Stephen P. Jenkins. (2016). 'Multilevel Modelling of Country Effects: A Cautionary Tale'. *European Sociological Review*, 32(1): 3–22.

Causality: Methods of Causal Inference in the Social Sciences

Course Provider: Professor Richard Breen

Aims:

The course introduces students to the "potential outcomes" or "counterfactual" model of causality and covers contemporary approaches to identifying and estimating

causal relationships using observational data from the social sciences.

Topics covered by this course include:

Topics covered in the class include the potential outcomes model of causality, randomized control trials, matching, propensity score analysis, inverse probability treatment weighting, robustness and sensitivity tests, natural experiments and instrumental variables, control functions, regression discontinuity designs, fixed effects, and difference in difference models.

Content and Structure:

The course focuses on the identification of causal effects, the assumptions on which causal claims rest, and the estimation of causal relationship using statistical models. Basic knowledge of probability and of statistical methods such as OLS regression and logit and probit models is a pre-requisite. There are no practical classes in this course, but students will be required to estimate models (in Stata or, preferably, R) and interpret the results.
Week 1: Review of Probability
Week 2: Review of Least Squares regression and properties of estimators
Week 3: The counterfactual model of causality, the fundamental problem of causality.
Week 4: Directed Acyclic Graphs; Matching
Week 5: Matching, Marginal Structural Models, g-estimation, robustness analysis
Week 6: Instrumental variables; natural experiments
Week 7: Control functions
Week 8: Regression discontinuity; fixed effects; difference in difference models

Learning Outcomes:

On successfully completing this course, students should have an understanding of the central role of causality in the social sciences and they should be able to cast a critical eye on the causal claims that social scientists make. Students should also have acquired a thorough knowledge of the potential outcomes approach to causality, the central role of assumptions in identifying causal effects, and they should be able to estimate a wide range of models for causal inference.

Teaching Arrangements:

Weekly two-hour lectures.

Course Assessment:

Weekly problem sets. These include both theoretical and applied problems.

Key texts:

- Morgan, Stephen L. and Christopher Winship. 2014. *Counterfactuals and Causal Inference: Methods and Principles for Social Research* (2nd edition), Cambridge University Press.
- Angrist, Joshua and Jörn-Steffen Pischke. 2009. *Mostly Harmless Econometrics*. Princeton University Press.
- Pearl, Judea, Madelyn Glymour and Nicholas P. Jewell. 2016. *Causal Inference in Statistics.* Wiley.

Online Social Networks

Course Provider: Dr Bernie Hogan, Oxford Internet Institute,
bernie.hogan@oii.ox.ac.uk,

Aims:

The internet is but one of many networks. Every network is different in its own way but there are striking similarities, whether we refer to traffic routing, infectious diseases, friendships on Facebook or gossip on Twitter. This course represents a primer in social network analysis [SNA], a longstanding approach to the generation and analysis of network data.
SNA, also sometimes called structural analysis, has been at the forefront of many of the most considerable insights in sociology, from inequality in jobs, to political polarization. Yet, network analysis extends beyond sociology in important and significant ways. From computer science, we learn optimizations for graphs and new ways of visualizing them. From statistics, we learn which networks are likely to appear by chance. From physics, we learn of large-scale cascading behaviour and ways of detecting

communities. Collectively, these insights comprise a new field called network science.

In this course, we introduce many of the fundamentals of social network analysis, from graph theory through personal networks to newer network science approaches and advanced statistical modelling. Each week includes reading summaries and exercises designed to build the student's capacity for network analysis. We conclude the course with a critical interrogation of network analysis to help circumscribe some limits to this otherwise exciting and powerful paradigm. The result is a well-rounded course designed to enable the effective use of networks in research.

Prerequisites:

- Successful completion of Intro to Scripting with Python is a requirement for this course, and interested students should attend the Sociology-specific course in the second half of Michaelmas Term. The course will be teaching networks using python. There are supplementary modules in Gephi, a standalone application. The only pre-requisite is that Gephi is installed on a user's laptop. There are optional modules in R for ERGms that will not be a part of the formatives but might be useful for students. Students wishing to use R should have RStudio installed. Specific libraries for installation will be discussed in class.
- It is also encouraged that the student has introductory statistics and is taking data wrangling in parallel although these are optional. Many students will successfully complete a qualitative approach to network analysis without complex statistics. Regardless, python is required for the successful completion of the formatives.

Key themes:

- What differentiates social networks as analytical objects from the reality they seek to represent?
- How do the descriptive measures of networks inform us about macro social structures as well as micro social behaviours?

- How do the affordances and constraints of online technologies help facilitate certain kinds of network structures (and indeed, even the notion of networks as analytical tools in the first instance)?
- Why do networks as visual objects persist in having a rhetorical power? Is it that they are merely 'sciencey' and complex looking, or should we consider the visual presentation of networks as a meaningful scholarly practice?

Topics covered by this course include:

1. Introduction
2. Ego-centred network data collection
3. Sociocentric and partial data collection
4. Dyads and homophily
5. Communities and clusters
6. Dynamic and Generative models
7. Network cognition and visualization
8. Theorizing beyond the network

Course Objectives:

The course will familiarise students with the state of network science as a paradigm comprising multidisciplinary approaches to the analysis of relational data. Students will be able to read introductory network metrics and understand how these measures speak to theories of human behaviour as well as put together an original piece of analysis using network data. Students will gain a modest understanding, via the 'sociology of science', as to why network analysis is a highly distributed field where no single software application, journal or conference covers all of the active research on social networks. Students will also learn basic data capture and analysis techniques that can enable them to begin, if not complete, a full social network analysis study.

Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course students should:
- Have a familiarity with the basic terms and concepts of social network analysis.
- Understand how differing network analysis metrics relate both to each other and to academic research questions.
- Be able to describe how a network can be constructed from an online phenomenon.

- Have a clear understanding of some of the various analytical tools used in network science.
- Be able to construct and theorise a research question that employs social network analysis in order to address a specific topic related to human behaviour and collective dynamics.

Teaching Arrangement:

The course will consist of eight classes taught in weeks 1-4 and 6-9 of Hilary term. The date, time and venue will be communicated to students during Michaelmas Term.

Each class will begin with an hour-long lecture. The second half of the class is typically a guided walkthrough of network analysis techniques. The techniques draw upon a variety of software packages and data sources. Every effort will be made to ensure cross-platform and open source software is used whenever possible, but this cannot always be guaranteed.

Course Assessment:

Students will be assessed through a final essay that is no longer than 5000 words which must be submitted to the Examinations School by 12 noon of Monday of Week 1 of Trinity Term.

Formative Assessment
Each week there will be a formative assignment. In weeks 1-4 the assignment will be a small analysis of a network done in an ipython notebook. In week 5 the student is expected to submit a final essay topic for approval. This will be a title and a <200-word summary of the topic. In weeks 6, 7 and 8 the students will again have short exercises to do in ipython (or related software) based on the course material. In week 9 the student will be expected to submit a preliminary piece of writing (between 1000-1500 words) that will form part of the final essay. The course instructor will provide written feedback of the writing and seek to schedule a meeting to discuss the writing after term ends and before papers are due. The purpose of this second piece is to demonstrate to the instructor that the proposed topic has sufficient literature / theoretical motivation and data to continue pursuing.

In addition to the formative assignments the course instructor will direct students to a wiki, housed at http://wiki.oii.ox.ac.uk/ . It will include headers for each of the readings for the weeks. Students are each expected to write a brief summary of at least two papers featured in the course. This way, by the end of course, every student will have a shared, thorough annotated bibliography to help them with their summative essay.

Key Texts:

A full course outline, including weekly reading, can be found on ORLO.

Police Violence and Racial Oppression

Course Provider: David Kirk

Aims:
The aim of the course is to examine the ways in which the criminal justice system has facilitated racial injustice, with particular focus on institutional racism in policing. Students will also be introduced to research related to the causes, consequences, and potential solutions to police violence as well as its connection to race.

Topics covered by this course include:
Historical and contemporary overview of racial injustice in the criminal justice system, with a focus on the UK and especially the US; the extent of police violence; the contagion of police violence and misconduct; assessing racism in policing; the interplay of guns and police violence; Black Lives Matter and protests against police brutality; prospects for police reform.

Contents and Structure:
The course will begin with a historical examination of the ways in which the criminal justice system has facilitated racial

oppression. Attention will then turn to the causes and consequences of police violence and brutality, including its disproportionate use against ethnic minorities. Thereafter, focus will turn to acts of resistance against police brutality and racial oppression, including Black Lives Matter.

Learning Outcomes:
On successful completion of the course, students will have:

(1) An understanding of racial disproportionality in police activities;

(2) An understanding of the causes and consequences of police violence.

Teaching Arrangement:
Eight seminars in Hilary Term. To facilitate discussion, each student is expected to write two formative essays over the course of the term, critically reviewing the themes to be covered in weekly seminars.

Course Assessment:
One assessed essay written unsupervised and unaided. The courser provider will publish two essay questions on Friday of Week 8 at noon. Candidates will answer one of these questions, and submit the essay to the the department's submission website by noon on Monday of Week 1 of Trinity Term. The essay must be no less than 3,500 words and no more than 5,000 words (inclusive of footnotes but excluding bibliography and appendices).

Key Texts:
Muhammad, Khalil Gibran. 2010. *Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime, and the Making of Modern America*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Alexander, Michelle. 2010. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. New York: New Press.

Political and Civil Conflict

Course Provider: Prof Heather Hamill

Aims: To introduce students to current social science debates on the causes and consequences of political and civil conflict

Topics covered by this course include:

This course is designed for students interested in aspects of political and civil conflict. The course introduces students to changes in the type and nature of conflict; the motivations of actors; the strategic use of violence and the end of violence and its consequences.

Content and Structure:

This course will begin by examining changes in violent political and civil conflict over time. It will then focus on civil wars and the role of ethnicity in violent conflict; recruitment into violent political organisations; how rebel groups are organised and the impact this has on their behaviour; the strategic use of violence against civilians including the use of suicide attacks; and the end of violence and its legacy.

Learning Outcomes:

On successfully completing this course, students should:
• Have acquired knowledge of the key theoretical debates on the causes and consequences of political and civil conflict and the motivations of actors
• Become familiar with a range of different case studies and issues arising from the comparative method of investigating this topic
• To be prepared for advanced doctoral research on violent political conflict

Teaching Arrangement:

Eight seminars in Hilary Term. Each student is expected to write three essays (1500-2000 words) and participate actively in seminars.

Course Assessment:

The course will be assessed by an open-book examination in Trinity term.

