

SDSU/UCSB GEOGRAPHY JOINT DOCTORAL PROGRAM

STUDENT'S HANDBOOK

Academic Year 2024-2025

SDSU

College of Arts and Letters
Geography



Updated August 2024

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SDSU/UCSB GEOGRAPHY JOINT DOCTORAL PROGRAM

DOCTORAL STUDENT'S HANDBOOK

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the **San Diego State University/University of California, Santa Barbara Joint Doctoral Program (JDP) in Geography**. The cooperating faculties of the Department of Geography at San Diego State University and the University of California, Santa Barbara offer the JDP. The research interests of the participating faculty members cover a range of geographic problems. The joint doctoral program offers work leading to the Ph.D. in the following systematic areas (Group A) with supporting development of skills in spatial techniques (Group B):

Group A – Systematic Areas

- Human Geography — Urban, Social, and Political Geography
- Environmental Geography — Society and Environment, Watershed/Ecosystems Analysis
- Physical Geography — Biogeography, Climatology, Hydrology, Landscape Ecology
- Geographic Information Science and Technology

Group B – Spatial Analytical Methods and Techniques

- Spatial Statistics
- Qualitative Methods and Ethnography
- Cartography and Internet Mapping
- Geocomputation and Spatial Modeling
- Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
- Remote Sensing and Image Processing
- Visualization and Visual Data Mining
- Spatial Decision Support Systems and Participatory GIS

Each student's program is designed around one of the areas selected from Group A and at least one of the technique emphases selected from Group B. Ph.D. students must attain the requisite skills in programming, statistics, mathematics, and foreign language necessary to successfully pursue their research goals.

This handbook provides information that doctoral students need during their time in the program. The handbook is organized in chronological order and addresses procedures and policies that govern the program. Any omissions or errors should be brought to the attention of the JDP Director and the Graduate Program Coordinator at SDSU.

FACULTY AND STAFF INFORMATION

SDSU, Academic Year 2024-2025

Department Chair:

Dr. Fernando Bosco, Professor of Geography, fbosco@sdsu.edu

SDSU/UCSB JDP Advisor/Director:

Dr. Piotr Jankowski, Professor of Geography, pjankows@sdsu.edu

Administrative Staff:

Candra Young, Department Coordinator, candra.young@sdsu.edu

UCSB, Academic Year 2023-2024

Department Chair

Dr. Trisalyn Nelson, Professor of Geography, trisalyn@ucsb.edu

SDSU/UCSB JDP Advisor and Vice Chair

Dr. Alan Murray, amurray@ucsb.edu

Administrative Staff

Sam Rifkin, Student Programs Manager and Graduate Program Advisor,
rifkin@geog.ucsb.edu

Alycia Lewis, Business Officer, alycia@geog.ucsb.edu

For a list of all JDP faculty at SDSU and UCSB, consult webpages at:

- <https://geography.sdsu.edu>
- <http://geog.ucsb.edu>

INITIAL PROCEDURES AT SDSU

CONTRACT AND APPOINTMENT

Students receive contract and appointment information prior to arriving on campus. Most of the sign-in process is done on-line, except for your check in appointment with Human Resources. Follow all the instructions that are sent to you and sign your contract and other paperwork so that your appointment can begin when the academic year begins. You must complete all necessary payroll forms by your contracted start date in order to ensure that the first pay warrant will not be delayed. You will need to provide a copy of your signed contract to the Graduate Programs Coordinator. You must supply Human Resources with your social security card prior to your pay warrant being issued. The University uses a “Red ID” number as your official ID number; that number will be listed on your student SDSUcard. You were assigned that number at the time of your application to the program.

The SDSUcard is the official campus wide identification, and it has multiple useful features. Without a SDSUcard, you can't get much done on campus. It is also used as a swipe card for entrance to our labs and a library card that allows you faculty-borrowing privileges. Information about the [SDSUcard can be found here](#)

You may receive a benefits packet containing information on the various insurance programs, if you qualify. You will need to decide which programs you want and sign up for them with Personnel. Assuming you properly sign-in by the listed deadlines, your first paycheck will arrive on **October 1** per CSU policy. You will continue to be paid once a month through September 1 of the following year. Also, your health insurance (if qualified) should be effective on October 1, if you signed up for benefits by mid-September. If you did not receive health insurance as part of your offer you will be required to purchase student health insurance, more information here - <https://grad.sdsu.edu/current-students/insurance>.

Payday is generally the last day of the month (you will receive a payday schedule) and checks are ready for dispersal by about 4:00 PM. The University provides direct deposit of payroll checks if you wish it.

Work assignment and orientation

During the first week of each semester, you will receive your assignment, supervisor, and list of duties. You should check in with your listed supervisor to clarify your responsibilities for the semester. Being titled a Teaching Associate does not mean that you will necessarily have teaching responsibilities all semesters, though you should expect teaching duties during your program (more on this below).

You'll be assigned one or more faculty whom you'll be assisting. Be sure to see them as soon as possible. It is imperative that you attend the beginning of year Doctoral Program Orientation

Meeting held the week before classes start in the fall semester. The JDP Director and the Graduate Programs Coordinator will give an orientation and answer questions you might have

Financial Support

Unless a JDP student is funded by an external grant or fellowship, **financial support** will come from SDSU—including for the year at UCSB. It has been the Department’s policy to support its doctoral students for four years, assuming that students make normal progress towards the degree and discharge their associateship responsibilities adequately. Additionally, Ph.D. students’ instructional fees/tuition are paid by SDSU. The miscellaneous fees must be paid by the student, unless other arrangements were made at the time of the offer of admission. Your offer letter contained the level of support that you can expect during the program.

Appointments as Teaching Associates provide full healthcare, dental, and vision insurance as well as several other benefits. Appointments as Graduate Assistants do not provide full healthcare and require purchasing a graduate health insurance plan or presenting proof of an alternative health insurance. There are strict deadlines for signing up for benefits, so please read your benefit materials carefully. When you sign in at SDSU Human Resources, you will receive information on the benefits orientation. Please plan on attending this. When you sign up for your various plans, talk to other students and check out the availability of the providers in, not only San Diego, but in Santa Barbara as well. *UCSB requires that you have a health care provider within 25 miles.* If not, you will be required to pay more than \$800 per quarter for their health coverage. Since open enrollment is only once a year, check into your plan prior to signing up, as SDSU will not cover the UCSB health fee. These funding relationships will remain in place barring some type of financial calamity beyond our control or significant changes in University policy affecting benefits.

OTHER INFORMATION FOR THE FIRST SEMESTER

Office, keys, email, and parking

You will be assigned an **office**. Departing graduate students usually are out of their offices by August 10, so if you arrive after that date you should be able to move right into your new office. There will be a computer in your office, which you will share with your office mate(s).

After getting an office, you’ll need **keys**. You will receive a key authorization form via email. Once you receive instructions, you should follow instructions to pick up your keys from Public Safety’s Key Issue Office located next to Peterson Gym (across from the Aztec Recreation Center) along with your Red ID. If you lose your key or do not return it by the deadline, there will be a charge of at least \$50 per key.

Pay close attention to emails that you receive regarding key return. If you do not return keys or renew keys by the deadlines, you will be fined.

