I. INTRODUCTION

The following report is an external review of the Graduate Program in Sociology, Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences in the School of Nursing at the University of California, San Francisco. The UCSF Graduate Division and the Graduate Council of the Academic Senate conduct academic reviews of each program approximately every eight years. This review was requested by Elizabeth Watkins, PhD (Dean, Graduate Division and Vice Chancellor, Student Academic Affairs and Professor, History of Health Sciences). The last external review of the Program was conducted in 2006. The external reviewers were Kim M. Blankenship (American University), Anne E. Figert (Loyola University Chicago) and Stefan Timmermans (University of California, Los Angeles). Michele de Coteau, PhD (Assistant Dean for Graduate Programs and Outreach) served as the coordinator for the review and Jason Rock, PhD of the Departments of Anatomy, Medicine and the Cardiovascular Research Institute served as the Graduate Council Liaison.

The review was conducted on October 2, 2014. The external review committee met with the following administrators from UCSF: Brian Alldredge, PharmD (Vice Provost for Academic Affairs), David Vlahov, RN, PhD, FAAN (Dean of the School of Nursing), Elizabeth Watkins, PhD (Dean, Graduate Division and Vice Chancellor, Student Academic Affairs), Michele de Coteau, PhD (Assistant Dean for Graduate Programs and Outreach), and Janet Shim PhD (Director of Sociology Program). During the day, the committee also met with all of the current members of the Sociology faculty, current graduate students in the Program, and alumni of the Program. The committee was provided with copies of the Sociology Program’s self-study documents, course syllabi, results from an anonymous survey of current Sociology PhD students (26 of 29 students in the 2nd year and above completed the survey) as well as many other written materials indicative of the performance of the department, faculty and students in the Graduate Program in Sociology.
The charge of the committee was to identify and highlight the current strengths of the Program and to identify any weaknesses and make recommendations for the Program’s future activities. This report is organized using the UCSF Graduate Division’s “Guidelines for External Report.”

I. PROGRAM (The Graduate Program in Sociology)

A. Goal and Promise

The stated purpose of the Graduate Program in Sociology at UCSF is to train graduate students in sociology with a specific focus in medical sociology, the sociology of science and the sociology of health and illness. Since 1968, this unique Program has been training medical sociologists for professional careers in both academic and research settings. As stated in their student handbook and website: “The principal aim of the Program is to educate students interested in professional careers as sociologists in academic and/or applied contexts with an emphasis on the study of issues in health, illness, medicine, health care and the analysis of health and public policies” (Doctoral Program in Sociology Student Handbook, p. 1).

This Program has contributed to both the research and reputation of the School of Nursing at UCSF and has an excellent reputation in the discipline of sociology within the field of medical sociology and science and technology studies.

For example, in 2010, the National Research Council released their periodic A Data-Based Assessment of Research-Doctorate Programs in the United States. Out of a field of 118 sociology doctoral programs, the UCSF Program was ranked between 6-20 (S or survey-based rankings) and 15-80 (R or regression-based rankings). Given the small size of the Doctoral Program, the committee, along with the Department, notes that that S ranking of 6-20 may be a more valid indicator of program quality relative to other sociology programs in the U.S. Although no separate rankings of medical sociology programs exist, UCSF is often mentioned as one of the top programs within the subfield. The past and current faculty has a first-rate international standing and an excellent grant funding record; they have produced exceptionally productive
and quality PhD students who have found full time employment in a highly competitive job market (73% in academics, 19% in the public sector and 8% in the public sector). For the period 1999-2014, the Sociology Program’s time to degree averaged 6.1 years. This is well under the national average for the PhD in sociology, which is 8.8 years (as published by the American Sociological Association in 2012, based on National Science Foundation data).