Key Texts:

- Kalyvas, Stathis (2006) *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*. Cambridge University Press
- Kapuściński, Ryszard *Another Day of Life* London: Penguin Classics; New edition (2001)
- Petersen, Roger D. (2002) *Understanding Ethnic Violence: Fear, Hatred, and Resentment in Twentieth Century Eastern Europe.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Tilly, Charles (2003) *The Politics of Collective Violence*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Weinstein Jeremy (2006). *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Political Sociology

Course Provider: Dr Stephen Fisher

Aims:

To introduce students to advanced research in political sociology and to prepare students for doctoral research in this area. The course encourages students to become familiar with and capable of engaging with the current research issues and debates in the field. So the reading list is designed to include a selection of the most important texts and a more comprehensive list of the most recent research from the top journals and publishers. The reading list is available from the course provider on request.

Topics covered by this course include:

The social circumstances of politics and the impact of politics on society: the organization and representation of interests; the formation and change in political identities, attitudes and social cleavages, and their relationships with the political process. Candidates will be expected to be familiar with the main theoretical approaches to political behaviour and a broad range of both single country and comparative studies.

Content and Structure:

The paper covers research on the social bases of politics, such as the roles of class, religion, gender and ethnicity; the factors affecting political behaviour such as protest participation, electoral turnout and vote choice; how citizens relate to the political process; how social and political identities and attitudes are formed and how they change.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, students should:

- be familiar with empirical research in political sociology, the technical tools used, and the empirical results obtained;
- be skilled in critiquing research in the area on both theoretical and empirical grounds;
- be prepared to undertake doctoral research in this area.

Teaching Arrangement:

There will be eight classes in Hilary term. Students will be expected to make at least one and up to three presentations and write three essays. These will be opportunities to receive feedback on ideas and arguments from the course provider and other students. Students are expected to engage constructively in the discussions on all the topics covered in classes. The class is only open to those doing the formal exam since there is not usually room for 'auditors'.

Course Assessment:

The formal assessment is by an open-book examination for which candidates have to answer three questions.

Class Topics:

The classes will cover the following eight topics.

1. Class
2. Ethnicity
3. Anti-immigrant sentiment and populist-right parties
4. Religion
5. Gender
6. Nationalism
7. Political participation and turnout
8. Social attitudes and value change

Background Reading:

There are no core texts for the course. Readings overlap very little between topics. However, the following provide some helpful background reading.

- Crouch, Colin (1999) *Social Change in Western Europe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Dalton, Russell (2018). *Citizen Politics: Public Opinion and Political Parties in Advanced Industrial Democracies* (7th edition). Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly Press.
- Dalton, Russell and Klingemann, Hans Dieter (eds) (2007) *The Oxford Handbook of Political Behavior*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Orum, Anthony, and John G. Dale (2009) *Political sociology: Power and participation in the modern world.* 5th ed. New York: Oxford University Press.

Social Movements

Course Provider: Dr Michael Biggs

Aims:

This option introduces the sociological literature on social movements and collective protest, including theoretical approaches and empirical methods.

Topics covered by this course include:

The Civil Rights movement as a case study. How to conceptualize social movements and collective protest. Movements since the 1960s draw disproportionately on university graduates. Participants are typically mobilized through social networks. Movements are intimately connected to institutionalized politics. Movement organizations face problems of democratic representation. Protest fluctuates dramatically over time. How to measure whether movements and protest make a difference.

Content and Structure:

There will be eight classes:
- Civil Rights movement in the early 1960s
- conceptualizing movements and protest
- class bases
- social networks
- political linkages
- movement organization
- protest volatility
- measuring outcomes

Learning Outcomes:

On completing the course, students will be familiar with a range of social movements and episodes of protest and will understand the major theoretical approaches and the various empirical methods used by sociologists. Most importantly, they will be able to formulate a research project that can contribute to the sociological literature.

Teaching Arrangement:

There is a weekly class in Hilary Term. Students will contribute two essays (about 2000 words) on the week's topic.

Course Assessment:

One three-hour examination in Trinity Term.

Key Texts:

- Tilly, C and S Tarrow. (2015) *Contentious Politics,* 2nd ed., Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Opp, K-D. (2009) *Theories of Political Protest and Social Movements: A Multidisciplinary Introduction, Critique, and Synthesis*, Abingdon: Routledge.
- Staggenborg, S. (2012) *Social Movements*, 2nd. ed., Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Social Stratification

Course Provider: Prof Colin Mills

Aims:

The paper introduces students to contemporary research on social stratification, so that they are able to apply advanced concepts and techniques to their own research problems.

Topics covered by this course include:

The major forms of social stratification; their relation to economic and political institutions. The course will concentrate mainly on industrial societies; the structure of social inequality; prestige hierarchies and status structures; class formation; social mobility; processes of 'social selection' and status attainment; social stratification and sub-cultural variations. Social stratification in relation to social integration, conflict, and change, with special reference to industry and politics.

Content and Structure:

This course examines the central debates about stratification and social mobility in contemporary societies. For example, what explains the sharp rise in income inequality in recent decades? Why has the gender gap in educational attainment disappeared? How much inequality is there between countries, and is global income inequality growing or shrinking? Are social classes becoming less relevant in modern societies? How do class advantages and disadvantages get passed from parents to children? In what sense can Britain be said to be a meritocracy? How does cultural inequality map onto social inequality? Students are introduced to the central concepts and theories, the key methodological issues in stratification research, and the main empirical results.

Learning Outcomes:

On completing this course satisfactorily, students should:

- have a thorough understanding of the empirical results in contemporary stratification research;
- understand how methodological issues in stratification research are related to theoretical concepts and substantive questions;
- be able to relate sociological stratification research with that done by economists and psychologists.

Teaching Arrangement:

Eight classes in Hilary Term. Students are expected to write four short essays (of no more than 1500 words each).

Course Assessment:

One open-book examination in Trinity Term.

Key Texts:

- Arrow, K., S. Bowles, and S. Darlauf, eds. (2000) *Meritocracy and Economic Inequality*, Princeton University Press.
- Bowles, S., H. Ginits and M. Osborne Groves, eds. (2005) *Unequal Chances: Family Background and Economic Success*, Princeton University Press.
- Wright, E.O. ed. (2005) *Approaches to Class Analysis*, Cambridge University Press.
- Devlin, B. et al. eds. (1997*) Intelligence, Genes and Success*, Copernicus.
- Grusky, D.B. ed. (2008) *Social Stratification*, 3rd ed, Westview Press.
- Goldthorpe, J.H. (1987) *Social Mobility and Class Structure in Modern Britain*, 2nd ed, Clarendon Press.
- Marshall, G., A. Swift, and S. Roberts (1997) *Against the Odds?* Oxford University Press.
- Firebaugh, G. (2003) *The New Geography of Global Income Inequality*, Harvard University Press.

Sociology of China

Course Providers: Professor Rachel Murphy and Dr Hamsa Rajan, Oxford School of Global and Area Studies (OSGA)

Content and Structure:

China's transition to a market society has produced dramatic changes in the lives of its citizens. In this course we will consider pressing social concerns that confront China as it continues its ongoing reforms and integration into the global community. Throughout the course we use comparisons

from within China across historical periods, regions, and social groups, and from other developing societies to enrich our analysis of key dimensions of social change. Example questions with which we engage include:

- What is unique and what is universal about social relationships in mainland China?
- Is there a civil society in China?
- In China, which determines life chances more: residency, human capital, or political background?
- Has women's status in society improved or declined since the Maoist era?
- What are some of the possible or likely causes of protests and tensions in ethnic minority areas of China?
- In what ways have market reforms impacted the provision of healthcare in China?
- How do changes in the educational system and educational inequality mirror broader social and economic trends in China?

We also evaluate Chinese civil society actors' and policy-makers' evolving approaches for conceptualising and dealing with the nation's most urgent social concerns. We pay attention to how state and non-state actors interact with each other to affect policy interventions. We further examine the ways in which state actors continually revise their strategies for ensuring the strength and stability of the nation overall and the wellbeing and/or political acquiescence of sub-groups in particular.

Learning Outcomes:

On successfully completing the course, students should:

- See how China – as a developing society, a late socialist society, and a rapidly industrialising society – can be studied through a sociological lens.
- Become familiar with academic research on social change in contemporary China.
- Be prepared for advanced research in the sociology of China

Teaching Arrangement:

The teaching comprises eight sessions in the Hilary Term – a 60-minute lecture followed by an 80-minute discussion class.

Each week, one/two students will make a ten-minute class presentation to address key questions for consideration, whilst students not presenting are expected to write and share with the group before the class a short commentary (around 300 words) discussing one or two of the week's readings. Students will also write and receive feedback on one unassessed essay of 1,500 words.

Students must come to class having done the assigned readings. Each student is expected to actively contribute to the class discussions and the interventions in the class should be based on careful consideration of the readings.

In the first week we look at China's socialist legacy and the ways in which socialist institutions intertwine with other formal and informal institutional arrangements to affect associational life and the relationship between society and individuals in late/post-socialist China. In successive weeks we use selected problems to explore wider issues of social change and stratification across gradients of education, class, gender, and ethnicity

Course Assessment:

Assessment is by an open-book examination in Trinity Term.

Key Preparation Texts:

- Goodman, D (2014) *Class in Contemporary China*, Polity Press.
- Jacka, T, A. Kipnis and S. Sargeson (2013) *Contemporary China: Society and Social Change*, Cambridge University Press.
- Gries, P.H and S. Rosen, eds. (2004) *State and Society in 21st Century China: Crisis, Contention and Legitimation*. London: Routledge.
- Chan, A, R Madsen, and J Unger. (2009). *Chen village: Revolution to globalization*. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press
- Perry, E.J. and M. Selden, eds. (2003) *Chinese Society: Change, Conflict and Resistance*, London: Routledge.

- Gold, T, D Guthrie, and D Wank, eds. (2002*). Social connections in China: Institutions, culture, and the changing nature of guanxi*. New York: Cambridge Univ. Press
- Walder, A G. (1986). *Communist neo-traditionalism: Work and authority in Chinese industry*. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press

Sociology of Cybersecurity

Course Provider: Dr Jonathan Lusthaus

Aims:

This option introduces students to key concepts in cybersecurity, from a sociological rather than technical perspective.

Topics covered by this course include:

Cybersecurity is often seen as a technical discipline, but it also contains a vital human component. People carry out cyber-attacks; people are victims of these attacks; people seek to defend against these attacks. The focus of this course is the social analysis of cybersecurity. While some broad technical terms will be covered, the emphasis will be on the nature, behaviour and organisation of attackers, defenders, and victims.

Content and Structure:

This course will cover cybercrime, hacking and hacktivism, insiders, proxies, and nation state threats, along with cyber policing and the cybersecurity industry, and the users and organisations who fall victim to cyber-attacks.

Learning Outcomes:

On completing the course, students will be able to:

- Understand the core concepts of cybersecurity.
- Understand the range of common attackers (cybercriminals, hackers, insiders, nation states), along with their behaviour and organisation.
- Understand the behaviour and organisation of victims, along

with the cybersecurity industry and police.
- Be able to apply sociological approaches and theory to key aspects of cybersecurity.