All students receive an SDSUId (@sdsu.edu) email when they commit to attending SDSU. You will receive instructions and further information about activating email separately. Please contact the department technical staff if you have any questions about email.

If you have a TA position then you are entitled to faculty parking privileges. If you have a GA position, then you are not entitled to faculty parking privileges. To purchase a permit, you will need to use the Aztec Parking Portal: <https://bfa.sdsu.edu/campus/parkingtrans/parkingportal>. You will need to know your Red ID number and have your vehicle's information (make, license number, etc.), readily available.

Establishing California residency

Because of the high cost of non-resident tuition, we require that our Ph.D. students who are U.S. citizens but not California residents become **California residents** during their first year in the program. You must begin the process as soon as you can and immediately after you arrive on campus, so that you can qualify for the following academic year (deadline is September 20th of your **first** year). Although the Office of the Registrar looks at each petition individually, some steps that you should take to establish residency would be:

- Remain in California when school is not in session.
- Register to vote and vote in California elections.
- Designate your California address as permanent on all school and employment records, including current military records.
- Obtain a California driver's license within 10 days of settling in California. (If you've never had a driver's license in any state, then obtain a California identification card.)
- If you have a car, obtain a California motor vehicle registration within 20 days of settling in California.
- Work in California and file California resident income tax forms from the date of entry into the state. Income earned outside of California after that date must also be declared in California. You must also not be listed as a dependent on a tax return of any other state other than California.
- Establish and maintain active bank accounts in California banks and close out-of-state accounts.
- Surrender all out-of-state identification (including driver's license).
- Establish a permanent home where your belongings are kept.

You are encouraged to complete several of these steps before the semester begins. If you fail to become a California resident, you will be required to pay the non-resident fees starting from Year 2! For more information regarding residency requirements, please peruse [the Office of the Registrar's website](#)

Vaccinations

You will need to prove that you have **had a measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccination** prior

to the end of your first semester at SDSU. Bring your inoculation records or show proof of immunity. Otherwise, you can get low-cost vaccinations at Student Health Services on campus.

Housing

The Geography graduate program at SDSU is pretty large. We normally support 15 to 20 doctoral teaching associates/graduate assistants and a similar number of master's-level graduate assistants.

Additionally, there are other full-time graduate students and post-doctoral researchers here. As a result, our graduate students represent a wide range of people at different stages of their lives and have discovered an array of housing accommodations to meet their varied situations. In short, your new colleagues are a great source of information on housing and other matters of critical interest to you as a newcomer to the Department and, perhaps, the San Diego community.

Moreover, many of our current graduate students would be glad to share their knowledge with you, having recently experienced just what you'll be going through. There is a **Facebook group** related to housing that is organized by the graduate students and that is used to share information: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/130650597514010/>.

Another good idea would be to contact the current doctoral student representative, whose contact information is available on the department's website. There are two graduate student-oriented apartment complexes that are near campus and run by the university, but no family student housing. The following web sites are pertaining to housing:

- SDSU Housing Office <http://housing.sdsu.edu/housing/>
- SDSU International Students Office http://go.sdsu.edu/student_affairs/isc/
- San Diego Union Tribune newspaper ads for rental housing <http://www.utsandiego.com/news/real-estate/>
- San Diego Reader newspaper ads for rental housing <http://www.sdreader.com/>

International Students

If you are an **international student**, you should check in with the International Student Office. It is located in the International Student Center on the far west side of campus (across the parking lot from Storm Hall at the corner of 55th and Aztec Circle Drive). There is a mandatory orientation for new international students each fall semester. [For specific information, check their website](#)

THE FIRST SEMESTER AT SDSU

ENROLLMENT AND FULL-TIME STATUS

For those of you with student loans from your previous encounters with institutions of higher education, remember that the Office of Financial Aid requires you to be a **full-time student**. If you have come here from another campus, be sure to update your enrollment information with your student loan providers (if you had student loans in the past). The Graduate Division considers "full time" for a graduate student to be at least 9 units of course units or any number of

units of GEOG 897 or 899 (at least one unit of 897 or 899). Note that Graduate Studies only pays fees for 6 units each semester (after the first semester of your first year and even then you need to request permission). This can and usually does cause confusion or some issues if you are applying for a scholarship, but do not panic. There are different definitions of full time depending on the purpose. Some scholarships or source of aid may have a different definition of full time, so please check this out carefully prior to registration to make sure you fulfill the requirements that you need based on your individual situation. SDSU's Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships has more detailed information on [eligibility requirement for scholarships](#)

Registration deadlines

SDSU uses a web-based registration system. No hard copies of the class schedule are available. Be sure to check with Dr. Jankowski, or the Graduate Programs Coordinator before registering. The deadline to add and drop courses at SDSU occurs just after the first two weeks of classes. You must complete your course registration by the deadline. If you fail to drop a course and receive an unofficial withdrawal grade, it will count the same as an F (no grade points) and deliver a fatal blow to your ability to maintain the required 3.0 GPA.

Required courses

There is no specified number of units in the doctoral program beyond the common core courses, Geog. 700 and Geog. 701, which you are required to take at SDSU. In addition to a broad understanding of modern geographic principles, you have to acquire the requisite theoretical, methodological, and, when appropriate, language skills needed to make you expert in your areas of specialization.

First semester Ph.D. students usually take 6 units of credit. Your fees for 6 units will be paid by the University. One of the courses you should take during the first semester is *Geography 701: Seminar in Development of Geographic Thought*, unless you already completed it as a MA/MS student at SDSU, or you completed a similar course during your master's studies at a different university. Either way, you must receive permission from the JDP Director to waive Geography 701. Also, SDSU will only pay for units that are necessary for your doctoral program, so be sure to see your adviser prior to enrollment in any courses.

Program specializations

The program is centered on a limited number of specializations, as listed in the introduction to this handbook and in SDSU's Graduate Bulletin. By the end of the fall semester or, at worst, by early spring semester you should have decided on your systematic specialties and methodological emphasis, developed a comprehensive plan of coursework and a rough timetable for completing your degree. You will need to work closely with your Interim Adviser during this process. This should help you to identify the specific foci of your program and whom you wish to invite to serve as your Dissertation Chair and the other members of your Joint Doctoral Committee, including those from UCSB. Once you've reached this point, you can officially form your Joint Doctoral Committee with the consent of the JDP Director.

INTERIM ACADEMIC ADVISER AND INTERIM ADVISING COMMITTEE

When you arrive to the program, your interim academic advisor at SDSU will be the professor who “sponsored” you during the admission process. In addition, the professor who “sponsored” you at UCSB will be a member of your interim advising committee. You and your interim academic advisor will select an additional one or two faculty members (both at SDSU and UCSB) to become members of this interim advising committee. The **interim adviser and interim advising committee** will continue to work with you until you designate a Dissertation Chair and put together your Doctoral Committee.

ENTRANCE SURVEY AND DIAGNOSTIC INTERVIEW

During the first weeks of classes you will be asked by the JDP Director to complete an entrance survey by providing brief responses about your: (1) academic strengths; (2) academic weaknesses; (3) general topic(s) you think might be involved in your dissertation research; (4) faculty members you are interested in working with; (5) goals and objectives for the program; and (6) career objectives following receipt of your doctorate. We will also ask you to indicate the areas where you feel a need for course work. You will also be given a “**4-Year Progress Calendar**” and asked to develop a timetable for completing your doctoral program. On the calendar, you will need to indicate what you expect to complete each year until receiving your degree. You should work through this exercise with your Interim Academic Advisor.