B. Curriculum/Coursework

The curriculum of the Doctoral Program in Sociology emphasizes 4 major areas completed by all students. These areas are: 1) Social Theory (three courses), 2) Medical Sociology (3 courses), 3) Quantitative Methodology (2 courses) and 4) Qualitative Methodology (3 courses). A review of the syllabi of these courses indicates that they are comprehensive and rigorous. The courses in theory and medical sociology alternate on a biannual basis and the methods courses are offered annually. In addition to these courses, students are required to complete as least 2 elective courses in one of four areas of emphasis in the Department: 1) Aging, Chronic Illness and Disability; 2) Health Policy; 3) Race/Class/Gender and Health and 4) Science, Technology and Medicine. Students also have the opportunity to take elective courses on adjacent campuses and work with the faculty of other programs such as Medical Anthropology and Social History.

Students take two qualifying exams after the end of the medical sociology and theory course sequences. After successful completion of the course sequence and qualifying exams, students are then required to take a Third Area Qualifying Exam (TAE) in their third year. The student selects a committee and works with them to complete a comprehensive literature review that focuses on the student’s potential dissertation. There was both praise for and criticism of this Third Area Exam. It was praised for the opportunity it provided students to spend time reading and reflecting on a focused substantive area of interest. At the same time, students and the faculty, and the committee, were concerned that it might slow down the progress of the students, particularly because ABD status is tied to completion of the TAE.
C. Coursework in Ethics/Responsible Conduct of Research

The Graduate Program in Sociology has taken a systematic approach to ensuring the introduction and training of PhD students in the ethical and responsible conduct of research. In addition to research ethics explicitly being covered in three required methodology courses (N212A Qualitative Data Collection & Ethics, S285A Qualitative Methods I and S285B Qualitative Methods II) it is also covered in many of the elective courses (S206 Corporate Influences on Health and Health Care). As part of the required methods sequence students must complete and submit an IRB application to UCSF. Additionally, the many students who work on faculty research projects or who apply for federally funded fellowships or research grants themselves are required to complete online courses in the responsible conduct of research through UCSF and the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI). The ethical and responsible conduct of research is also one of the Provisional Learning Goals (to be adopted by the Program in Fall of 2014). Provisional Learning Outcome 4 states: “Students will demonstrate the capacity to conduct independent and original research, in an ethical and responsible manner.” The coursework assignments covering research ethics and soon to be adopted learning goal is comparable to other doctoral research programs.

D. Are Resources Adequate?

In many ways, the reviewers found that the Program is in good shape: the faculty student ratio is low, publications and grants are high, the institution has moved endowments and fellowships to cover more of the social sciences, and the Program has maintained its reputation as a premier graduate training program in medical sociology. There is institutional support from the School of Nursing and the Graduate Division for this unique Program. As in previous reviews, the committee was deeply impressed with the Sociology Program’s ability to maintain excellence especially given limited resources. These limitations are described in greater detail throughout this report, but include limited funding for fellowships for students, virtually non-existent funding for other student activities, such as conference travel, improved, but still
uncertain Program and student space, and limited or no funding for TAs and adjunct faculty. There is also a concern that a shrinking graduate program may augur a smaller faculty.

II. STUDENTS

A. Student Recruitment

The Sociology Program continues to attract both qualified and motivated students. Since the 2006 review, the mean GRE scores for admitted and enrolled students have risen. Although California continues to be the primary residence of students, the Program has drawn from national pools as well. Many students are coming to the Program with graduate degrees in other fields. The size of the applicant pool has varied within the last 8 years but that could have been affected by the poor economy. All members of the Program are involved in the recruitment and selection process and interview prospective applicants either by phone or in person. The Program has been successful in recruiting a more racially and ethnically diverse group of students. White students constitute only 54.2% of the current students. Two out of the four students admitted for 2014 are students of color. Women have traditionally and continue to be overrepresented in the Program – currently constituting 71% of the students. The Program continues to be committed to diversifying their students.