Teaching Arrangement:

There will be eight classes in Hilary Term. Students will choose one topic within weeks 1-4, and another in weeks 5-8. They will submit one 1500-word essay at the end of week 4, and the other at the end of week 8. Feedback will be provided one week later in each case.

Course Assessment:

One three-hour closed-book examination (3 essay questions) in Trinity Term.

Key Texts:

There is no one textbook suited to this course. A range of readings will be assigned for each topic, including:

- Kello, L. (2017) *The Virtual Weapon New Haven*, Yale University Press.
- Levi, M., and Williams, M., (2013) 'Multi-agency partnerships in cybercrime reduction: Mapping the UK information assurance network cooperation space,' *Information Management & Computer Security*, 21 (5) pp. 420-443.
- Levy, S. (2010) *Hackers: Heroes of the Computer Revolution*, Sebastopol, CA, O'Reilly Media.
- Lusthaus, J. (2018) *Industry of Anonymity: Inside the Business of Cybercrime*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press
- Steinmetz, K. (2015) 'Craft(y)ness: An ethnographic study of hacking,' *British Journal of Criminology,* 55 (1) pp. 125-145.

Sociology of Latin America

Course Provider: Prof Leigh A. Payne

Course Description:

This course reviews the major sociological concepts and theories as applied to Latin America and the contribution of scholarship on Latin America to the field of sociology. The course covers issues
including sociology of the Latin American state; development; class, poverty, and inequality; gender and sexuality; migration; social movements and counter-movements; religion; race and ethnicity; and crime and violence.

Course Objectives:

This course introduces students to advanced research on sociology in Latin America and prepares students for doctoral research in this area.

Content and Structure:

This course consists of eight lectures and eight seminars and tutorials.

Course Assessment:

Unmarked assessments: The following will form part of the overall assessment of the student's progress in the programme, but will not constitute part of the final mark for the course.

- Weekly attendance and participation in lectures and seminars
- Two essays of approximately 2500 words (excluding footnotes and bibliographies), one submitted during term and one before week 10. The essay questions should be selected based on past exam paper questions or in consultation with the course provider
- Short presentation of one essay in tutorial
- One critical written and orally delivered review of another student's essay in tutorial
- Revisions sessions including a mock exam
- Critical review of another student's mock exam question

Marked assessment: The following constitutes one component of the final mark for the MSc and MPhil: a take-home examination on Sociology of Latin America in Trinity Term.

Sociology of Gender

Course Provider: Dr Man-Yee Kan

Aims:

This option aims to introduce candidates to the sociological literature explaining the causes and consequences of gender inequalities. We focus on the state, the schools, the labour market, the domestic sphere and women's representations and positions in post-industrialised societies as arenas of gender inequality.

Topics to be covered in this course will include:

The course focuses on contemporary gender inequalities in post-industrialised societies. Candidates will be familiarised with theories and literature about gender inequalities. The mechanisms and institutions through which gender inequalities are produced and reproduced will be discussed.

Content and Structure:

There will be eight classes, covering the following topics:
- Gender inequalities: perspectives and trends
- How gender works in the education system
- Occupational segregation
- The gender wage gap
- The domestic division of labour
- Gendered consequences of parenthood
- Welfare states and public policy regimes
- Ways forward: policies, actions, and approaches for understanding processes of change

Learning Outcomes:

On completing the course, students will be familiar with the contemporary situations and trends concerning gender inequalities in post-industrialised societies. They will understand

the theories and mechanisms that explain the processes leading to gender inequality. They will be capable of embarking on a research project on the subject.

Teaching Arrangement:

There is a weekly class in Hilary Term. Students will write two essays on the tutorial topics and give one presentation of about 20 minutes summarizing and critically discussing the literature.

Course Assessment: An online open book exam in Trinity Term.

Key Texts:
- Blau, F. D., Brinton, M. C. And Grusky, D. (2008) (eds). *The Declining Significance of Gender*? Russell Sage Foundation
- Crompton, R. Scott, J., and Lyonnette C. (2010) (eds) *Gender Inequalities in the 21st Century.* Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.
- Esping-Andersen, Gösta. 2009. *The Incomplete Revolution.* Cambridge, UK: Polity.
- Scott, J., Dex. S. and Plagnol, A. (2012) (eds). *Gendered Lives*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.
- Treas, J. and Drobnic, S (eds) (2010) *Dividing the Domestic: Men, Women, and Household Work in Cross-National Perspective.* Stanford University Press.
- Risman, B. (2018) "Gender as a Social Structure" In Risman, B. J., Froyum, C. M, Scarborough, W. J. (eds) (2018). *Handbook of the Sociology of Gender.* 2nd Edition. Chapter 2.

Sociology of Mafias

Course Provider: Prof Federico Varese

Aims:

The course analyses five criminal organizations that have emerged in different times and contexts: the Sicilian Cosa Nostra, the American Mafia, the Russian Mafia, the Hong Kong Triads, and the Japanese Yakuza. We explore the extent to which these cases, notwithstanding their differences, share crucial characteristics and features. We examine the origins, structure, organizational norms, activities, relations with terrorism, transplantation and decline of mafia groups. We explore and tests propositions from the theory of protection.

Topics covered by this course include:

Definitions of Mafia and organized crime. Property rights theory and protection theory. Origins of Mafias. Resources Mafias use. Organization, role of women and norms. Mafias in legal and illegal markets. Mafias and politics. Mafias and popular culture. Organized Crime in non-traditional Mafia territories. Mafias and terrorism. The transplantation of Mafias. The decline of Mafias.

Content and Structure:

The course focuses on the extent to which these organizations share particular features, and the extent to which they do not. It covers rituals and norms (week 1); what Mafias do in both legal and illegal markets (week 2); the organization (week 3); the way they invest their money (week 4); the role of women (week 5) and popular culture (week 5). The course examines parallels between state behaviour in early modern Europe and Mafia behaviour in depth (week 6&7), how mafias have emerged historically and how to fight them (week 8). The course is multidisciplinary and draws upon concepts from political theory, industrial economics, and political economy, as well as on the history and sociology of different countries, such as Hong Kong, Italy, Japan, Russia, and the United States.

Learning Outcomes:

On successfully completing the course, students should be familiar with:

- Key issues related to the origins, organization, activities, migration and decline of mafia groups;
- Key theories discussed in the course;
- The comparative method in Sociology and key concepts in Political Theory, Industrial Economics, and Political Economy.

In addition, students should be able to apply key insights to cases not covered in the course.

Teaching Arrangement:

Teaching will be through 8 weekly seminars. Every week students are expected to study the required readings and engage in class discussion.

Course Assessment:

Production of two "Reading Responses" (RRs) during the course of the Term, to be submitted by noon on Friday of Weeks 3 and 6 by email to the course provider. The RRs should not exceed two A4 pages (font 12). The course provider will supply the title of the RRs the week before, during class time. The work will be graded on a pass/fail basis. In case of fail, the candidate is allowed to re-submit once. If the candidate fails twice, or fails to submit none or only one of the RRs, they will have failed the course. Late submission will lead to penalization in the final grade. The course provider's comments on successful RRs will be minimal.

Production of one assessed essay written unsupervised and unaided. The courser provider will publish three Exam Questions on Friday of Week 8 at noon. Candidates will answer ONE of these questions and submit their essay to Inspera by noon on Friday of Week 11. This assignment must be no less than 3,500 words and no more than 5,000 words (inclusive of footnotes but excluding bibliography and appendices). An accurate word count must be declared on the first page of the essay. Students may not approach the course provider for clarification on essay questions or help with or feedback on the essay. Students are expected to draw on course readings; whilst they may be rewarded for drawing upon additional works, Examiners may reduce the mark of those who fail to cite course readings. Candidates should take seriously the word limits imposed (both upper and lower). If the word limit is exceeded, then the examiners may decide not to mark the work; and if they do proceed then the mark may be reduced. Similarly those who write less than the minimum word limit may be penalized.

Key Texts:

Pre-course Reading (pick at least one):

- Pistone, J.D. and R. Woodley. *Donnie Brasco: My Undercover Life in the Mafia*, 1988.
- Arlacchi, P. *Men of Dishonor*. 1992.
- Maas, P. *Underboss. Sammy the Bull Gravano's Story of Life in the Mafia*, 1997.
- Escobar, R. *Escobar*. 2009.
- Leeson, *The Invisible Hook*. 2009.
- Poulsen, K. *Kingpin*. 2011.
- Glenny, M. *Nemesis*. 2015.

Pre-course Viewings:

Mean Streets; *The Godfather: Parts One and Two*; *Goodfellas*; *Casino*; *Donnie Brasco*; *Narcos* TV Series; *Cartel Land* (documentary).

Course Key Texts:

- Gambetta, D. 1993. *The Sicilian Mafia*. Harvard University Press.
- Varese, F. 2017. *Mafia Life*. Profile and OUP.

Some key papers are collected in Varese, F. (ed.) 2010. *Organized Crime. Critical Concepts in Criminology*, Routledge, 2010.

Options Outside Sociology

Students may take one of their two option papers outside of the department. Permission must be sought from the Director of Taught Courses, the supervisor, and the department offering the alternative option. The student must also complete an application form, available here, and return it to the Graduate Studies Administrator by the end of Week 6.

Departmental Seminars

Michaelmas term seminars will be held via a combination of Microsoft Teams and in-person attendance, with details for Hilary and Trinity terms to follow. See the departmental website for further [details](#). **Attendance at the**

Monday Departmental Seminars is mandatory for all taught course students. Students are highly encouraged to attend the Nuffield College Sociology Seminars. Details are available on the Nuffield College website.

Thesis

The thesis is expected to represent a substantial piece of research. The thesis topic should be within the subject of the course, to be specified jointly by Supervisor and student, but it does not need to be related specifically to any of the taught papers.

There is a Thesis Workshop for MPhil students at the beginning of Trinity Term of their first year where students are required to make a brief presentation on their research topic, specifying the research question they plan to address, the relevant theoretical ideas and the method they propose to use to answer their chosen question. Students must also complete Gantt Charts for the Workshop and also fill in feedback forms which comment on their fellow students' presentations.

Students are asked to deposit one copy of their thesis with the Department. Students working with data that is not publicly available must ensure that examiners will be able to access data if required. The thesis should contain details of how such access can be obtained. Students who make use of materials in languages other than English must, on request of the examiners, make available English translations (e.g. of transcriptions, code books, etc.,) within a time period specified by the examiners, not usually expected to be more than one month. All students must complete a Research Ethics Checklist.

Formatting

All taught degree theses must:

- Use 12-point font, and preferably a serif font such as Times New Roman;
- Give the length of the text in number of words;
- Present the main text in double spacing with quotations and footnotes in single spacing. Place footnotes, where present, at the bottom of each page;
- Have numbered pages;
- Use referencing that corresponds to one of the established bibliographic conventions: preferably APA style and not Vancouver;
- Be submitted in English; unless for exceptional reasons otherwise determined by a relevant Board, in the term in which the candidate is first admitted.
- Text must be presented on a white background with a margin of 3 to 3.5 centimetres on the left and right sides of the page.
- Have no mention of Supervisor, acknowledgements, or any other identifying remarks;
- Be identified by candidate number and not by the candidate's name.