These items will serve as the basis for your **Diagnostic Interview**, which should take place before the end of October. You will arrange for your interim advising committee to meet with you to discuss your background and interests. The UCSB sponsor may participate by Zoom, and should at the very least be notified about the outcome of the Diagnostic Interview if for some reason he or she is unable to participate. During the Diagnostic interview you will discuss your proposed program of study, including potential courses (listed in the Entrance Survey) and timing of your residency at UCSB. The committee will make recommendations regarding additional preparation or remediation that you might require, and courses to meet your immediate needs as well as working with you to develop a broad outline of your doctoral program and time table.

DEPARTMENT CULTURE AND LIFE AS A GRADUATE STUDENT

MEETING AND INTERACTING WITH STUDENTS AND FACULTY MEMBERS

Once you are signed in, have an office, registered for classes, and know your way around, your primary focus in this Ph.D. program has to be your academic work. Ultimately, the graduate

student experience is only as substantial as you and your fellow graduate students make it, so stretch yourself intellectually and challenge your classmates to do the same. If you are like most doctoral students you will learn as much from your colleagues as you will from your classes and professors. Work hard and excel academically.

You should make a real effort to **introduce yourself** to all of the faculty in the Department. The week before classes is a good time to do this because almost everyone is around and there are a lot of unfamiliar faces lurking the hallways. All of the faculty have an open-door policy, specifically during their office hours, so you can just wander from open office door to open office door letting people know who you are. This will allow you and the faculty to attach faces to names and helps to create good feelings on all sides. You'll probably be surprised at how interested most faculty will be to meet you.

The department has several graduate student groups: the Geography Graduate Student Association (GGSA), a chapter of Supporting Women in Geography (SWIG), a chapter of the American Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing (ASPRS), and the Volunteer Hazard Mapping Corps (VHMC). These groups complement the department's formal activities. For example, the GGSA includes a funding peer who typically provides information on funding opportunities.

An academic department such as our is successful when everyone contributes to creation of an intellectual environment conducive to the free exchange of ideas. Constructive and civil critique of others' ideas, teaching, and written work are an important part of healthy academic exchange. The everyday 'hallway' relationship between graduate students and faculty should be defined by professional collegiality.

INTERACTING WITH YOUR DISSERTATION CHAIR AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

As a Ph.D. student, you have a **very** large part of the responsibility for assuring you progress through your doctoral studies. Along with your Dissertation Chair, you will determine the timing of virtually all of the elements of your program and the clearing of the various hurdles separating you from the doctorate degree. **Therefore, it is critical that you establish and maintain frequent and regular contact with your Dissertation Chair, your UCSB sponsor and later on, your other committee members.**

It is a really good idea to establish a schedule of monthly meetings with your Dissertation Chair to discuss your progress to date and upcoming activities related to your program. Periodically, you should revisit your "4-Year Progress Calendar" and revise it as needed. This is first completed as part of the Diagnostic Interview and it is described later in this handbook. Also, make contact by phone or email now and then with the UCSB faculty on your committee in order to keep them abreast of your situation. In this way, you will be able to keep communications open and information flowing. Further, this will enable you to avoid a situation where you would be talking to your committee members only when you "need something" from them.

DUTIES AND EXPECTATIONS OF A TEACHING ASSOCIATE/GRADUATE ASSISTANT

During your time at both SDSU and at UCSB, you will be paid as a teaching associate or a Graduate Assistant. We often give doctoral students an opportunity to teach and, in most cases, doctoral teaching associates will be required to perform teaching duties. We encourage all doctoral students to teach at least one course during their tenure in the program so as to gain valuable teaching experience. Such experience allows doctoral students to assess their interest and aptitude for college-level teaching. This experience is also necessary for attaining academic teaching positions after graduation.

Doctoral students will submit a teaching request form to the Department Chair every January to plan for the upcoming academic year. This will give the Chair information about the courses that a particular student is qualified / prepared to teach, and also allows the department to determine which students are available to teach. If you are given a teaching assignment for the Fall Semester, you can use part of the summer to review texts, develop a syllabus, and do the other things you need to do to get a class organized.

Teaching workshop

All doctoral students are required to complete the **Teaching College Geography workshop** that the Department offers before the start of the fall semester. You should take this course in the late summer before your first-year teaching. The workshop is informal; no credits are assigned, but a certificate of completion is provided. The workshop meets for two days prior to the start of the fall semester. For questions about this workshop, please speak with Dr. John O’Leary (oleary@sdsu.edu).

Assigned time

For any non-teaching activities (such as faculty or personal research), you are allocated “assigned time” for research. Each semester, you are required to submit a summary of the activities undertaken as part of your teaching associateship. About a month prior to the end of the semester at SDSU (even for those at UCSB), you will receive an email requesting a summary of your “assigned time” activities. For this summary, you should include your semester activities: research, presentations, publications and other activities. Please be sure to submit the form to the Geography Administrative Coordinator in a timely manner, once the information is requested.

Colloquia attendance

During your time at SDSU, **attendance to the Department of Geography colloquia presentations is expected (and implicitly mandatory)**, even though we do not take roll or give formal unit credit, as is done at UCSB for GEOG 201 (see below). During your first year, it is likely that attendance to colloquia and/or presentations will be mandatory, as it is typically a required component of GEOG 701 and GEOG 700. However, even if you are not

taking these courses or if you are not a first-year doctoral student, you are still expected to attend the colloquia. We see the colloquia as part of your doctoral training; moreover, attending presentations and colloquia is part of regular academic life and part of your ongoing professional development. Finally, weekly colloquia contribute to the creation of a vibrant academic culture in the department. Your attendance is expected as part of being a good department citizen.

Annual Report and Assigned Time Report

At the end of each academic year your advisor will complete **an annual progress report of your academic and teaching associateship activities, irrespective of your funding status.** Your advisor will comment on your course work and other formal academic activities (e.g., special studies, independent research, directed readings); proposal development, written and oral exam preparation/completion, dissertation research/writing; and academic activities recommended for the coming summer and start of the coming academic year.

Your Annual Report is a key component used by the Chair of the Department and the Ph.D. committee to measure your progress in the JDP and to determine continuation of your funding.

At about the same time, you will be asked to provide the Geography Administrative Coordinator with a description of your accomplishments for the year and of your duties as a teaching associate/graduate assistant. This is known as an “assigned time report” and it is mandatory for state employees appointed as teaching associates or graduate assistants.

GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS

Very early on you should be thinking about extramural funding opportunities for your dissertation research. There are numerous **grants and fellowships** available to doctoral students to support their dissertation research. Among these are Fulbright-Hays Fellowships, National Science Foundation Dissertation Improvement Grants, NASA Earth Science Fellowships, and many, many other sources of funding both great and small. We strongly urge you to apply for dissertation funding, not only because of the monetary support it brings but also for the longer-term benefits that derive from feeling comfortable in the competitive application process and the professional prestige that comes from attaining such grants or fellowships. The general philosophy of the participating faculties is that extramural funding from grants, contracts, and fellowships should help to augment and not replace the funding provided by SDSU. In addition, SDSU has a competitive [University Graduate Fellowship](#) for Ph.D. students that funds two years of a stipend without teaching obligations. This is ideal for Ph.D. students in their third and fourth year of the program. Talk to your Dissertation Chair about it if you are interested, since it requires sponsorship.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS AND TRAVEL SUPPORT

Regular attendance and presentation at conferences is an essential component of professional life. These include local, regional, national, and international conferences and workshops.

Attendance of the annual AAG and/or AGU meetings, for example, are vital for doctoral students because it is as an opportunity to present your work and to build your professional network. Regional or local conferences, such as the annual APCG (Association of Pacific Coast Geographers) meeting, often provide a smaller and friendly setting to learn the ins and outs of academic conferences. Local and regional conferences are also more budget friendly and they allow you to meet and interact with graduate students and faculty from other institutions. The annual ESRI conference that takes place in San Diego is also a good option for doctoral students interested in geo-spatial techniques. Talk to your dissertation chair for advice and planning to present your work at a conference.

It is often a good idea to start by giving your first presentation at a regional conference during your first or second year in the program, and then move to a national level conference during your third or fourth year in the program. Presenting at a national conference after you have advanced to candidacy and are at an advanced stage of your dissertation is essential if you are planning on pursuing an academic career.

The department attempts to support conference travel of JDP students at the candidacy/advanced dissertation stage by offsetting some of the costs of registration and travel. The department Chair typically announces availability of funds and eligibility at the beginning of the fall semester.

PUBLISHING YOUR WORK

All doctoral students should pursue publication at some point since this is essential to academic life. Initial publications are often co-authored with your dissertation chair and/or UCSB committee members if they were involved in the research. However, single author publications are also possible and encouraged. For example, many doctoral students begin writing for academic journals with book reviews, research brief, or a commentary before attempting a full-blown research piece on their own. Always talk with your dissertation chair and or committee members about your publication plans.

When publishing in an academic journal or other academic outlet, JDP students must acknowledge their affiliation with the departments of Geography at both institutions (SDSU and UCSB).

PLANNING FOR THE YEAR AT UCSB

BASIC TIMELINE

As part of the joint doctoral program, you are required to spend at least one academic year in **full-time residence at UCSB**, defined as three consecutive quarters of full-time enrollment, not including the summer. In order to maximize the utility of that experience, you'll be ready to go once you've decided on a Dissertation Chair, selected your specializations, and have a firm grasp of your dissertation topic. Generally, students spend the second year in the program at UCSB. You must enroll at UCSB during a continuous academic year, following the Fall/Winter/Spring

quarter sequence.

VISITING UCSB

During your first year at SDSU it's a good idea to **visit UCSB**. This will give you an opportunity to meet some of the graduate students and faculty there as well as see the surroundings and familiarize yourself with the campus. Such a sojourn would probably be most useful to you if it comes after you have selected a Dissertation Chair and areas of specialization. You should try to meet with your UCSB sponsor and talk to anyone else you think might be appropriate for your Doctoral Committee. Be sure to phone and/or e-mail ahead and make appointments! Otherwise, you might strikeout during your visit.

Prior to arriving at UCSB

In addition, there is some groundwork you should do before going to UCSB. About six months prior to your first quarter in Santa Barbara, you should contact your UCSB sponsor (or sponsors if you have more than one) to let them know that you're coming and to find out if they are going to be available to work with you during your time at UCSB. This alerts them to your intentions and allows you a chance to get them recommitted to your efforts. A good entree for this discussion would be to email an abstract of your potential dissertation topic for comment. Also make a visit to the UCSB campus so that you can try to meet with your sponsor(s) and to talk to other faculty that might be potential committee members. You should be able to get tentative class schedules for your time there that can be used in determining your course work possibilities. You'll be able to scope-out housing options in Isla Vista, Goleta, Ellwood Beach, downtown, or Montecito, too. Also be sure to talk with your joint program colleagues currently at UCSB for the current scoop on what's going on. During your stay at UCSB, you are encouraged to: (1) further develop your dissertation topic and reading list for your written examination, (2) meet regularly with your UCSB committee members – taking pertinent courses that they offer is an excellent way to establish greater rapport with them, and (3) plan your written examination.

Housing at UCSB

Graduate housing is available at UCSB (<https://www.housing.ucsb.edu/current-residents/move-in/graduate-apartments>).

Single graduate students typically apply for housing between March 1 and May 15 each year and the results are announced by mid-June. Recently, new graduate students have been guaranteed housing in the San Clemente Villages (graduate apartments) if they apply on time. The SDSU Graduate Coordinator will give your name to UCSB, which allows UCSB to place you on the priority list as a first-year graduate student.

There is also information for [family housing](#) at UCSB. The wait can be long: up to two years for couples with no children and about a year or less for families with children. **This generally means getting on the list as soon as you enter the program.** The application process involves

creating a login name and password. If you create a login name and password for family housing very early (like September of the previous year), you may have to keep renewing it about every three months to ensure that you are still on the waiting list for family housing.

Other housing possibilities can be explored from a distance if one of the joint students at UCSB posts a notice on the Geography Department's email listserv (gradb). Indicate the accommodations you need, how much you're willing to pay, and when you'd like to move in. UCSB's Housing and Residential Services Office maintains an extensive listing of rooms, apartments, and houses for rent that you can check out upon arriving. Remember that if you're starting at UCSB in the Fall Quarter (late September), you should have your housing situation sorted out before the end of August because after that it becomes more difficult. Some of your classmates will be going through the same process as you, so pooling resources might be helpful.

THE FIRST QUARTER AT UCSB

Financial aid while at UCSB

Your financial aid will be administered through UCSB during your residency there. If you are unsure if the change in schools has been recognized, upon enrolling at UCSB you may want to contact the lenders of any student loans that you may have to notify them that you will be attending UCSB and are requesting a deferment based upon full time enrollment at another institution. The lenders will send a form to UCSB for verification after you have initiated the deferment request. If you have any problems, please see the Geography Administrative Coordinator, SH 314. In addition, when you leave UCSB to return to SDSU, please notify Financial Aid at UCSB as well.

Beginning procedures at UCSB

During the summer, the UCSB Geography Student Program Manager will set up your geography email address as well as add your email to the new year's cohort.

The Fall Quarter at UCSB normally begins in late September, but you need to give yourself time to get everything sorted out. You won't have much time when classes start because quarters move very quickly. You should arrive by mid-September. The new student orientation and classes begin the week of September 20th. There are some people in the Geography Department office that you must meet. The UCSB's **Student Programs Manager** (in the Department of Geography) will handle all of your paperwork. Introduce yourself to this person as soon as possible; given the joint nature of the program, there will invariably be times where you will need the assistance of the person in this position. SDSU will continue to pay your registration fees while you're at UCSB and the Student Programs Manager will help you handle the paperwork between the Department and the Graduate Division at UCSB. They will also show you where your mail can be found, how to get photocopies, access to phones, fax services, and office keys. You may receive bills for registration fees. The SDSU Graduate Division will pay these fees in late September, so there is no need to make any payments. If any benefits are held

up due to nonpayment of fees, please contact the Geography Administrative Coordinator at SDSU immediately to clear up things.