The Program faculty members expressed concern that although their students are smart, diverse and prepared for graduate study, they are losing potential students to other, more well financed doctoral programs in sociology. Programs of similar size and rank are able to offer higher, multi-year stipends in areas of the country with lower housing costs. This was an issue in 2006 in the previous review and continues to be an issue in 2014. For example, the data provided by the Sociology Program indicate that UCSF falls well behind comparable sociology doctoral programs with an emphasis in medical sociology. In comparison to UCSF: UCLA fully covers, for 5 years, tuition plus stipend for 15 of 20 students; Brandeis accepts 3 students per year who are fully funded for 5-years (students receive approximately $12,000-16,000 in tuition
plus a $20,000 stipend); and at Rutgers, 7-9 students are offered multi-year packages in a tiered system.

The Sociology Program is making some changes in order to recruit more effectively. It has moved its admission deadline from February 1st to December 15th to bring it in line with most sociology doctoral programs. Another way that the Program is changing its recruitment process is by limiting the number of admitted students to three every year. Previously the Program admitted about 8-10 students and cohort size has varied from 4 up to 8 students every year. Because of recent decisions to limit cohort size, the admissions process is undergoing some change and the committee urges the Program to monitor and consider the implications of changes in the size of the cohort and a possible every other year admission plan. In particular, the Committee is worried that shrinking the size of the Program too much will make it less effective and harm its national prominence in medical sociology and may in the long run affect full time faculty staffing. UCSF programs in anthropology and history held out as examples of the every other year admission model also have a smaller number of FTE. Considering its current faculty size, the Sociology Program should be able to admit a yearly cohort of 6-8 students.

C. Student Evaluation

In addition to being assessed every quarter in their coursework and through three comprehensive examinations post coursework, the doctoral students in Sociology are evaluated annually using an Annual Student Progress Self-Evaluation form. This form represents a response to the previous external evaluation report, which suggested that there was a loss of contact between students and faculty advisors after the completion of coursework. This highly professional and lengthy annual evaluation form has been revised several times over the last couple of years. It is an effective mechanism of allowing students who have finished their coursework to check in with their advisor every year. The student evaluation is comparable to other doctoral programs in sociology.
D. Faculty–Student Interchange

The current students expressed positive opinions on the nature of student-faculty interactions in terms of advising and mentoring in the meeting with the review committee. We also looked at the results of the anonymous student survey to confirm this impression. In the survey, 22/25 students indicated that they were very satisfied (n=14) or somewhat satisfied (n=8) with their faculty advising. Only 3 of the 25 students expressed dissatisfaction with faculty advising.

Students and faculty expressed frustration and dissatisfaction with the physical space allotted to the Program (see below).

E. Financial Support for Students

Since the last external review, financial support for students continues to be a critical problem for the Program. Both faculty and students raised the issue of inadequate institutional support for Social and Behavioral Science and Sociology Program students at UCSF. The committee heard many expressions about feeling like second-class citizens within UCSF and dissatisfaction with both the current level and pattern of funding for graduate students.

Despite a very high level of external funding in the Department, very few students are supported by research assistantships. We learned that the internal costs of paying student fees if they work more than a limited number of hours/week makes it difficult to support students on external grants. This means that students are often denied the opportunity to work on a grant or that they are limited in the amount of hours that they can work on a project. This policy was identified in the previous external report as a roadblock to funding students and this situation continues to limit students’ opportunities. Responses from the anonymous student survey indicate that lack of funding for both TA/RA and fellowships is one of the major areas of strong dissatisfaction (16/25 respondents indicating somewhat or strongly dissatisfied with TA/RA availability).