The thesis should be of **no more than the maximum word count** specified for each degree, with **footnotes and tables *included*** in this figure**; references and appendices are *not* included**. (As a guideline,

Appendices should make up no more than 30% of the thesis.) The maximum word count for the MPhil is 30,000 words.

Delivery

The thesis must be submitted to the Department's Inspera submissions site. It must be accompanied by a statement that the thesis is the candidate's own work except where otherwise indicated. This statement will be provided on the Inspera site.
Also please submit the following electronically to the Graduate Studies Administrator:

- The full manuscript of the thesis in MS-Word or PDF;
- If applicable, syntax files that were used for quantitative data analysis (for instance the relevant .do-files if Stata was used);
- If applicable, syntax files that were used for quantitative data analysis (for instance the relevant .do-files if Stata was used);
- In case of own data collection, a file (or files in a zip-archive) containing the raw data anonymised in accordance with the terms of the informed consent given by

participants (transcripts of interviews, raw data from experiments, other collected material).

The data and syntax files remain the intellectual property of the student. The department will not use the submitted materials for any other purpose and will destroy both syntax files and own data collection after the final exam results for the student have been released.

Examination of MPhil Theses

Theses submitted as part of a taught course are marked by two examiners for the award of the relevant degree. If they cannot agree on a mark, or for some other reason require more information to reach a fair judgement of the work, the examiners can decide to also examine the thesis in an oral examination (Viva) at relatively short notice; students are therefore advised not to leave Oxford until they have received their final degree results around mid-July.

Deadlines/Workshops for MPhil

These are the main deadlines and workshops for the taught courses.

Lecturers may request additional course work, e.g. essays for your optional paper, with deadlines not included in this list.

Deadlines for the options Online Social Networks, and Sociology of Mafias can be found in the section on Option Papers.

What?	To Whom /Where?	When?
Year One		
Complete Online Plagiarism Course and Quiz, email certificate to GSA	Graduate Studies Administrator (GSA)	12 noon, Friday, Week 2
Select Options	GSA	12 noon, Friday, Week 6, MT
Examination Entry	Through eVision	Usually before 12 noon, Friday, Week 8, MT

Sociological Analysis Term Essay	Inspera	12 noon, Friday, Week 9, MT
Statistical Methods Timed Exam	Exam Schools	09:30, Friday, Week 0, HT
Demographic Analysis Essay	Inspera	12 noon, Friday, Week 0, HT
Thesis Title Submission and Ethics Form	GSA	12 noon, Wednesday, Week 8, HT
Demographic Analysis Applied Assignment	Inspera	12 noon, Friday, Week 8, HT
2,500-word critique of research paper (Critical Essay)	Inspera	12 noon, Monday, Week 1, TT
Thesis Workshop		Friday, Week 4, TT
Examinations (Sociological Analysis & Options)	Online	The exams *normally* take place during Week 8 and/or 9, TT
Year Two		
Select Options	GSA	12 noon, Friday, Week 6, MT
Examination Entry	Through eVision	Usually before 12 noon, Friday, Week 8, MT
Replication Project	Inspera	Monday, Week 5, HT
Advanced Quantitative Methods Take Home Exam	Inspera	12 noon, Monday, Week 2, TT
Thesis	Submit to Inspera Electronic material to the GSA	12 noon, Friday, Week 6, TT

Full guidelines on submitting your work can be found [here](#).

Examination Criteria and Marking Scale

Candidates are examined on the basis of examination scripts, thesis, critical essay, and coursework. The main criteria applied by the examiners in judging this material are analytical quality, ability to apply the theoretical and methodological approaches that have been taught, critical awareness of alternative approaches and sources of data, and knowledge of the substantive literature.

A mark of zero shall be awarded for any part or parts of questions that have not been answered by a candidate, but which should have been answered. Where a candidate has failed to answer a compulsory question, or failed to answer the required number of questions in different sections, the complete script will be marked, and the issue flagged. The board of examiners will consider all such cases so that consistent penalties are applied

Where a candidate presents a thesis (or other exercise) which exceeds the word limit prescribed by the relevant statute, decree or

regulation, the examiners, if they agree to proceed with the examination of the work, may reduce the mark by up to ten marks. This also applies to late submissions.

The scale of marks used by examiners and assessors for all subjects is shown below:

a. Coursework and Thesis

Distinction level

80-100	Distinction	**Superb work:** Work is of exceptional quality based on a comprehensive knowledge of the chosen topic; a sustained high level of critical analysis combined with a genuine originality of approach. The work is tightly argued, meticulously organised, extremely well documented and will be, in principle, of publishable standard (essay/dissertation).
75-79	Distinction	**Excellent work:** Work displays many of the qualities for work in the 80+ range but falls short on one of the criteria listed above.
70-74	Distinction	**Fine work:** Work shows evidence of extensive relevant reading, a significant grasp of current major issues in the field and offers an original approach to the chosen topic. This knowledge is reviewed critically and with sufficient insight to challenge received ideas. The arguments are clearly and persuasively put.

Pass level

65-69	Merit	**Strong pass:** Work shows consistency and fluency in discussing and evaluating evidence and theories from a wide range of sources. Work demonstrates the ability to relate this reading to their chosen topic and will clearly have understood and assimilated the relevant literature. The arguments are clear and well structured. The examples are pertinent and go well beyond standard or predictable cases.
55-64	Pass	**Good pass:** Work shows clear evidence of knowledge and understanding but ideas, critical comments or methodology are underdeveloped or oversimplified. Work shows significant room for improvement in the clarity and structure of the argument and although there is appropriate reference to relevant reading, it is not sufficiently extensive. Some irrelevancy may be present.
50-54	Pass	**Pass:** Work exhibits some knowledge of the chosen topic, but displays weaknesses of understanding and thoroughness. Arguments are weakly structured and important information and references are lacking. A considerable proportion of this work is irrelevant, or otherwise fails to directly address the question.

Fail

45-49	Fail	**Marginal fail:** Work is seriously flawed, displaying a lack of awareness of essential texts and incoherent arguments. The research involved is poorly organised and inadequately discussed, offering a fundamentally inadequate response to the chosen topic. Large parts of the work may be irrelevant.
0-44	Fail	**Outright fail:** Inadequate coverage and/or analysis, or work not submitted.

b. **Final Exams**

Distinction level

80-100	Distinction	**Superb work:** Answer to exam question is of exceptional quality based on a comprehensive knowledge of the chosen topic, a sustained high level of critical analysis combined with a genuine originality of approach. The work is tightly argued and meticulously organized.
75-79	Distinction	**Excellent work:** Answer to exam question displays many of the qualities for work in the 80+ range but falls short on one of the criteria listed above.
70-74	Distinction	**Fine work:** Answer to exam question shows evidence of extensive relevant reading, a significant grasp of current major issues in the field and offers an original approach to the chosen question. This knowledge is reviewed critically and with sufficient insight to challenge received ideas. The arguments are clearly and persuasively put.

Pass level

65-69	Merit	**Strong pass:** Answer to exam question shows consistency and fluency in discussing and evaluating evidence and theories from various sources. Answer demonstrates the ability to relate this reading to their chosen topic. The arguments are clear and well structured. The examples are pertinent and go beyond standard or predictable cases.
55-64	Pass	**Good pass:** Answer to exam question shows clear evidence of knowledge and understanding but ideas and critical assessment is underdeveloped or oversimplified. Answer shows significant room for improvement in the clarity and structure of the argument and although there is some reference to relevant reading, it is not sufficiently extensive. Some irrelevancy may be present.
50-54	Pass	**Pass:** Answer to exam question exhibits some knowledge of the chosen topic, but displays weaknesses of understanding and thoroughness. Arguments are weakly structured and important information and references are lacking. A considerable proportion of the answer is irrelevant, or otherwise fails to directly address the question.

Fail

45-49	Fail	**Marginal fail:** Answer to exam question is seriously flawed, displaying a lack of awareness of essential texts and incoherent arguments. The discussion involved is poorly organized and offers a fundamentally inadequate response to the chosen question. Large parts of answer may be irrelevant.
0-44	Fail	**Outright fail:** Inadequate coverage and/or analysis, or no answer(s) at all.

Marks of 70 and above represent distinction grades, marks from 65 to 69 are merit grades, marks from 50 to 64 are pass grades, and marks below 50 represent a fail.

The majority of components are double marked (blind), and the examiners normally agree an overall mark prior to the examiners' meeting. In the event that this is not possible then the external examiner reads the script to adjudicate the mark.

Routine scaling of marks is not undertaken. However, where the marks of an individual assessor, examiner, paper, or question are outside the normal range of variation, a process of moderation, decided by the Chair of Examiners, may be undertaken.

If a student requires a deadline extension for any work that counts towards their final mark, they will need to **apply to the Senior Tutor in their college** who will then write to the Proctors. **Deadline extensions need to be applied for in advance and have to be accompanied by a medical note**. The Proctors then decide if the reason is valid and inform the examiners. **The department cannot grant extensions** and penalties may be incurred for late submissions.

If a student does not submit their thesis, or fails to turn up for any of their exams, the student will be allowed to resubmit the piece or work or re-sit the exam one time; the mark of this second submission/sitting will be capped. (In most cases, it is better to hand in a bad thesis/complete an exam and fail, than to hand nothing in at all. If you find yourself in this situation, please contact your College as soon as possible to discuss the situation with them, as all extensions or applications for Mitigating Circumstances must go through the College in the first instance.)

PASS: To pass the course, candidates must achieve 50 or more in all components. If a candidate fails just one component of the MPhil that is not the thesis and it is a marginal fail (i.e. not less than 48), they can still be awarded a degree without merit or distinction if they achieve a mark of 64 or above in another component.

MERIT: The Board of Examiners may award a merit for strong work in the whole examination. To obtain a merit, candidates should obtain an overall average mark of 65 or above. Candidates who have initially failed any component of the examination will not normally be eligible for the award of Merit.

DISTINCTION: The examiners may award a distinction for excellence in the whole examination. To obtain a distinction, candidates should obtain EITHER an overall average mark of 70 or above OR an overall average mark of 68 and above, with two assessed components at 70 or above. Candidates who have initially failed any component of the examination will not normally be eligible for the award of Distinction.

FAIL: A candidate who fails a taught degree may enter for **one** subsequent examination only, provided this is still within six terms of his or her initial registration. A revised version of the same thesis may be resubmitted and will be examined afresh by the examiners on the second occasion. No component can be retaken if passed first time round

The Proctors' rules concerning arrangements in cases of illness, disability, etc., are detailed in the Examination Regulations. Subject to the provisions given in these notes, a candidate who fails to appear at the time and place appointed for any part of his or her examination shall be deemed to have withdrawn from the examination.