Once at UCSB, the first source of information for what courses to take should be your **UCSB sponsor** (the person who acts as your advisor while at UCSB). Talk with your sponsor(s) to go over your intended course of study, qualifying exam subjects, and dissertation work. This is best done early in your stay, ideally prior to registering.

At the beginning of each quarter and particularly the first, make an appointment to see your UCSB faculty sponsor. In addition to finalizing your classes and independent research credits, you should make sure that the two of you are on the same page for your graduate assistant duties and any resource requirements that you may have (e.g., office space, computer or laboratory access, etc.). Office space is assigned automatically, and it will be in your UCSB sponsor's space.

Registration at UCSB

Registration information was emailed to you in May. Registration is done through the [GOLD web site](#). Make sure to do it as early as possible. International students need to pick-up registration information at the Office of International Students and Scholars on campus.

Orientation at UCSB

Prior to the start of the fall quarter, the Student Programs Manager from the UCSB Geography Department will schedule **a full day orientation for all new graduate students**. During this orientation, you will be introduced to staff, faculty, and graduate students. The following topics will be covered: registration, health services, room access card, and library access. Make sure you go to this because you'll find out important course requirements, and be given information on access to all the department's labs. Be there or be left out! You will have a mailbox in the Department office.

While at UCSB, your salary continues to be **paid by SDSU**, but we do "assign" your time to the UCSB faculty. Normally, you should be assigned as a graduate student researcher to your sponsor, unless you have another source of funding (i.e., fellowship). It is your responsibility to check with your sponsor regarding how you will be funded. However, you are not expected to TA while at UCSB.

ENROLLMENT IN COURSES AT UCSB

You are required to enroll in at least 12 units every quarter at UCSB if you have an academic appointment (GSR, TA, Reader, Teaching Associate). The UC System takes a head count at the end of the 3rd week of the quarter and we get credit for full-time Ph.D. students only if they are enrolled in 12 or more units.

There are **two required courses** for joint doctoral program students at UCSB. You must enroll in **Geography 201 - Colloquium** each quarter (this course is for a S/U grade only). As part of this course, you will be asked to make a presentation about your research during the Spring quarter. In addition, you must enroll in **Geography 200A: Introduction to Geographic Research** (2 units- also for a S/U grade). It is offered during Fall quarter and includes presentations and discussions by department faculty of research areas in the department. This course can help you select your committee members from the UCSB Geography department.

Additional units should be obtained through independent research studies courses: Geog 596 - Directed Reading and Research (2-8 units - letter grade). Geog 597 - Individual Study for Ph.D. Examinations (1-12 units- S/U grade only). **However, you must take a course for a letter grade during your first quarter at UCSB (see next section)**

All of the courses above require that you enroll with an **instructor # and/or approval code (approval codes are needed for research units)** so that the Registrar knows who is giving you the grade. Instructor codes can be found at the UCSB Geography departmental website, <https://www.geog.ucsb.edu/academics/graduate/courses>. Request an approval code from the

Student Programs Manager for Geog 596 and 597.

Other methodological courses that you take during your year at UCSB include:

Geog 210A: Analytical Methods in Geography I (4 units). Offered in Fall quarter, it is an introduction to analytical methods for geography research. It is a great class if you need to brush up your math. Emphasis is placed on solving geographically relevant problems and their documentation.

Geog 210B: Analytical Methods in Geography II (4 units). Offered in Winter quarter, it covers statistical principles and practice of analyzing geographical data. Emphasis is placed on exploratory data analysis and graphical techniques.

Geog 210C: Analytical Methods in Geography III (4 units). Offered in Spring quarter, it is an overview of key concepts in spatial statistics, including measures of spatial association and models for spatial regression, point processes and random fields. Geostatistical methods for analysis and interpolating continuous and area (lattice) data.

You can also take courses related to your research interests in other departments and academic units at UCSB.

Establishing a GPA at UCSB

You must establish a GPA while you are enrolled at UCSB. If you don't, UCSB Graduate Division will send a "subject to academic probation" notice because your GPA has fallen below a 3.0. Because Geog 201, 200A and 597 are S/U graded courses, it's easy to end up with no GPA. You need to be sure and register for at least one letter graded course such as Geog 596 or a regular course. **Be sure you take at least one course each quarter for a letter grade (of B or better).**

Please remember that quarters move fast. Finally, keep in contact with your sponsor(s) and run ideas by them. Remember, directed readings and special studies are great ways to keep actively involved with your sponsors and, in many cases, a good way to prepare yourself for your qualifying exams.

LIBRARY PRIVILEGES AT UCSB

Joint doctoral students have full library privileges at UCSB upon their arrival. Book borrowing privileges should be active as soon as a student ID card is received. The UCSB netID is used to access all of the Library's online journals and databases.

Once students become doctoral candidates, book borrowing privileges expand to 1-year. Details regarding loan periods for books are available online (<http://www.library.ucsb.edu/services/loan-periods>).

The UCSB Library also provides access to the book collections of the entire UC system. Access to materials at other UC campuses and remote storage facilities is via the standard Interlibrary Loan (ILL) process which delivers books to campus. When in San Diego, we recommend that joint program students use the local SDSU ILL service for UC-owned materials (as we have no method for shipping books to SDSU other than to their ILL department).

In addition to traditional library materials, the UCSB Library has excellent spatial data, map, and historic aerial photography collections. Many of these materials are not in the Library's online catalog. Please start at the Map & Imagery Laboratory's website (<http://www.library.ucsb.edu/mil>) and consult with the Geography liaison librarian for your research needs or if you have questions regarding Library use policies. The Library is here to help you succeed.

MAJOR ACADEMICS MILEPOSTS IN THE GEOGRAPHY JDP

As you know from the previous sections, you need to **select systematic specialties and methodological emphases**. Hopefully you will have a good grasp of these interests upon entering the program, but people do change their mind. If you haven't made these decisions by the end of your first semester or very early into your second semester, you are behind the curve. **You are expected to make timely progress through the basic milestones of the program.** These include but are not limited to, identifying an advisor, assembling a committee, writing a research proposal and advancing to candidacy, submitting drafts of written work to advisor/committee, and defending your dissertation. The next sections explain the procedures for these milestones in detail.

ENTRANCE SURVEY AND DIAGNOSTIC INTERVIEW

All first-year students are required to complete an **Entrance Survey** during their first semester. The survey is provided by SDSU's JDP Advisor/Director (Dr. Jankowski). The survey serves as the basis of the **Diagnostic Interview** that is also held during your first semester with your SDSU interim advisor, and at least one other SDSU faculty member. The UCSB sponsor may participate by Zoom, and should at the very least be notified about the outcome of the Diagnostic. During the Diagnostic you will discuss your proposed program of study, including potential courses (listed in the Entrance Survey) and timing of your residency at UCSB. Upon completing the Diagnostic Interview you should revise the Entrance Survey based on any feedback and send an electronic copy to Dr. Jankowski.