The Program is trying to work with the administration to develop a more stable funding plan for students. Since the 2006 report, there has been some volatility (increases and then
cuts) in the funding of graduate assistantships from the School of Nursing, changes in software systems and changes in the way that the Graduate Division has created new sources of student fellowships. For example, the Sociology Program was allocated three new Anthony Fellowships (that cover fees only) and several of the students have benefitted from the new internship/fellowships (that provide fees and stipend and require 50% time work). Students in the Program have also been extraordinarily active in seeking external support from sources such as the American Sociological Association Minority Fellowship Program, National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship Program, and various National Institutes of Health training grants. Finally, the Sociology Program is proactive about the future. For example, the Program admitted only three students for AY2014-15. This has made it possible to offer all students in years 1-5 who do not have their fees paid through fellowships or other sources, coverage of their fees in AY2014-15. The Program is to be congratulated on this accomplishment and the review committee acknowledges how much work this has taken. We urge the Department to continue to engage with all of these programs and take these and other measures to ensure student funding. However, we also encourage the Program to consider the trade-off of full funding for its graduate students with smaller cohorts.

F. Timeliness and Quality of Student Degree Completion

The Sociology Program at UCSF has excellent average time to completion rates, which are well below the national norms for sociology PhD programs. Because all coursework is done within the first two years of study, students are able to proceed to their third area exams, proposal and dissertation very efficiently. Although there was some disagreement about whether or not the Third Area Exam impedes progress to the degree, the merits of the exam were not questioned. The students we talked to were positive about the intellectual enterprise and result of the exam but there were concerns from faculty and the review committee that it may slow down progress. One other factor that may impede progress, according to students, relates to the various forms and administrative procedures involved with advancing to candidacy. The review committee
recommends that the Department consider creating materials easily accessible to students that systematically present this information for the students so as to facilitate their navigation through both the School of Nursing and the Graduate Division.

**G. Placement of Graduates**

The placement of Sociology Program graduates continues to be very good. This has not changed since the 2006 review in spite of an extraordinarily competitive job market economy. Graduates of the Program have secured positions in academic settings, policy organizations, foundations, and government, including the CDC and U.S. Senate and Department of Agriculture. Recent tenure track placements include Georgia Tech, University of Illinois Chicago, Arizona State and the University of Cincinnati. For a variety of personal and professional reasons, many graduates choose to remain in the Bay area.

**H. Student Morale**

Current and past students in the Program expressed an overall satisfaction with the Sociology Program. They were complimentary to the faculty for their expertise, mentoring and advising. The student survey data also indicate that the Program has provided an intellectually stimulating and exciting place for learning (23/25 students strongly or somewhat agreed), that the Program faculty paid attention to the student’s voices (22/25 students strongly or somewhat agreed) and that the Program handles issues related to diversity in a satisfactory manner (22/25 students strongly or somewhat agreed). The students were less complimentary to the School of Nursing and Graduate Divisions.

The 2006 external report recommended more of an active student voice on departmental committees. The Sociology Program has taken great strides in trying to be more inclusive of the student voice and it has paid off. Students have been involved in faculty searches and the Program has instituted a Student - Faculty Task Force that meets regularly to address collectively and collaboratively issues of programmatic concern. Each cohort of students has
representatives on this Task Force and the Program has been very successful in meeting this recommendation.

III. FACULTY
A. Scholarly Quality, Size, and Breadth of Interest

The Graduate faculty in Sociology represent a tremendous strength of the Program. Since the last Program review, four faculty have retired and four new faculty have been hired. The current core faculty members have national or international reputations in their specialty areas. New faculty are productive, and are engaging in cutting-edge research, just as more senior faculty have done before them; senior faculty remain highly productive and have received various prestigious awards signifying their stellar reputations. It is noteworthy that in a time when applications for external funding have increased and available funds have flattened or even declined, faculty have recently achieved their pre-recession intra- and extramural funding levels of nearly $7 million. This is an extraordinarily high figure for a sociology program. While the core faculty are small in number, their areas of expertise complement one another in ways that provide considerable breadth to the Program, particularly when combined with the teaching efforts of affiliated adjunct and in-residence faculty (but see below).