Course Evaluation and Student Feedback

The Department of Sociology is concerned that students have the opportunity to comment on the structure, teaching and content of each of the courses. Student feedback will thus be sought through the use of student evaluation forms. Students will also have the chance to participate in leavers' focus groups over the Long Vacation (more information will be provided closer to the time).

Feedback on Formative and Summative Assessment for PGT Programmes

Feedback on both formative and summative assessment is an important element of all programmes at Oxford and may be provided informally and/or formally.

Feedback on formative assessment e.g. course essays or assignments, should provide guidance to those for whom extended pieces of writing are unfamiliar forms of assessment; will indicate areas of strength and weakness in relation to an assessment task; and will provide an indication of the expectations and standards towards which students should be working.

Feedback on summative assessment e.g. theses and dissertations, should provide a critical review of the work and provide suggestions for improvements and future development of the topic of research, to enable students to develop their work for doctoral study if appropriate. Students can expect to receive informal feedback on their progress and on their formatively assessed work.

For Sociological Analysis students will receive written comments from a teaching assistant on the weekly memo. For Optional Papers, course providers will give students written comments on essays submitted in Hilary Term. Students will also receive written comments on their STATA assignments in Michaelmas Term.

All students on taught master's programmes can expect to receive formal written feedback on at least one designated piece of formative assessment that is normally submitted during the first term (or very early in the second term) of the course.

All students will also receive formal written feedback on the thesis submitted in the final term of the course.

Students studying for the MPhil Qualifying Test will receive formal written feedback via email on their Sociological Analysis Term Essay which is submitted on Friday of Week 9 in Michaelmas Term.

Students will receive formal written feedback on their theses submitted in the final term of their course, via email in due course after the final Exam Board convening.

Supervision

All graduate students have a University Supervisor. The University Supervisor guides the student through his or her course of study.

The Supervisor reports on the student's progress to the Teaching Meeting at the end of each term and will also provide feedback to the student. The advice of the Supervisor will always be sought by the GSC before recommending any change in status, transfer between courses, and so on. It is of great importance for the student to keep in regular contact with his or her Supervisor and to keep the Supervisor fully informed as to the progress of his or her studies.

Students and Supervisors are required to electronically submit a termly progress report to the Graduate Supervision Reporting (GSR).

Graduate Supervision Reporting

Graduate Supervision Reporting (GSR) is used by Supervisors each term to review, monitor and comment on their student's academic progress and performance and to assess skills and training needs. Students are given the opportunity to contribute to their termly supervision reports by reviewing and commenting on their own academic progress. *All students are required to submit a GSR report each term.*

Students will receive a report of their termly supervision from their Supervisor. Divisions, Departments and Colleges use the completion of supervision reports as an essential means of monitoring student progress.

The supervision reporting process is controlled by a structured timetable with automatic notifications and reminders. Once reports are submitted, they are immediately available to the student, Supervisor and DGS for review. Additionally, Subject Administrators, College Advisors, College Administrators and Scholarship and Funding

Administrators are able to view reports.

Graduate students will also all have a College Adviser. The role of the College Adviser is to provide pastoral and general academic advice. They can be particularly helpful if the student has any academic or other difficulties that he or she does not feel able to discuss with the University Supervisor.

Students on full-time and part-time matriculated courses are also surveyed once per year on all aspects of their course (learning, living, pastoral support, college) through the Student Barometer. Previous results can be viewed by students, staff, and the general public.

Change of Supervisor

It may be appropriate in some cases to change Supervisor if, for example, the direction of the student's work changes. The Graduate Studies Committee and all university Supervisors also recognise that occasionally there can arise incompatibilities of temperament or approach between Supervisor and student. Because of the central importance Oxford attaches to the relationship between Supervisor and student, students are urged to discuss any problems of this kind freely and in full confidence with the Taught Course Director. An alternative method of approach in such cases is through the student's College Advisor or College Tutor for Graduates. A change of Supervisor requires the approval of the Graduate Studies Committee.

Code of Practice for Supervisors of Taught Course Students

Supervisors responsible for oversight of progress of Masters' students on taught courses are expected to:
- Meet with students (in general twice or more per term)

- Discuss progress, feed-back comments to course providers, course directors and DGS
- Assist in choice of options papers
- Help in the development of thesis topic
- Write termly reports on the student on GSR

In addition to the above, Supervisors are expected to provide the following with respect to master's theses:

- Frequent meetings with students to discuss progress of thesis (informal guidelines: for MPhil students at least four times per term)
- Timely responses to materials submitted for comment
- In particular, comment on final drafts in good time for students to respond before final submission
- Ask to see transcripts of interviews, or syntax files in data analysis to check that the thesis is indeed the student's own work

This last obviously depends on Supervisors' availability in Oxford during the summer vacation months, and on students' timely submission of drafts.

Supervisors should provide a reasonable level of availability during the summer; it is the student's responsibility to arrange dates for submission of work to Supervisors—but it would be helpful if Supervisors could warn students of any extended period of unavailability during the month before the thesis submission date.

Regulations Governing Graduate Degree Courses

Below is a summary of the most relevant rules. In exceptional circumstances it may be possible to seek dispensation from these rules. Students should consult the [Examination Regulations](#) for the full text and seek further advice from their Supervisor.

Plagiarism

What is Plagiarism?

Plagiarism is presenting someone else's work or ideas as your own, with or without their consent, by incorporating it into your work without full acknowledgement. All published and unpublished material, whether in manuscript, printed or electronic form, is covered under this definition.

Plagiarism may be intentional or reckless, or unintentional. Under the regulations for examinations, intentional or reckless plagiarism is a disciplinary offence.

All students should carefully read the [Oxford Students website guidance](#).

You may be found guilty of plagiarism if:

- You are presenting or passing off another person's work as your own
- You import into your own work 'more than a single phrase from another person's work without the use of quotation marks and identification of the source'
- You make 'extensive use of another person's work, either by summarising or paraphrasing it merely by changing a few words or altering the order of the presentation, without acknowledgement'
- You use 'the ideas of another person without acknowledgement of the source' or submit or present work as your own' which is substantially the ideas or intellectual data of another'
- You make 'a deliberate attempt at passing off the ideas or writings of another person as your own'

- You take 'the words, ideas and labour of other people and give the impression that they are your own.'

[From *Beat the Witch-hunt! Peter Levin's Guide to Avoiding and Rebutting Accusations of Plagiarism for Conscientious Students*]

Plagiarism and University Policy

Cases of apparently deliberate plagiarism, while happily infrequent in the University, are taken extremely seriously, and where examiners suspect that this has occurred, they bring the matter to the attention of the Proctors.

Your attention is drawn to the Proctors' and Assessor's Memorandum, Section 9.5, 'Conduct in Examinations' and in particular to Sections 4 and 5 and the concluding paragraph of the section:

4. *No candidate shall present for an examination as his or her own work any part or the substance of any part of another person's work.*
5. *In any written work (whether thesis, dissertation, essay, coursework, or written examinations) passages quoted or closely paraphrased from another person's work must be identified as quotations or paraphrases, and the source of the quoted or paraphrased material must be clearly acknowledged.*

"The University employs a series of sophisticated software applications to detect plagiarism in submitted examination work, both in terms of copying and collusion. It regularly monitors on-line essay banks, essay-writing services, and other potential sources of material. It reserves the right to check samples of submitted essays for plagiarism.

Although the University strongly encourages the use of electronic resources by students in their academic work, any attempt to draw on third-party material without proper attribution may well attract severe disciplinary sanctions."

Procedure for dealing with cases of poor academic practice and plagiarism in taught degree examinations

Level 1: procedures for Examination Boards

If a marker, or a Turnitin report generated in the course of examination procedures, raises concerns about the proper attribution of a passage or piece of submitted work, the matter will be reported to the Chair of Examiners. The Chair will compile and retain any evidence and decide whether or not the case is one which may be dealt with by the Board (poor academic practice) or whether it is one that requires reference to the Proctors for investigation and possible disciplinary action. The Chair may consult the Proctors in cases of doubt.

Level 2: procedures for the Academic Conduct Panel

Examination Boards will refer cases to the Proctors' Office if the Chair has made a decision that a case exceeds the criteria for dealing with Level 1.

The student will be able to appeal a decision of the Academic Conduct Panel by sending a written appeal within fourteen days of receiving the Panel's written decision. Two members of the Academic Conduct Panel with no previous connection to the case will consider the appeal, and this will normally be a paper-based exercise.

The student will not be able to appeal a referral to the Student Disciplinary Panel; in such cases they will have the right to apply for permission to appeal to the Student Appeal Panel following the outcome of the Student Disciplinary Panel.

Level 3: Student Disciplinary Panel

The Student Disciplinary Panel will deal with the most serious cases of plagiarism, and those referred to it by the Proctors or the Academic Conduct Panel because the likely outcome would be failure of the whole degree.

The procedures and regulations set out in Statutes and Regulations apply:

Statute XI (Parts A and B) and Council Regulations 3 of 2006

Outcomes

The Panel will have a range of outcomes available to it including:
- Submission awarded 0% - no opportunity to re-submit i.e. failure of programme
- Award classification reduced
- Failed award
- Expelled from institution and failed award
- Removal of a degree (in cases of former students)
- Additionally, any of the outcomes available at Level 2

Online Plagiarism Quiz and Self-Tests

By the end of Week 2, all students are required to take the Avoiding Plagiarism Tutorial, and to email a copy of the certificate of completion to the GSA.

The Oxford Students skills webpage has guidance on plagiarism, time management, referencing, research skills, and more.

In addition, the resources below (available in various libraries across Oxford) will help you identify and avoid plagiarism in your work:

Neville, Colin (2007) *The complete guide to referencing and avoiding plagiarism* Maidenhead; New York: Open University Press [SOLO link]

Pears, Richard and Graham Shields (2016) *Cite them right : the essential referencing guide [electronic resource]* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan [SOLO link]

Third Party Proof-readers

Students have authorial responsibility for the written work they produce. Proof-reading represents the final stage of producing a piece of academic writing. Students are strongly encouraged to proof-read their own work, as this is an essential skill in the academic

writing process. However, for longer pieces of work it is considered acceptable for students to seek the help of a third party for proof-reading. Such third parties can be professional proof-readers, fellow students, friends, or family members. This policy does not apply to the supervisory relationship, nor in the case where proof-reading assistance is approved as a reasonable adjustment for disability.

The default position is that the guidance outlined below applies to all assessed written work where the *word limit is 10,000 words or greater*. However, departments and faculties may opt to specify that, for certain assessments, students should not be allowed any proof-reading assistance if the purpose of the assessment is to determine students' abilities in linguistic areas such as grammar or syntax. In this case, the rubric for the assessment should state clearly that no proof-reading assistance is permitted.