DISSERTATION CHAIR AND DOCTORAL COMMITTEE

Second, you will need to identify the person who will be your **Dissertation Chair** and the members of your **Doctoral Committee**. Your Doctoral Committee supervises your program. They approve your course work selection, evaluate the dissertation proposal, administer and evaluate the Qualifying Exams, judge the merit of the dissertation, and administer and evaluate the dissertation defense. The Dissertation Chair chairs the Doctoral Committee. Normally, your

Dissertation Chair will come from the SDSU faculty. That individual probably will be your Interim Advisor, although there are a number of legitimate reasons for you to select someone else. Remember that you need to *ask* your potential Dissertation Chair to be your Dissertation Chair. Don't take it for granted that someone "knows" what you want if you haven't asked. As a courtesy, if the person you select to be your Dissertation Chair is not your Interim Advisor, let them know you've selected someone else; this can eliminate possible confusion in the future. Should there be a cause to change your Dissertation Chair, consult with the JDP Program Director/Ph.D. advisor, choose a new advisor and formally alert your former advisor of the change. Do not expect others to communicate these decisions for you.

It is permissible to have co-Dissertation Chairs who co-chair the Doctoral Committee. If this is the case, make it known to all parties involved so that there is a clear agreement and understanding of roles and responsibilities.

You need to select a **second member** of your Doctoral Committee from our faculty and **two additional members from UCSB**. Just as in the case of the Dissertation Chair, be sure to invite the other members to be a part of your committee. Because you'll have earlier contact with the SDSU faculty, choosing the Second Member from SDSU will probably be easier for you than determining who at UCSB fits your requirements. If needed, your Dissertation Chair should be able to help you in making those decisions by providing information about or talking with UCSB faculty on your behalf. You already have at least one "sponsor" on the UCSB campus, but you will need to determine that you want them on your committee as well as selecting your fourth member. If you wanted to, you could have additional members to your Doctoral Committee from either Department, from other departments on either campus, or from another university (when authorized).

The UCSB committee members must be professors in the Department of Geography at UCSB or must be affiliate faculty of UCSB Geography (check the UCSB Geography webpage to see the affiliates). If there is a need to include a UCSB committee member who is not from Geography (or Geography affiliate) the Geography Department at UCSB can request an exception to this rule on a case-by-case basis (e.g., to have one of the UCSB members of a Joint Doctoral committee be from outside Geography or non-Geography affiliate). In those exception requests, it needs to be made clear that there is a strong academic need and that the outside member is a better fit for a student's research interests.

If you wanted to, you could have additional members to your Doctoral Committee from either Department, from other departments on either campus, or from another university (when authorized).

Once you have put together the Committee, **you need to make it official** by filing the **Nomination of Doctoral Committees for the Joint Doctorate** form and the **Conflict of Interest Disclosure** form. Both of these forms require approval of the SDSU JDP Director, UCSB JDP Director, your Doctoral Adviser/Dissertation Chair, UCSB department chair,

Graduate Dean at SDSU and Graduate Dean at UCSB. Once the form is approved by the UCSB Graduate Dean, you have an **official committee**. All of the official forms required of you will be filed on your behalf by the Department, however **you are responsible for initiating the forms** and you should double-check to track the forms' progress with the Graduate Program Coordinator. The form must be OFFICIALLY APPROVED by UCSB Graduate Division PRIOR to taking the written qualifying examination. Allow a few weeks for this process.

QUALIFYING EXAMINATIONS

General Description

The process of qualifying to write a Ph.D. dissertation has three steps. First, the student must take a written qualifying examination that normally consists of three portions devoted to: 1) the student's substantive area, 2) her or his technical or methodological field(s) of interest, and 3) general geographic thought and inquiry. Second, the student prepares a dissertation proposal that describes the dissertation topic and associated research questions and/or objectives, summarizes the relevant background literature, and presents a comprehensive research plan for the dissertation. Third, the student's doctoral committee conducts an oral qualifying examination to ensure that the student possesses the full knowledge and competence required to carry out her or his dissertation research. Students should sign up for at least one unit of Geography 890: Independent Study for Doctoral Exams, when preparing for both Qualifying Examinations. SDSU does not consider 890 to count towards full-time status for the purposes of scholarships and financial aid.

The doctoral committee will assign a PASS, CONDITIONAL PASS, or FAIL grade for each examination. Passing the written examination allows the student to proceed to the oral qualifying examination. However, the doctoral committee must conditionally approve the dissertation proposal before the student takes the oral qualifying examination. Passing the oral examination signifies that the doctoral dissertation proposal is approved and enables the student to advance to candidacy. A student may repeat each examination once. Failure to pass either examination after the second attempt leads to termination from the JDP.

WRITTEN QUALIFYING EXAMINATIONS

Procedures

The next hurdle to clear after your Doctoral Committee is formed is the **Written Qualifying Examination**. While it will vary from person to person, normally you should be ready to attempt the written examination sometime near the end of the second year of your program. The written examination will cover material from three areas: (1) your substantive areas; (2) your methodological/technique emphases; and (3) general geographic theory and inquiry. In essence, you will need to demonstrate a broad understanding of modern geographic principles in addition to a specialist's competencies in your sub-field(s) of the discipline.

Reading list

To **get ready for the Written Qualifying Examination**, you should discuss with each of your Doctoral Committee members their expectations of you. At least four months before the target date for your exam prepare a draft reading list, with input from your dissertation chair.

The reading list should be structured according to the three general areas of the examination: (1) Theory of Geography and Spatial Science, (2) Methods of Research and (3) your dissertation specialization. Forward the draft reading list as an e-mail attachment to your other committee members. Request that they review your list and suggest any other key readings. You may also want to ask them if they require receipt of your draft dissertation proposal prior to the Written Qualifying Examination and if so, what stage of completeness it needs to be. Finalize the dates that you will take the exam, once you have committee concurrence with the reading list.

Administration of the written examination

The student's doctoral committee will administer the written qualifying examination. The Chair of the doctoral committee will make arrangements with the other committee members to obtain questions. Written qualifying examinations will conform to the following guidelines:

- In consultation with the Chair of the doctoral committee, the student will draft a list of readings within the realm of the three examination sections. The draft list is to be circulated to the other committee members and modified according to their input. This list of readings provides the basis for the examination questions.
- The exam will be administered on three consecutive days (e.g. MTW) following the three-portion format described above (see A: General Summary). A student might request writing the exam in three alternating days (e.g. MWF) if there are personal, family or health concerns (prior approval by the committee is needed).
- During the exam, a student is expected to work at least 8 hours per day. A student might choose to write for longer than 8 hours per day. The student will send answers to the questions back to the Chair of the doctoral committee or SDSU's joint doctoral program coordinator as arranged earlier, at the end of each writing day. It is suggested that students write down the time spent in answering each question at the end of each essay.
- The questions should be coordinated and reviewed by the Chair of the doctoral committee before being given to the student. The Chair will ensure that there is a balanced and reasonable allocation of questions that can be answered in the allotted time. The Chair might choose to consolidate and rearrange questions given by other committee members prior to giving them to the student to balance the contents and length of the examination. It is expected that all committee members will ask the student to answer at least one question, though exceptions can be made if the Chair and the rest of the doctoral committee come to a different agreement.
- The entire exam will not be given to the student in advance; rather the Chair of the doctoral committee or SDSU's JDP coordinator will provide the student with a specific set of questions at the beginning of each day of the examination. This arrangement should be clarified prior to

the beginning of the examination.

