

The following glossary is intended to clarify the terminology you'll hear as a graduate student. This glossary was made with students who are first generation or from low income/working class backgrounds in mind, but can be of benefit to everyone. It is entirely created and curated by graduate students in the department.

### Graduate School in General:

**ABD:** All but dissertation. This is the last step of your PhD, and means you have completed all requirements of the department except the defense of your dissertation. Many academic jobs, including post-docs, require this when applying.

**Adjunct:** faculty now only peripherally associated with a department or instructors who teach part-time, similar to lecturers (sometimes were previously faculty).

**Advisor:** the main professor overseeing your academic trajectory. Can be the chair of your committee. Can be co-advised by two professors.

**Associate Professor:** a professor with tenure who is not yet a full professor.

**Assistant Professor:** a professor who has not yet achieved tenure. Also called junior faculty.

**Bursar:** the financial office on campus.

**Certificate:** educational credential denoting speciality training.

**Co-Author:** someone you write a piece you intend on publishing with. Can be faculty or other graduate students (in some instances, undergraduates).

**Cohort:** the group of graduate students that start your program the same year as you. Denoted by year (first year cohort, second year cohort, etc).

**Committee:** the group of faculty responsible for approving your work at milestones. You can change committee members at different points if need be.

**CV or Curriculum Vita:** the academic equivalent of a resume. Can be as long as need be, as opposed to a resume, which is typically 1-2 pages. Templates and more information can be found [here](#).

**Empirical papers:** papers that use data to support their claims.

**Department:** division of an academic discipline housing faculty, students, and staff.

**Department chair:** faculty member in charge of day-to-day operation and liaison to the larger university.

**Direct Deposit:** a way you can set up your paycheck to go directly into your bank account.

**Dissertation:** the final “paper” you must write detailing your main research project. Is generally about 150-200 pages long. Must be defended and submitted for a PhD student to receive the PhD.

**Doctoral/PhD Student:** graduate student enrolled in a PhD program. Sometimes this designation is used only for students who have advanced to PhD candidacy, i.e., for those who are working on their dissertation or dissertation proposal.

**Faculty:** all professors and instructors in the department.

**Fellowships:** a grant given for the purpose of research. Some can pay tuition waivers, meaning you may not have to get an assistantship when using that fellowship. Are applied for.

**First Author:** person on a paper who has contributed the most intellectually. Ranking continues for second, third, fourth etc. authors.

**First Generation:** a student or academic who is the first in their family to attend college. Sometimes used in graduate school as the first in their family to attend a graduate program.

**Full Professor:** highest rank in the department. Has tenure.

**Full-time student status:** graduate student awarded certain privileges taking a certain amount of credits.

**Graduate chair:** faculty member in charge of the graduate committee.

**Graduate committee:** 3-4 faculty in the department that meet to support graduate students and discuss issues facing the graduate program.

**Grants:** money awarded to a graduate student outside of a stipend.

**Hooding:** the ceremony of getting a hood denoting a PhD at graduation. Your advisor places your hood on you.

**Instructor:** a faculty member focused on teaching. Has a higher teaching load but little to no research requirements.

**IRB:** Institutional Review Board. Proposals must be submitted to them for approval before undertaking any research with human subjects.

**Job Talk:** formal presentation given by prospective faculty when applying to a job in the department. Usually a few per hire. About an hour long, including question and answer session. There's usually free food.

**Masters of Arts:** degree received before a PhD. Can be obtained here in your third year, although you can enter the program with one. A terminal MA program means graduate students join the department with the intent of getting a masters.

**Mentor:** anyone who helps you and provides guidance in your career. Can have different mentors for teaching, grad student life, and research. The department endorses the multiple mentorship model, meaning you should be receiving advice from more than one person.

**Mixed Methods Research:** research that utilizes more than one method, usually quant and qual.

**Outside Member:** a member of your committee who is not faculty in the department.

**PhD:** Doctor of Philosophy (does not mean you studied philosophy). Final level of education. Awarded after completion of the program.

**PhD Candidate:** a doctoral student who has completed all the milestones up to their dissertation proposal defense.

**Primary/Secondary:** designations of committee members. Primary members generally create more of the thresholds of passing (like having more input writing comps questions).

**Postdocs:** a temporary job after getting a PhD usually focused on research (there are some teaching postdocs). Last 1-3 years. Usually a stepping stone to other jobs.

**Qualitative Research:** Formally, any research that does not involve statistics is qualitative, but in the department it tends to mean interviews and ethnographies. Sometimes this kind of research is called interpretive to differentiate it from other kinds of qualitative research (comparative/historical, content analysis, etc.).

**Quantitative Research:** Research that involves detailed use of statistics. Can include use of existing data sets or data collected in surveys.

**Ranking:** US world report national ranking of departments. General rule for jobs is that people get jobs in slightly lower ranked departments than their programs.

**Registrar:** keeper of records. Office on campus in charge of enrollment.

**Reviewer:** a person usually reading your articles submitted to journals and evaluating them blind, meaning they don't know it's you. Most reviews have 2-3 reviewers.

**Revise and Resubmit:** common designation for an article submitted for publication. Between a rejection and acceptance. *Usually* means that with the appropriate changes the paper will be accepted, but not always.

**R1, R2, R3:** designation of a research school. We are an R1. More information on the Carnegie Classifications [here](#).

**Seminars:** courses that are smaller. Usually but not always 2.5 hours long once a week.

**SLAC:** Small Liberal Arts College.

**Specialization:** area of sociological concept that the department has faculty with expertise in.

**Sole Authored:** an article only written by one person.

**Tenure:** a milestone achieved by faculty measured by research, teaching, and service output. Among other things, tenure means that faculty cannot be fired because the university disagrees with their research.

**Theoretical papers:** papers that focus on theoretical contributions and often don't have empirical data.

**Tuition Waiver:** comes with assistantships, means you don't have to pay for tuition.

**Undergraduate chair:** faculty member in charge of the undergraduate committee. Is a good resource for teaching concerns.

**W-2:** Tax form showing your earnings. Is mailed to you or visible in an online portal.

**1098-T:** Tax form used by students. Is mailed to you or visible in an online portal.