The use of third-party proof-readers is not permitted for work where the *word limit is fewer than 10,000 words*.

What a proof-reader may and may not do

Within the context of students' written work, to proof-read is to check for, identify and suggest corrections for errors in text. In no cases should a proof-reader make material changes to a student's writing (that is, check or amend ideas, arguments, or structure), since to do so is to compromise the authorship of the work.

A proof-reader may
- Identify typographical, spelling and punctuation errors;
- Identify formatting and layout errors and inconsistencies (e.g. page numbers, font size, line spacing, headers and footers);
- Identify grammatical and syntactical errors and anomalies or ambiguities in phrasing;
- Identify minor formatting errors in referencing (for consistency and order);
- Identify errors in the labelling of diagrams, charts, or figures;
- Identify lexical repetition or omissions.

A proof-reader may not
- Add to content in any way;

- Check or correct facts, data calculations, formulae, or equations;
- Rewrite content where meaning is ambiguous;
- Alter argument or logic where faulty;
- Re-arrange or re-order paragraphs to enhance structure or argument;
- Implement or significantly alter a referencing system;
- Re-label diagrams, charts, or figures;
- Reduce content so as to comply with a specified word limit;
- Translate any part of the work into English.

Authorial responsibility

Students have overall authorial responsibility for their work and should choose whether they wish to accept the proof-reader's advice. A third-party proof-reader should mark up the student's work with suggested changes which the student may then choose to accept or reject.

Failure to adhere to these guidelines could constitute a breach of academic integrity and contravene the *Proctors' Disciplinary Regulations for Candidates in Examination*. It is therefore the student's responsibility to provide the proof-reader with a copy of this policy statement.

Entering for examinations

In order to complete your examination entry successfully you must have completed your University registration within the student registration window. You can check whether your registration is complete by logging in to Student Self Service and clicking on My Student Record: if your registration is not complete you will see the Register screen and you should contact your college immediately; if your registration is complete you will see the Check my Details screen.

A full guide to the examination process is available here and students are strongly encouraged to read it carefully.

Mitigating circumstances notices

If you experience problems before or during your exams, or in relation to your submitted work, which you think may have seriously impacted your performance you should contact your college office as soon as possible, and they will help you submit a mitigating circumstances notice. Further guidance is available [here](#).

Where a candidate or candidates have made a submission, under Part 13 of the Regulations for Conduct of University Examinations, that unforeseen factors may have had an impact on their performance in an examination, a subset of the board will meet to discuss the individual applications and band the seriousness of each application on a scale of 1-3 with 1 indicating minor impact, 2 indicating moderate impact, and 3 indicating very serious impact. When reaching this decision, examiners will take into consideration the severity and relevance of the circumstances, and the strength of the evidence. Examiners will also note whether all or a subset of papers were affected, being aware that it is possible for circumstances to have different levels of impact on different papers. The banding information will be used at the final board of examiners meeting to adjudicate on the merits of candidates. Further information on the procedure is provided in the *Policy and Guidance for examiners, Annex B* and information for students is provided [here](#).

Failing the MPhil

Candidates who have previously failed the MPhil without extenuating circumstances cannot achieve more than a pass degree on retaking.

In the event of failure of the MPhil or MPhil Qualifying Test overall, a candidate is allowed to retake/resubmit certain elements (meaning discrete pieces of written work, theses, tests, or examination papers). Any retakes/resubmissions for the MPhil Qualifying Test must take place before the first week of the next academic year. Any retakes/resubmissions for the MPhil must normally take place the following year. A candidate may only retake/resubmit elements of those components that received a fail mark overall. If a candidate failed a component for

which assessment is comprised of one or more elements, only those elements that received a fail mark may be resubmitted/retaken. Any elements for which the candidate achieved a pass mark cannot be resubmitted/retaken. Any elements that constitute part of a component that received a pass mark overall cannot be retaken/resubmitted, even if there are particular elements of the component that received a fail mark. Marks for any elements that are not retaken or resubmitted will not change.

If a candidate fails just one component of the MPhil that is not the thesis, and it is a marginal fail (i.e. not less than 48), they can still be awarded a degree *without* merit or distinction if they achieve a mark of 64 or above in another component.

Any resubmitted written work (including the thesis) will be examined afresh. While there is no requirement to make substantial changes to written work before resubmission, candidates should note that fail marks are never awarded without careful consideration *and minor editing is unlikely to be sufficient to transform even a marginal fail mark into a pass mark*.

Candidates must re-register if they wish to re-take any exam or resubmit their thesis. Re-registration must be completed at the same time and in the same way as registration for current students, i.e. in early Hilary term through the student's college. They must also pay a fee for resubmission of the thesis and another fee for exam entry (details can be obtained from Colleges). A student must be both registered and their re-entry fee received by Exam Schools for their exam or thesis to be marked. The onus is on the student to arrange resubmissions in conjunction with their college and Exam Schools. The department is not involved in the process.

If a student does not submit their thesis, or fails to turn up for any of their exams, the student will be allowed to resubmit the piece or work or re-sit the exam one time; the mark of this second submission/sitting will be capped. (In most cases, it is better to hand in a bad thesis/complete an exam and fail, than to hand nothing in at all. If you find yourself in

this situation, please contact your College as soon as possible to discuss the situation with them, as all extensions or applications for mitigating circumstances must go through the college in the first instance.)

For students whose thesis fails to attain a pass mark, the Department provides two Supervisory sessions before resubmission: one at the beginning of the academic year and one when the student has a complete draft of the (revised) thesis. If a student is retaking a component of the MPhil that is assessed by unseen examination, the Department will provide a single Supervisory session to review the student's knowledge and understanding of the subject and advise on appropriate further study and revision. If a student is retaking a piece of coursework, arrangements will be made for the student to discuss with the relevant course provider an appropriate course of action to enable the coursework to be completed. Additional provision of assistance may be available to those who failed or could not complete the MPhil due to illness or circumstances outside their control.

Release of Examination Marks

On advice from the University authorities, no marks are released until after the final meeting of the Examination Board for each course (July for both the MPhil Qual and the MPhil). There will be no exceptions to this.

Details of examiners and rules on communicating with examiners

The External Examiner for the MSc in Sociology for the 2021-22 academic year is Ms Paula Surridge. The internal examiners are Prof Dowd (Chair) , Prof Kirk, Dr Block and TBC.

Students are strictly prohibited from contacting external examiners directly. If you are unhappy with an aspect of your assessment you may make a complaint or appeal (see pages 43-4).

Fees

Fees are paid termly.

MPhil students have six terms of fees in total.

Fees are charged whether or not the student is working in Oxford. Fees are not charged if the student status is formally suspended by the Graduate Studies Committee.

The residence requirement is shown below. Students must be in Oxford for this period. Residence as a Recognised Student does not count towards residence required for Oxford degrees. Additional residence requirements may apply to scholarships or other forms of funding.

Residence Requirements

For the MPhil	six terms

It is vital that every overseas student familiarises him/herself with UK Visa Rules and Regulations. Please refer to the UK Border Agency Website and the relevant section of the University Website. It is your responsibility to inform your Department and College of any change in circumstances, including address.

Suspension of Status as a Postgraduate Student

With the support of his or her Supervisor and college, students may apply to the Graduate Studies Committee for suspension of status for a specified period. If the application is approved, the candidate will not be liable to pay fees during the period of suspension and will automatically resume his or her former status at the end of the period.

The Graduate Studies Committee may consider applications for suspension on the following grounds:

- Where the student is prevented from pursuing his or her course of study in

- circumstances which are outside his or her control though there are good grounds for believing that he or she will be able to resume work within a reasonable period (e.g., physical or mental incapacity, maternity leave and unexpected domestic crises).
- To take up temporary work which is likely to be relevant to his or her subsequent career and the opportunity for which is unlikely to recur.
- Any such application should have the support of the student's Supervisor and College and should normally be for a specified period.

Candidates are expected to endeavour to complete their studies within the normal time limits for the course in question and the Graduate Studies Committee is not prepared to consider applications for suspension merely on the ground that a candidate wishes to engage, for personal reasons, in some other activity and then return to his or her postgraduate work at some later date.

Illness

The University records should show correctly for how many terms a student has been actively working on a thesis. Students whose work is unavoidably interrupted by illness are encouraged to apply for suspension of status immediately. ESRC-funded students must additionally comply with all of the ESRC's regulations for suspension of the course. Failure to comply with these regulations may have serious consequences for the Department's ability to award ESRC studentships in the future.

A candidate for the MPhil whose illness is not serious enough or of too short duration to justify suspension of status may nevertheless feel that it is likely to have an adverse effect on his or her performance in the examination. In this case he or she must ask his or her Senior Tutor, Supervisor and doctor to take up his or her case with the Proctors, who have the option, at their discretion, of writing to the examiners and asking that the candidate's illness be taken into account. Candidates should not write direct to the examiners, who cannot take account of pleas which do not arrive through the official channels.

Paid Work

There are several opportunities to teach in the department and the university in general. A limited number of Teaching Assistants is recruited for Lab Sessions and Tutorials in the Department. Please contact the Course Provider of the course you would like to teach. The Department of Politics and International Relations (DPIR) has a register of Tutors for Undergraduate teaching. DPhil students (those who have successfully Transferred Status) interested in Tutorial work should contact DPIR directly.

Your first commitment must be to your Oxford degree work, which is demanding and intensive. If you need, or wish, to undertake paid employment of any kind (whether inside or outside the University), you must first obtain the approval of your college and your supervisor. Both the College and the Department are likely to have a number of small jobs available, some of which can be combined with study. The norm for the number of hours of paid employment that graduate students may undertake for the Department are as follows: a maximum of six hours per week for taught course students and no more than ten hours per week for doctoral research students. Students may be permitted to work beyond these norms during vacations, subject to the explicit approval of their supervisor. Departmental teaching assistantships and research assistantships are advertised as and when they become available.

Please be aware that if you are a Tier 4 student visa holder you will have restrictions, which are set by the Home Office, on the number of hours you are permitted to work each week during term time. Paid and unpaid work within the University, for colleges, and for external organisations counts towards your permitted weekly hours. You will be asked to complete a declaration to ensure that you are not working in breach of these conditions

Please also consult the Education Committee's [paid work guidelines](#).

Students with external funding will need approval from their funding body before accepting employment as college lecturers, Junior Research Fellows or in other similar posts. In all such cases both student and supervisor must act in accordance with the rules of the funding body. Any ESRC-funded students must consult in the first instance Kate Gear, the ESRC Studentship Officer at the Social Sciences Division, (tel. 01865 6-14866), who will check whether the proposed employment contradicts the terms of their ESRC studentship.

Ethical Review Procedures for Research

Research Ethics Review and Approval

The University's policy and guidance on the ethical review of research undertaken by staff and students which involves human participants is available on the University website. This includes Introduction to Research Integrity and Ethics Training, compulsory for all University researchers and students. Departmental Policy on Ethical Training Requirements for Research Staff and Graduate Students (mandatory) is available from Canvas. It covers all research in which people participate in a direct way by, for example,

- answering questions about themselves or their opinions,
- or performing tasks - such as completing an online survey
- or being observed,
- all research which involves data about identified or identifiable people.