This said, given the small size of the faculty, it is critical to the Program that any reductions in faculty and/or teaching time, for example, due to administrative appointments, or upcoming retirements are quickly addressed. In the case of the former, it appears that the appointment of Dr. Dworkin as Associate Dean of Academic Affairs for the School of Nursing will be handled appropriately through hiring of adjunct faculty. If there are any additional retirements over the coming years, they should similarly be replaced in a timely manner with faculty whose training is in the discipline.

Also, of note, while the reputation of the Department and its faculty is extensive, it appears that within the University, particularly the medical school, the presence of Sociology is
unknown to many. Undoubtedly this results in lost opportunities for: collaboration among faculty; hiring of Sociology graduate students as RAs on research projects around the University; and training of medical students, who might expand their understanding of health beyond the traditional clinical and biomedical frameworks were they to have access to Sociology classes, faculty and graduate students. More could be done to raise awareness around the University of the presence of its high quality Sociology faculty and Graduate Program. The Review Committee recommends that the Program organize talks or other events to raise its profile at UCSF.

**B. Support for Teaching**

Core faculty teach 3 courses a year, regardless of their level of external funding. This appears to provide for coverage of core theory and methods requirements and a few elective courses in substantive areas of expertise on a relatively regular basis. For purposes of maintaining a predictable and broader array of courses (and to offer courses listed on the books that have not been offered on a regular basis), consideration should be given to providing additional support in the way of adjuncts or in-residence faculty. Three faculty provide the largest share of the Department’s advising and mentoring, but this primarily reflects both the newness of faculty and, in the case of Dr. Bliss, is primarily by design, representing a way of protecting her time as a more junior faculty member. The expectation is that the advising/mentoring roles of the newest faculty will increase with time.

With regard to teaching-related resources, the limited funds available for adjunct and in-residence faculty make it challenging to offer a full array of electives. The lack of TA positions clearly impacts on faculty teaching as well, particularly in the core methods classes.

Space remains another problem for teaching. While some space issues have been addressed since the last review – core faculty and administrative staff have adequate office space at Laurel Heights, and meeting room space is also available – classroom and meeting space at the Parnassus campus remains a challenge. Here, classrooms are often too small
and/or inappropriately configured, and sometimes, classes need to be moved during the semester because rooms are not available for the full semester. One response has been to relocate classes to Laurel Heights, but this puts the Sociology course offerings on the periphery of the University, and may partially account for the lack of/low visibility of the faculty and graduate students within the University (see above).

In contrast, administrative support to the Department, for teaching and other activities, appears to be strong. Students and faculty alike indicated that the Graduate Program Coordinator is a vast source of knowledge and is usually the first and last stop for questions related to teaching, Departmental and University policies, student services, and the like. Among other ways, she supports faculty teaching as a member of the Sociology Student-Faculty Task Force, and by disseminating information about the Program, assisting with recruitment and liaising with relevant University offices. This is a key and critical staff position for the Program.

C. Recruitment and Retention

As indicated above, since the last review, the Department has recruited four new core faculty members, including Drs. Dworkin, Shim, Zimmer, and Bliss to replace the same number of retiring faculty. As recommended by the previous Program review group, these hires have largely been trained elsewhere, ensuring fresh perspectives and intellectual breadth. Given the high quality of this group of relatively new faculty, it is clear that recruitment efforts have been highly successful. At the same time, it is difficult to comment on retention, with Dr. Dworkin representing the longest serving of these faculty, since fall 2008. In light of the small size of the faculty, it will be critical to ensure that every effort is made to retain this highly productive group of scholars.

D. Morale

Faculty are quite collegial, and morale seems relatively high. There is a sense that the Dean of Nursing and other members of administration recognize the value of and support the Program. Nevertheless, faculty are stretched by the demands of research and grant writing, publishing,
maintaining the teaching program (e.g., offering the full array of courses), and mentoring in light of their small size and the insecurity of graduate student funding.