- The examination is "open book" and access to internet/world-wide-web is permitted unless doctoral committee members specifically request a modification of the policy based on well-justified circumstances.
- Written examinations will take place in a private office in the Department of Geography at SDSU designated specifically for this purpose. Alternatively, the examination can take place at another location approved by the chair of student's doctoral committee.

Evaluation of the written examination

Following administration of the examination, the doctoral committee will evaluate the student's performance in each section and in the overall exam. Except in unusual circumstances, the Chair of the student's doctoral committee will provide the student with a written evaluation of the examination within 2 weeks and, in all cases, no longer than 6 weeks of finishing the exam:

- It is expected that all doctoral committee members will read all questions, although a member may skip questions well outside his/her expertise.
- The author of a question must assign one of the following grades to such question: EXCELLENT, SATISFACTORY OR UNSATISFACTORY. Other committee members may choose to grade questions that they did not author, but they are not required to do so.
- Committee members are required to provide written feedback in cases of questions graded UNSATISFACTORY.
- After all questions have been read and graded, each committee member assigns a grade to the overall exam: PASS, CONDITIONAL PASS or FAIL. The committee then deliberates on the final grade for the written examination so that the student can be informed.
- After committee deliberation, the Chair of the doctoral committee provides a final evaluation of the written examination to the student, including a grade of PASS, CONDITIONAL PASS or FAIL. A unanimous PASS vote is required for advancement to candidacy.
- In cases of a CONDITIONAL PASS, a student could be asked to revise or rewrite questions or sections of the exam. Any re-written portion of the examination must follow the procedures outlined above, which should have been followed during the original exam.
- In the case of a FAIL, a student must rewrite the entire exam, which may involve new questions.
- After a FAIL, the exam may be taken a second time, either in the same semester or in the semester immediately following the receipt of the written evaluation. Failure to comply with the timeframe for taking the second examination will result in another FAIL grade, which means termination from the JDP.
- A student must pass the written qualifying examination prior to sitting for the oral qualifying examination.

ORAL QUALIFYING EXAMINATION

Dissertation proposal and the oral examination

Having successfully completed the written qualifying examination, the student's doctoral committee will conduct an oral qualifying examination, based on a draft dissertation proposal for doctoral research. The doctoral committee must have provisionally approved the dissertation proposal before the student takes the oral qualifying examination. The proposal describes your dissertation topic, summarizes the relevant background literature, and presents a comprehensive methodology or study plan for the dissertation. The Dissertation Proposal is often built from, or provides the basis of grant, fellowship, or scholarship proposals that are submitted to funding organizations.

Doctoral dissertation research that involves human or animal subjects, including use of data that have the potential to be linked to specific human individuals, must be approved by the SDSU Institutional Review Board (IRB). JDP students no longer have to submit documents to both SDSU and UCSB IRBs. Documents should be submitted to the IRB of the university with which the major adviser (dissertation chair) is associated (normally SDSU IRB) and the other university's IRB will receive notice of the outcome to the human/animal subjects request.

During the oral examination, questioning is focused on the dissertation proposal, although specific questions may be asked on material from the written examination, which may require clarification. The goal of the oral examination is to demonstrate that you possess the knowledge and competence required to carry out your dissertation research.

Guidelines for the oral examination

Oral qualifying examinations will conform to the following guidelines:

- It is expected that the oral examination will take place soon after the written qualifying examination, normally within the same semester or the semester immediately after the successful completion of the written exam. The general objective of the oral examination is to ensure that the student has a satisfactory proposal for dissertation research, and that the student possesses the full knowledge and competence required to carry out his or her dissertation research.
- The proposal describes the dissertation topic, summarizes the relevant background literature, and presents a comprehensive methodology or study plan for the dissertation. The dissertation proposal is often built from, or provides the basis for, grant, fellowship, or scholarship proposals that are submitted to funding organizations.
- The SDSU Institutional Review Board (IRB) must approve doctoral dissertation research that involves human or animal subjects, including the use of data that has the potential to be linked to specific human individuals. JDP students do not have to submit documents to both SDSU and UCSB IRBs. Documents should be submitted to the IRB of the university with which the Dissertation Chair is associated (normally SDSU IRB) and the other university's IRB will

receive notice of the outcome to the human/animal subjects' request. Ideally, IRB approval should be granted prior to oral qualifying examination or immediately after.

- The oral examination is open only to voting committee members. All committee members must participate in the oral examination, either physically present or through some other form of communication technology that allows for real time listening and questioning.
- During the oral qualifying examination, questioning is focused on the dissertation proposal, although specific questions may be asked on material from the written qualifying examination, which may require clarification, or from the relevant body of theory and knowledge associated with the proposed research.

Evaluation of the oral examination

- Following the examination, all committee members shall vote and agree on a PASS, CONDITIONAL PASS, or FAIL on the student's level of preparation. A unanimous PASS vote is required for advancement to candidacy. Passing the oral examination signifies that the dissertation committee has accepted the dissertation proposal.
- A CONDITIONAL PASS might be assigned if the student gives a satisfactory performance during the oral examination but the dissertation proposal still requires further refinement and/or modification.
- If a student FAILS the oral qualifying examination on the first try, she or he will be allowed one additional attempt.
- Upon satisfactory completion of the oral examination and prescribed coursework, the student must apply to the graduate dean at UCSB for advancement to candidacy. Upon payment of the candidacy fee to UCSB, and after approval by the graduate deans of both campuses, students will be notified of their advancement to candidacy by the UCSB graduate dean.

CANDIDACY

Upon passing the Qualifying Examinations, you will be **Advanced to Candidacy**. This is done by the filing of the **Report on Qualifying Examinations for the Joint Doctorate** form. This form contains the signatures of your Committee members indicating their individual evaluations of your performance on the Qualifying Exams and the Committee's recommendation of advancement to candidacy as well as those of the SDSU JDP Director and the UCSB JPD Director. You request advancement to candidacy by signing the form and indicating the date by which you intend to complete the dissertation. In addition, you must pay a fee to the UC Regents.

Registration after candidacy

Once you have advanced to candidacy the expectation is that you will register for a total of 6 units per semester, to be selected from either GEOG 897 (Doctoral Research), or GEOG 899 (Doctoral Dissertation). However, if you and your Dissertation Chair determine that formal coursework is necessary for preparing you for your dissertation research, you should request permission from the Doctoral Adviser to take courses other than 897 or 899 (the reason for this pertains to the source and amounts of allocated funding for JD student fee coverage). During the

semester you will earn your doctorate, you need to be enrolled in at least three units of GEOG 899. If you have registered in at least 3 units of 899, you can register in only 1 unit in the summer.

Further, you will need to apply for graduation prior to the deadline for that semester.

DISSERTATION

Following the successful completion of all prescribed coursework and qualifying examinations, the major remaining requirement for the Ph.D. degree will be the satisfactory completion and defense of a dissertation consisting of original research of publishable quality carried out under the guidance of the Chair of the doctoral committee. Approval of the completed dissertation by the entire doctoral committee implies that an organized investigation yielding substantial conclusions of interest that expand the frontiers of knowledge and understanding in the discipline has been carried out. Results must be reported in a manner demonstrating the ability of the candidate to effectively execute and report independent investigation.