Why is ethics scrutiny and approval important?

- It is part of the responsible conduct of research.
- It demonstrates that your research has been conducted according to the highest ethical standards. It is important to protect the dignity, rights, and welfare of all those involved in the research (whether they are participants, researchers or third parties)

- It is a University requirement.
- It is now the expectation - and in some cases formal requirement - of funding bodies.

What to do

- **Check if and how you need to apply for approval**: Visit the Central University Research Ethics Committee (CUREC) site and identify if you need a CUREC form filled in using the decision flowchart. You can also check where and how to apply for ethical approval with the flowcharts here.
- **Decide whether your project needs CUREC 1A or CUREC 2**: This depends on the sort of research you are doing and the information it involves. To check which you will need, fill in the first section of the CUREC 1A form; the form will advise you whether to continue with the CUREC 1A application or start a CUREC 2. Application forms for both sorts of ethical approval are available here under "How to apply".
- **Apply well in advance**: You will not be able to undertake any research until your application has been approved. Please start the process of completing the form and gather then required material as soon as possible. When writing any CUREC application, assume that you are the expert in your topic area and explain your project methods clearly and simply. This includes giving a clear idea of potential ethical issues and how you propose to address them. Remember that the ethics committee partially relies on your expertise as a researcher in your field, in order to be clear about the ethics of a project.

It is likely your application will need documents to support it and help to explain what you are doing. These documents can be broadly classified as for external (participant) or internal (researcher) use. Documents for external use include invitation letters/emails, information sheets, written consent forms, oral consent scripts, project recruitment advertisements, participant-completion surveys, or questionnaires (paper or online). Please see the main CUREC page on informed consent for more details. Documents for internal use include sample research

instruments (researcher-completion surveys or questionnaires, semi-structured interview guides), detailed study protocols, and record of oral consent forms. Please use only documents templates approved by CUREC.

In most cases, the Departmental Research Ethics Committee (DREC) will want to see final versions of external use documents in order to check compliance with the relevant University policy. As far as possible the DREC will also want to see examples of interview schedules and draft questionnaires. (We are aware that survey questions and other research instruments evolve as part of project methodology.)

- Please complete the form electronically and send it **in Word format** from your Oxford email account to drec@sociology.ox.ac.uk . **You must sign your form and also obtain your supervisor's signature:** applications are not valid until signatures and relevant supporting documents have been provided. There is more information about signatures in the checklist itself.
- Your form will then be reviewed by the Department Research Ethics Committee. Please note that the anticipated turn around on Ethics applications is between 5 and 30 days for CUREC 1A applications and may be up to 60 days for the more complex CUREC 2 process. Once your research has received ethical approval you will receive a letter to confirm this.

Approval of research using publicly available data is usually routine. **Ideally you should have completed the process of receiving ethical approval by the time you submit your thesis topic to the GSA in Week 8 of Hilary Term of your first year.** Please ensure that you leave enough time to complete the forms, collect the requisite signatures, and for the approval process to take place. For projects requiring only CUREC 1A approval, applications submitted early in Hilary Term should have sufficient time for approval. If you believe that you may need CUREC 2 approval, please contact Agnieszka Swiejkowska (drec@sociology.ox.ac.uk), the Research Facilitator, as soon as possible in Michaelmas Term for advice.

Other resources:

- The Research Ethics Guidebook, funded by the ESRC as part of the Researcher Development Initiative and developed by a team at the University of London's Institute of Education, is a guide through ethics review and regulatory processes for social scientists.
- The Research Support Service offers several different training courses for preparing for ethical review.

Risk Assessment, Insurance and Safety Considerations for Any Travel or Fieldwork

Many students will, as part of their course, be required to undertake fieldwork. Fieldwork is considered as any research activity contributing to your academic studies, and approved by your department, which is carried out away from the University premises. This can be overseas or within the UK. The safety and welfare of its students is of paramount importance to the University. This includes fieldwork and there are a number of procedures that you must follow when preparing for and carrying out fieldwork.

COVID-19: In view of the extraordinary current situation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, research should be conducted remotely wherever possible. The University is working towards a measured, phased, and safe resumption of research that cannot be conducted remotely, including research involving face-to-face interaction with other people. Projects and related risks will be assessed on case-by-case basis. Further information and updates on the University and government guidance can be found here. Inquiries about individual projects should be sent to: drec@sociology.ox.ac.uk.

Preparation

Safe fieldwork is successful fieldwork. Thorough preparation can pre-empt many potential problems. When discussing your research with your supervisor please think about the safety implications of where you are going and what you are doing. Following this discussion and before your travel will be approved, you will be required to complete a

travel risk assessment form. This requires you to set out the significant safety risks associated with your research, the arrangements in place to mitigate those risks and the contingency plans for if something goes wrong. There is an expectation that you will take out University travel insurance. Your department also needs accurate information on where you are, and when and how to contact you while you are away. The travel assessment process should help to plan your fieldwork by thinking through arrangements and practicalities. This website contains some fieldwork experiences which might be useful to refer to.

It is vital that risk assessments and travel insurance applications are submitted **at least one month before planned travel**. Forms for high-risk travel should be submitted even further in advance, to allow the forms to be approved by the Divisional Safety Officer, and possibly by the University Safety Office.

Please submit the completed forms to Hannah Brawn – Graduate Studies Administrator (graduate-studies@sociology.ox.ac.uk) via the online system.

You are advised to talk to your Supervisor at the earliest opportunity. In addition, you should make an appointment to talk to the Graduate Studies Administrator (Hannah Brawn) **at least one month before the start of your trip**. She can provide the appropriate forms and assist with the risk assessment process.

The need to complete a risk assessment should not be seen as an obstacle, but as an integral and fundamental part of travel and fieldwork preparation. Those conducting interviews in **areas of high risk** (e.g. areas of serious political unrest) or in **an environment which poses a higher risk than the normal place of work** (e.g. interviewing prisoners in a prison) must be able to demonstrate that they have thought properly about where risk may be present and describe clearly their proposed actions to mitigate such risk as far as is reasonably possible.

As a separate but related matter, you should always provide Hannah with an itinerary and contact details for your next

of kin, in order to meet university regulations.

Training

Training is highly recommended as part of your preparation. Even if you are familiar with where you are going there may be risks associated with what you are doing.

Social Sciences Division Research and Skills Training (termly)

Full details and dates on the website.

- Preparation for Safe Fieldwork. A half day course for those carrying out social science research in rural and urban contexts
- An Insider's Guide to fieldwork. A student led course on negotiating the practical aspects of fieldwork.
- Vicarious trauma workshops. For research on traumatic or distressing topic areas or contexts.

Safety Office courses (termly)

Full details and dates on the website.

- Emergency First Aid for Fieldworkers.
- Fieldwork Safety Overseas: A full day course geared to expedition-based fieldwork.

Useful links

More information on fieldwork and a number of useful links can be found on the Social Sciences divisional website. Those travelling to risky areas or those carrying out particularly sensitive activities (*wherever* they may be being done) will be required to have their forms referred to the Safety Office for approval. Sufficient time in advance of the start of the trip must be allowed for this referral to take place.

Travel Insurance

A separate form is needed to apply for the University's travel insurance. Please note that

the University's insurance will not be valid if you do not have a valid risk assessment and do not complete this process in good time. There is no cost to students associated with taking out University travel insurance, and the policy offers a good quality of coverage.

More information on the university's scheme is available online.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office gives up-to-date advice on travel to anywhere in the world, country by country. You are strongly advised to refer to this in any case; and particularly where advisory information applies. All travel plans to FCO advisory areas must be the subject of a risk assessment and will be referred to the Safety Office by the Head of Administration and Finance. To check if your travel plans might be affected by an FCO advisory please check the website.

Some key points:

- Allow plenty of time (at least one month) before the start of your trip to do the planning and get any approvals
- The University has a duty of care to you wherever you are - when you are there on what may be perceived as legitimate university business. Research would count as such. Even if your trip is taking you home to your own country (e.g. you are a Turkish national going to do fieldwork in Turkey), you will still need to demonstrate that you have considered the risks and completed a risk assessment.
- If your fieldwork involves human participants or use of personal data, you will also need to consider the ethical implications of such activity. Detailed information on the university's policy on data protection and handling is available on Research Data website; further details on the ethics clearance process are available online.

Committees

Sociology Graduate Studies Committee

The members of the Sociology Graduate Studies Committee are:
- Dr Michael Biggs - DGS
- Dr Man Yee Kan - TCD
- Prof Takehiko Kariya
- One student representative (the student rep shall attend for unreserved business only)

For 2021/22 the Chair will be Dr Michael Biggs. The Graduate Studies Committee:
- Considers applications for admission,

- Appoints a University Supervisor for each student,
- Considers applications from students during the course of study (e.g. change of course; Transfer of Status; Confirmation of Status; Extensions of time etc.)
- Appoints examiners for MLitt and DPhil candidates
- Reviews the programme of teaching and considers changes in regulations etc.

The Committee meets twice a term (normally Tuesdays in weeks 2 and 7). It is important that students submit any applications (and all accompanying material) to the Committee (via the Graduate Studies Administrator by Friday of week 1 and Friday of week 6) in

good time for its meetings. While some matters may be dealt with under Chair's action during the vacations, this is not the norm and will not always be appropriate. Enquiries about the work of the Graduate Studies Committee should be made to the Graduate Studies Administrator. Academic records of all students are maintained centrally on the University student database. Each new record is opened on the issue of a formal notice of admission. Further information is added to students' records during their first term from matriculation forms and all records are continually updated as students' progress on their course.

Graduate Joint Consultative Committee (GJCC)

The GJCC exists to provide a forum for graduate students to put forward suggestions, comments and grievances about the courses and facilities provided by the department. It will usually meet every term in Week 3. Membership includes student representatives (two for MSc, and one each for MPhil, PRS and DPhil), Head of Department, teaching staff, and the Graduate Studies Administrator. Some secretarial support is provided by the GSA. All students are welcome to attend and are encouraged to put forward items for discussion through their representatives.

Divisional and University Representation

Student representatives sitting on the Divisional Board are selected through a process organised by the Oxford University Student Union (Oxford SU). Details can be found on the Oxford SU website along with information about student representation at the University level.

Supporting You

Problems, Advice

Students who have problems, academic, administrative, or personal, and who are uncertain of the proper way to go about solving them have several possible courses of action open to them.