IV. PHYSICAL FACILITIES AND OTHER RESOURCES

Although some space issues have been addressed (see above), the long-term physical location of the SBS Department and Sociology Program remains undetermined as yet. Faculty indicated that it is likely that all departments and programs will have to vacate the Laurel Heights building within the next five years. The Sociology Program has expressed a preference to relocate back to the Parnassus campus where the School of Nursing will remain, but this has not yet been resolved. To add additional uncertainty and stress, it seems that space on the Parnassus campus may be remodeled in a way that reduces the number and size of private office spaces, increases the number of open (or semi-private) work stations and reduces the number of permanent private offices. Faculty are highly concerned about the implications of this for productivity, privacy, and student confidentiality. For space issues to remain undetermined like this, possibly for the next five years, contributes uncertainty and stress that may impact on faculty morale and even retention, as well as on graduate student recruitment. We hope that this issue can be resolved as soon as possible in a way that ensures the Program remains vital and faculty and students are productive, and that enhances the Program’s visibility as a central part of the School of Nursing, and University.

Space is also an issue for the graduate students, who indicated that even though there is some central space at Laurel Heights, it is in a windowless office and the equipment available to them (e.g., computers) is outdated. There is no central gathering place on the Parnassus campus for students, other than the library, and students felt that this space too, was inadequate.

As indicated above, there is strong administrative support for graduate instruction and research. Still, other resources to support graduate education, such as funds for supporting
conference travel, and bringing speakers and mentors from outside the area, were seen as lacking. Yet such opportunities are a relatively low-cost way to raise student visibility, extend their professional and mentoring networks, and otherwise increase the scope of a small program. We encourage the University to continue to explore ways to enhance the Program’s visibility.

V. STRENGTHS, CHALLENGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Strengths

• The Graduate Program in Sociology is impressive—it is recognized nationally and internationally for its strength in medical sociology, health and illness, and health disparities; and for its training in qualitative methods and theory

• University administration appears to recognize the value of the Department and the unique contribution it makes to the School of Nursing and the Graduate School

• Faculty bring in considerable external funds in support of their research; much higher than the typical and often larger sociology department

• Open positions have been filled in a timely manner with sociologists; hiring for replacements of faculty has occurred prior to their retirement, which provides continuity to the Program

• Time to completion of the Program is better than the national average for Sociology

• Students are resourceful in finding opportunities to work as research assistants (within the University and in other settings) and to gain teaching experience (e.g., as adjuncts at other local universities/colleges)

• Students have been quite successful in getting external funding to support their work

• There seems to be a high level of mentoring and students feel that they have good access to faculty
• The curriculum is strong, with exemplary concentrations on social theory and research methods that provide students with strong grounding in the discipline while also preparing them for careers in health research or practice; this makes them stand out from other students trained in medical sociology or public health

• Students found great value in the first and second qualifying exams (theory and methods); it gave them a chance to really consolidate their classroom learning and to demonstrate a strong sociological foundation

• Students found great value in the TAE, in allowing them to spend some focused time reading in an area of interest, and digesting, summarizing, and analyzing the information

• Morale among faculty and students appears relatively high

• Program administrative support serves as crucial resource of information

B. Challenges

• There seems to be a tradeoff of having more secure, predictable funding but at lower levels (both in terms of number of students and in stipends) than other schools, meaning that the Program can lose top candidates to better offers (though last year, this did not happen, they got their top three candidates)

• To maintain security of funding, at current levels, the Program must bring in a small cohort, but small cohort size could threaten the feasibility and even continuation of the Program and its faculty

• There are limited opportunities for students in the Program to gain teaching experience given that there is no undergraduate program at UCSF and no funding for TA positions

• Many courses are described as electives in the books but they are often not offered, and it’s not clear from the student perspective, with what regularity they are available

• Limited funds available for adjunct faculty, impacts the ability to offer electives
• ABD status requires completing TAE, but this can take a while; without the status of ABD, students are not qualified to apply for a full range of funding opportunities either within the University or externally

