

Joint Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Programs in Social Work and Social Science  
Funding Plan for the Implementation of a Continuous Enrollment Policy for  
Students in Ph.D. Programs

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The Joint Interdisciplinary PhD program in Social Work and Social Science (SWSS) is a partnership with the LSA Departments of Anthropology, Economics, Political Science, Psychology, and Sociology. Graduates of this Rackham Interdisciplinary program earn a PhD in Social Work and their specific social science field. They either enter the program with a MSW or earn one in the first years of their program here.

The program supports the motivations and intent of Rackham's proposed Continuous Enrollment Policy. Students in our program can benefit from changes in student support that could come with the policy. However, in order for this enrollment policy to be effective, our program must identify University sources to pay any new tuition costs for students. This document contains a description of the Joint Social Work and Social Science program's plan for student support. We are continuing to work on the details for implementing this plan.

### **Student Support**

Students in the joint SWSS program are currently admitted with a five-year funding package that includes stipend, health insurance, and tuition grants. For most students resources from the School of Social Work and Rackham fund three of the five years. The remaining two years are funded by GSI positions in their social science department. In recent years the joint SWSS program has also been allotted two Rackham Merit Fellowships and one Regents Fellowship to award to incoming students. The program works with students whose courses of study extend beyond their committed support to identify other sources of support such as GSRA or GSI positions, or internal or external fellowships. Current students often go on detached study when they are conducting fieldwork away from Ann Arbor or when their dissertation writing exceeds five years and they have their own sources of financial support.

The Continuous Enrollment Policy will eliminate these options for detached study. Our plan is to continue to offer all incoming students a five-year funding package with the same terms and sources of funding. We will re-allocate small fellowships administrated by the School of Social Work to one term of tuition during the fifth year of study. We will continue to work with students who are making satisfactory progress beyond the five-year funding package to access other sources of support such as GSRA or GSI positions, or external fellowships. If these candidates are unable to access these types of support, they will be eligible for a tuition-only fellowships coordinated between the Joint SWSS Program and the relevant LSA social science department. It is assumed, but not yet confirmed, that our partner programs will fund students in proportion to the tuition attribution model.

## **Satisfactory Academic Progress**

All students in the Joint SWSS Program are required to complete an annual evaluation of progress. The progress report identifies a timeline and benchmarks for program requirements. These reports are reviewed by the Supervisory Committee of the Joint SWSS Program and a feedback letter is sent by the director of the PhD program to each doctoral student. This process recognizes that there are individual differences in progress toward the degree that may reflect personal circumstances, disabilities and other limitations, mentoring and advising issues, and the nature of the student's project.

Students who are not making satisfactory progress will be given written notice, and provided guidance on what needs to be accomplished in a given time period in order to return to satisfactory progress status again. Students who are given notice of a lack of satisfactory progress are eligible for additional terms of tuition-only fellowship support to provide them the opportunity of making the necessary progress to regain satisfactory standing. Students who do not meet the agreed-on progress milestones will not be eligible for further tuition support until they complete them and have a plan for continued progress. Students whose personal circumstances and situations are interfering with progress will be referred to appropriate support services and may be encouraged to take a 1-2 year leave of absence.

## **Estimate of Increased Terms of Registration**

Based on the current enrollments in the joint program, and an analysis of the registration patterns of current and past candidates, we estimate that there will be an increase in registrations, and we are working to determine a good estimate. Coverage for the tuition costs associated with this increased registration will come from the School of Social Work, and Rackham, and the participating social science departments in LSA.

## **Funding Available for Tuition Payments**

The Joint SWSS Program plans to fund its share of the tuition-only fellowships with savings associated with the expected reduction in the candidacy tuition rate, partial funding from the LSA social science departments, and support from Rackham. Furthermore, the School of Social Work will use small additional award support as described earlier.

## **Process**

The director of the Joint SWSS Ph.D. program will coordinate with the relevant LSA departments when students in the program requires support and must register due to the continuous enrollment policy change. Together, they will determine the appropriate source to fund and process the tuition-only fellowship, and the duration for which students will be eligible. The director of the Joint SWSS Ph.D. program will also continue to work with Rackham to develop a detailed implementation approach for this plan.

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