Overview

You’ve gotten into graduate school—no small feat in today’s competitive environment. But now what? This seminar, affectionately known as the “pro seminar,” aims to help you begin figuring that out. In other words, its central purpose is to help new graduate students get oriented to the graduate programs. Over the course of this semester, we will have the opportunity to discuss the requirements of the MA and PhD programs in sociology at UWM, the state of the sociology as academic discipline and profession, and opportunities for professional careers both within academia and beyond after you have completed your degree. The seminar will also provide students with opportunities to meet many of the Sociology Department’s faculty and to become more familiar with their research and expertise.

Grading

The course is graded S/U (i.e., “satisfactory” or “unsatisfactory”) rather than A-F. Regular attendance is required. Students who have no unexcused absences will receive an “S”, while others will receive a “U”. Bad behavior such as chronically being late or leaving early, sleeping, checking your phone, using a computer or tablet for unrelated activities, and so on will result in a “U”.

Content

My aim is to make the course responsive to students’ needs and interests. Accordingly, additional topics may be discussed as at students’ request. Many of the weekly meetings will also include visits from members of our faculty. In addition to any topics suggested by students, we may discuss topics such as the following:

- How academic departments are set up
- Impressions of the current field, career options
- Concerns and advice
- Online & other resources for research
- Choosing an MA topic and committee
- After the MA (employment/PhD program)
- Academic publishing
- Professional conferences
- The job market (faculty and non-faculty positions) for PhDs