Every college has their own systems of support for students, please refer to your College handbook or website for more information on who to contact and what support is available through your college. Details of the wide range of sources of support available more widely in the University are available from the Oxford Students website, including in relation to mental and physical health and disability. Furthermore, students may:

- Consult their Supervisor or the Graduate Studies Administrator in the first instance. The Taught Courses Director (Dr Man Yee Kan), the Director of Graduate Studies (Dr Michael Biggs) or the Head of Department (Prof Federico

Varese) will if necessary, consult the appropriate authorities on your behalf. The Director of Graduate Studies, Dr Biggs, is happy for students to drop in with *brief* questions when he is in the Department. For longer questions (i.e. requiring more than 15 minutes of time) an appointment *must* be booked.
- For issues about a particular course, please first talk to the course provider if appropriate.
- At your college, consult the Senior Tutor, the Tutor for Graduates, or your own College Advisor, who will give similar help.
- Consult the elected graduate representatives in the Department who will give what help and advice they can.
- Consult the Graduate Studies Office in the University Offices or the Graduate Studies section of the University website, which will advise on the obtaining of necessary forms, submission of applications, dates and deadlines, deposit of theses, etc.
- Students who are not satisfied that the Department has addressed their concerns should consider making a formal complaint to the Head of Department, Professor Federico Varese. There are also some issues which the Department cannot address, e.g.

complaints relating to exams, and a formal complaint to the Proctors must be made in these circumstances. See below for more information.

- On a more personal level, the University Counselling Service at 11 Wellington Square (which acts in a strictly confidential way) is experienced not only in general psychological problems but also in the special problems and blocks associated with academic work. Nightline is a confidential listening and information service run for students by students and is open from 8pm until 8am from 0th to 9th week each term. Students can phone (2)70270 or visit Nightline at 16 Wellington Square.
- The Disability Coordinator for the Department is the Graduate Studies Administrator.

Student Conduct

Students at Oxford are subject to two separate (but complementary) sets of disciplinary regulations: the rules and by-laws of your college provided in your college handbook, or equivalent document, and the University's conduct regulations.

The University regulations covering student conduct come from three main sources:
- University statutes, in particular Statute XI on University discipline;
- regulations, issued by: Council; the Proctors, as the University's disciplinary officers, including emergency regulations for student conduct, published in the University Gazette, notified to you by your college and remaining in force for a set period; the Rules Committee (six Congregation members and six student members who meet annually to review and issue conduct regulations); the Curators of the University Libraries; the IT Committee;
- rules on access and use, made and published by people or bodies responsible for managing University land and buildings, or operating University services and facilities.

The Examination Regulations cover a wide variety of important topics, you should read them carefully. Students who intentionally or recklessly breach regulations, or incite or conspire with others to do so, are liable to disciplinary action.

For more information please see the Student Conduct page of the University website.

Freedom of Speech

The Department is committed to upholding the freedom of speech, following the University's policy:

Free speech is the lifeblood of a university

It enables the pursuit of knowledge. It helps us approach truth. It allows students, teachers and researchers to become better acquainted with the variety of beliefs, theories and opinions in the world. Recognising the vital importance of free expression for the life of the mind, a university may make rules concerning the conduct of debate but should never prevent speech that is lawful.

Inevitably, this will mean that members of the University are confronted with views that some find unsettling, extreme or offensive. The University must therefore foster freedom of expression within a framework of robust civility. Not all theories deserve equal respect. A university values expertise and intellectual achievement as well as openness. But, within the bounds set by law, all voices or views which any member of our community considers relevant should be given the chance of a hearing. Wherever possible, they should also be exposed to evidence, questioning and argument. As an integral part of this commitment to freedom of expression, we will take steps to ensure that all such exchanges happen peacefully. With appropriate regulation of the time, place and manner of events, neither speakers nor listeners should have any reasonable grounds to feel intimidated or censored.

It is this understanding of the central importance and specific roles of free speech in a university that underlies the detailed procedures of the University of Oxford.

Policies and Regulations

The University has a wide range of policies and regulations that apply to students. These are easily accessible through the A-Z of University regulations, codes of conduct and policies available on the Oxford Students website. In particular, please note the guidance on recording of lectures.

Complaints

Complaints and academic appeals within the Department of Sociology

The University, the Social Sciences Division and the Department of Sociology all hope that provision made for students at all stages of their course of study will result in no need for complaints (about that provision) or appeals (against the outcomes of any form of assessment).

Where such a need arises, an informal discussion with the person immediately responsible for the issue that you wish to complain about (and who may not be one of the individuals identified below) is often the simplest way to achieve a satisfactory resolution.

Many sources of advice are available from colleges, faculties/departments and bodies like the Counselling Service or the Oxford SU Student Advice Service, which have extensive experience in advising students. You may wish to take advice from one of those sources before pursuing your complaint.

General areas of concern about provision affecting students as a whole should be raised through Joint Consultative Committees or via student representation on the faculty/department's committees.

Complaints

If your concern or complaint relates to teaching or other provision made by the faculty/department, then you should raise it with the Director of Graduate Studies, Dr Michael Biggs.

Complaints about departmental facilities should be made to the Graduate Studies

Administrator, Hannah Brawn. If you feel unable to approach one of those individuals, you may contact the Head of Department, Prof Federico Varese. The officer concerned will attempt to resolve your concern/complaint informally.

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome, you may take your concern further by making a formal complaint to the Proctors under the University Student Complaints Procedure. If your concern or complaint relates to teaching or other provision made by your college, you should raise it either with your tutor or with one of the college officers, Senior Tutor, Tutor for Graduates (as appropriate). Your college will also be able to explain how to take your complaint further if you are dissatisfied with the outcome of its consideration.

Academic appeals

An academic appeal is an appeal against the decision of an academic body (e.g. boards of examiners, transfer, and confirmation decisions etc.), on grounds such as procedural error or evidence of bias. There is no right of appeal against academic judgement.

If you have any concerns about your assessment process or outcome it is advisable to discuss these first informally with your subject or college tutor, Senior Tutor, course director, director of studies, supervisor or college or departmental administrator as appropriate. They will be able to explain the assessment process that was undertaken and may be able to address your concerns. Queries must not be raised directly with the examiners.

If you still have concerns you can make a formal appeal to the Proctors who will consider appeals under the University Academic Appeals Procedure.

Harassment

The Department is committed to fostering an inclusive culture which promotes equality, values diversity and maintains a working, learning and social environment in which the rights and dignity of all students are

respected. Harassment or victimisation is regarded as unacceptable behaviour and is not tolerated in any form. All members of the University are expected to treat each other fairly and with respect, courtesy, and consideration.

Help and advice can be found in the Department by contacting your Supervisor, the DGS, the GSA or the Departmental Harassment Advisor (Agnieszka Swiejkowska, the Research Facilitator).

You can also contact your college for support and advice.

For more information about where to go for help and advice, please see the Harassment webpage on the University site. You can also read the University's Harassment Policy here.

Whom to talk to about what

Academic Matters

- Supervisor

- Graduate Studies Administrator
  Hannah Brawn
  graduate-studies@sociology.ox.ac.uk

- Taught Course Director
  Dr Man Yee Kan
  man-yee.kan@sociology.ox.ac.uk

- Director of Graduate Studies
  Dr Michael Biggs
  michael.biggs@sociology.ox.ac.uk

Business of the Graduate Studies Committee

- Graduate Studies Administrator
  Hannah Brawn
  graduate-studies@sociology.ox.ac.uk

Ethics Forms

- Research Facilitator
  Agnieszka Swiejkowska
  01865 1 86177
  DREC@sociology.ox.ac.uk

Use of Departmental Facilities

- Graduate Studies Administrator
  Hannah Brawn
  graduate-studies@sociology.ox.ac.uk

Computing and IT

- Manor Road IT
  01865 2 84840
  itsupport@manor-road.ox.ac.uk

Change of Supervisor (see page 31)

- Supervisor

- Graduate Studies Administrator
  Hannah Brawn
  graduate-studies@sociology.ox.ac.uk

- Taught Course Director
- Dr Man Yee Kan
- man-yee.kan@sociology.ox.ac.uk

Confidential Advice Relating to Harassment

- University's confidential harassment number
  01865 2 70760

Equality and Diversity at Oxford

"The University of Oxford is committed to fostering an inclusive culture which promotes equality, values diversity and maintains a working, learning and social environment in which the rights and dignity of all its staff and students are respected." Equality Policy (2013).

Oxford is a diverse community with staff and students from over 140 countries, all with different cultures, beliefs, and backgrounds. As a member of the University you contribute towards making it an inclusive environment and we ask that you treat other members of

the University community with respect, courtesy, and consideration.

The Equality and Diversity Unit works with all parts of the collegiate University to develop and promote an understanding of equality and diversity and ensure that this is reflected in all its processes. The Unit also supports the University in meeting the legal requirements of the Equality Act 2010, including eliminating unlawful discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between people with and without the 'protected characteristics' of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and/or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Visit our website for further details or contact us directly for advice: equality@admin.ox.ac.uk.

The Equality and Diversity Unit also supports a broad network of harassment advisors in departments/faculties and colleges and a central Harassment Advisory Service. For more information on the University's Harassment and Bullying policy and the support available for students visit the dedicated webpage.

There are a range of faith societies, belief groups, and religious centres within Oxford University that are open to students. More information can be found here.

Student welfare and support services

The Disability Advisory Service (DAS) can provide information, advice and guidance on the way in which a particular disability may impact on your student experience at the University and assist with organising disability-related study support.

The Counselling Service is here to help you address personal or emotional problems that get in the way of having a good experience at Oxford and realising your full academic and personal potential. They offer a free and confidential service. For more information visit:

A range of services led by students are available to help provide support to other students, including the peer supporter network, the Oxford SU's Student Advice Service and Nightline. For more information, visit the webpage here.

Oxford SU also runs a series of campaigns to raise awareness and promote causes that matter to students.

There is also a wide range of student clubs and societies to get involved in.

List of Abbreviations

CUREC and DREC – University and Department Research Ethics Committees respectively, these terms also used to refer to the Ethics assessment forms
DGS – Director of Graduate Studies
DPhil – Doctor of Philosophy
DTP – Doctoral Training Partnership. Oxford is part of the Grand Union DTP with Brunel and the Open University. It is funded by the ESRC and it is the means by which several of our doctoral students receive financial support. It is also facilities various training activities open to all Oxford students.
EPC – Education Policy Committee
ESRC – Economic and Social Research Council
GJCC – Graduate Joint Consultative Committee

Grey Book – The Exam Regulations (now not produced in hard copy, can only be found online).
GSC – Graduate Studies Committee
GSR – Graduate Supervision Reporting
NCRM – National Centre for Research Methods. Maintains a UK research training courses database and offers bursaries.
Proctors – The two Proctors (Senior and Junior) have responsibilities under the statutes and regulations for aspects of student discipline, for ensuring the proper conduct of examinations and for dealing with complaints.
PRS – Probationer Research Student
SSD – Social Sciences Division
TCD – Taught Courses Director

TNA – Training Needs Analysis

For any further puzzling Oxford abbreviations
and acronyms, visit the Online Glossary.