FINAL EXAMINATION (DISSERTATION DEFENSE)

Format of the examination

- The final examination, organized and administered by the doctoral committee, shall consist of a dissertation defense before the doctoral committee and open to the public.
- The final examination is conducted at SDSU or UCSB, with all doctoral committee members in attendance. Special arrangements can be made for doctoral committee members to participate by videoconference.
- At the final examination, the student gives a 30-minute overview presentation of dissertation's results and findings. The presentation is followed by questions and comments from doctoral committee members and others in attendance. The Chair of the doctoral committee moderates the questions and comments. The purpose of this portion of the dissertation defense is to further clarify segments of the dissertation and to acquaint the candidate with the nature of any further work that needs to be undertaken prior to the final approval of the dissertation.
- The outcome of the dissertation defense is a PASS or FAIL grade, decided by all doctoral committee members. The final examination may be retaken once.
- Revisions to the dissertation may be required following the final examination, even if a PASS grade is awarded.
- After all requirements for the doctoral degree have been fulfilled, students are encouraged to give an additional public lecture (colloquium) to present the results of the overall doctoral research to the entire university community.

Documents for final examination

Final examination documentation (besides your presentation materials):

- The **Report on Final Defense for Joint Doctorate** form (this is the form that you and your committee will sign at the end of your defense). You will need to obtain signatures of the SDSU JDP Director, the UCSB JPD Director, the SDSU graduate dean, and the UCSB graduate dean.
- You should have **your dissertation signature page**. This is a page that is actually part of the hard copy printed text of your dissertation. It comes after the title page. It must be formatted according to the UCSB formatting requirements (see [step by step filing tutorial](#)).

DocuSign is recommended to collect signatures on all forms. All forms can be emailed to academics@graddiv.ucsb.edu.

FORMATTING AND FILING THE DISSERTATION AT UCSB AND SDSU

You need to make sure that you **format your dissertation** in the style that is prescribed by the UCSB Graduate Division. Follow the [filing tutorial](#) and the [UCSB Formatting Resources](#).

You can download a Joint Doctoral Dissertation template as well from UCSB Graduate Division: <https://www.graddiv.ucsb.edu/filing/filing-your-thesis-dissertation-or-dma-supporting-document#formatting-resources>.

This page also contains a variety of resources for filing, including checklists and deadlines.

Before submitting the dissertation, get formatting feedback from one of the academic advisors at UCSB Graduate Division. S/he will check if the dissertation has any previously published material, which would require permission letters. You will also need to footnote previously published sections in your dissertation.

Students are supposed to be in a "fee relationship" with the University when they complete the requirements for the degree. Joint program students will very likely be registered at SDSU when filing. If you plan on filing during summer session, you'll need to register at SDSU for GEOG 899 (Dissertation) and **apply for graduation** by the deadline for summer session. You will be responsible for covering the costs of registration and filing fees if you file during the summer.

Once the **dissertation is ready to be filed**, you will first need to **file it at UCSB**. To file at UCSB you will need: your dissertation approved by your committee, in a PDF following the format specified by UCSB's Graduate Division. The filing tutorial linked above is especially helpful.

Filing at UCSB has two parts: Electronic submission of your entire committee-approved thesis, dissertation or supporting document (DMA students) including a formatted, but unsigned signature page and copyright permission(s) (if required) at ProQuest. PLEASE NOTE: when asked to include your Abstract on the Details page, verify that the content is legible as certain

formatting/characters may not copy accurately-ProQuest includes help if special formatting is needed.

The second part: One electronically signed approval page emailed to academics@graddiv.ucsb.edu.

Once you are all clear at UCSB, you can **file at SDSU**. As mentioned above, make sure you have paid your registration fees for the semester (or summer) in which you plan to file. You also need to be enrolled in 899 for at least 1 unit in the summer or 3 units during the fall or spring semesters. (Please note that for summer enrollment in 899, you must register through the university; doctoral students cannot take 899 through Extended Studies).

Next, contact Pat Walls again at SDSU's Graduate Division (pwalls2@sdsu.edu). Let him know you've filed at UCSB and that you are now ready to file at SDSU. He'll ask you to bring another hard copy of your dissertation to him, plus a scanned copy of the completed "Report of Final Defense" form, two original and signed copies of the signature page (one for him and an extra one for Montezuma Publishing), and a copy of the title page. You will also need to turn in the copy of the SED survey (the one that you turned in at UCSB) if you did not already email it to him. If you don't have a copy of the SED survey with you, Pat Walls can give you one that you can fill out on the spot. Once Pat Walls gets all the paperwork, he will fill out a clearance sheet that verifies that you are enrolled in GEOG 899.

Next, take your dissertation to Montezuma Publishing located in Suite 104 of the Industrial Technology building on campus (thesis@montezumapublishing.com or 619 594-7551). You can also send them a PDF of the dissertation. Tell them that you need your dissertation bound for filing. Make sure to order copies (your choice of binding) for your committee members. Give them the Clearance Sheet you received from Pat Walls, the extra signature page, and your dissertation (if you didn't submit it via email). Pay the copying fee and make sure that you Montezuma Publishing sends a copy of the receipt back to Pat Walls in the SDSU Graduate Division. Once she has that receipt, Graduate Division will get our Dean's' signature on the Report of Final Defense form, mail it back to UCSB.

Last loose ends

Once SDSU Graduate Division sends the Report of Final Defense form to UCSB Graduate Division, the Academic Advisor there will process the degree conferral. If you need a degree verification letter after the degree has been conferred but before actually receiving the diploma that is sent by the Registrar (which can take up to a couple of months), you can request it by emailing gradacademics@graddiv.ucsb.edu. Also, there is a diploma mailing fee that UCSB will assess to your account before they will mail the diploma. Finally, in the final semester of your appointment at SDSU, you are required to complete an exit survey prior to the last day of your contract.

TIME TO DEGREE STANDARDS

Time to degree standards (TTDS) are strictly monitored by UCSB Graduate Division. For Geography, **TTDS are 4 years to advance to candidacy and 6 years to graduate.** You'll be closely monitored when you go beyond TTDS, and potentially be put on probation. Most likely, you and your advisor will have to file UCSB's Academic Progress Plan form to explain why you are beyond the allowed TTDS, and offer a plan of action that will satisfy UCSB's graduate division.

COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY

We very strongly encourage you to participate in the SDSU College of Arts & Letters (CAL) **Commencement Ceremony** celebrating your graduation. It is both an opportunity for you to receive the recognition that you deserve for your many years of effort and an opportunity for you to bask in the pride that your loved ones, friends, fellow students, and faculty take in your accomplishment. In addition to the individual hooding ceremony at the CAL main graduation, there will be a **departmental recognition ceremony** to honor you. To participate in the CAL Commencement Ceremony you must have either graduated, or your Dissertation Chair must communicate to the JDP Director that you will file your dissertation by the end of the summer session at the latest. In the latter case, you should apply for spring graduation so that your name will be included in the Commencement Bulletin and be on the list for tickets.