• There has been improvement in the TAE experience, expectations clearer, shorter document, provides opportunity to delve into an area that they would not otherwise have BUT:
  o Not as relevant/helpful for those doing the three-paper model
  o Chair of TAE cannot be dissertation committee chair; students found this to be a problem in a small department
  o Alumni stressed that it would be more helpful if they were encouraged to turn the TAE into a paper (even critical lit reviews can be published)

• There were mixed feelings among students and faculty about how prepared students were for the job market in terms of numbers of publications

• Students are resourceful in identifying funding, research and teaching opportunities but things seem to happen a bit haphazardly, or by chance, and it can take an extraordinary amount of time on the students’ part to identify such opportunities

• The University policy of requiring coverage of fees/tuition when students work over a limited number of hours makes hiring students on grants more expensive than hiring staff, reduces likelihood of students gaining research experience through long term participation on projects of direct relevance to their interests, and may contribute to concerns about publications and competitiveness of grad students on the job market

• New social science consortium presents an opportunity for collaboration and coordination, but also has potential for competition of resources

• Lack of awareness in the University (especially medical school) of the Department or of what sociologists can contribute to medical school (teaching, education and research)

• Webpage appears to be out-of-date
• Some concern expressed that the three paper option for the dissertation was not presented as a manageable option; faculty do not seem familiar with it or to encourage students to pursue it

• Space continues to be a concern—students feel that student space is not centrally located, that the space available is a “windowless office” with outdated equipment that even tech services doesn’t want to work on and faculty do not like the uncertainty of not knowing where Sociology will be located in 5 years.

C. Recommendations

• Explore options for making a small program “bigger” by, for example, collaborating with other departments/programs, or the social science consortium

• Carefully consider long-term impact of small cohort, or going to an every other year model, for faculty and the Program

• Work to ensure that social science consortium provides opportunities for collaboration, sharing of resources (for example, to offer a broader range of quantitative methods training), raising awareness of the value of social sciences to the University

• Continue the practice of replacing Sociology faculty with other sociologists, and of conducting searches before retirement

• Explore options for other sources of funds for student tuition and fellowships—for example, from University, donors, alumni—beyond grants, that would allow more stability in the Program

• Find ways that the faculty can build more tuition support into research grants as they are writing, so they are able to support graduate students over the long term. Alternatively, explore offering matching funds for hiring of graduate students as research assistants

• Explore ways to systematize/formalize what is currently being done by students rather informally to identify research assistant and teaching opportunities, funding sources, etc.
• Develop/make better use of alumni network—those remaining in the San Francisco area in particular, seem to have research positions that might in turn provide opportunities for students to gain research experience

• Provide some type of grant-writing workshops for students, with particular focus on social science research

• Provide graduate students who have been accepted into the Program, information about applying for funding prior to starting the Program, and connect them with other students who have experience with these sources

• To increase potential for students to collaborate and publish, provide funds for bringing in relevant speakers to talk about their own research and give students access to broader professional networks; similarly, funds for student travel to conferences could help raise their visibility, increase the size of their mentoring networks

• Consider separating advancement to degree as administrative category from pedagogical activity; for example, administratively defined as having completed second qualifying exam and pedagogically defined as having completed TAE (this would make students eligible to apply for various types of funding sooner)

• Consider moving up the dates of the two qualifying exams in the summer Ensure that the first two qualifying exams are offered soon enough in the summer to allow for some preparation but also, to ensure that there is time left in summer for writing, research, and grant and manuscript development

• Explore other options for TAE—encourage students to write something that could be published as a critical literature review; consider how it fits with the three-paper dissertation option

• Consider changing rule that prohibits chair of TAE and chair of dissertation committee from being the same person
• Be more proactive in advertising the Department within the University and neighboring universities/colleges that may require teaching assistants; raise awareness about its presence and what sociologists can offer to medical student training

• Explore creative ways to increase targeted recruitment—e.g., identify undergrad programs in public health in the region/country and “advertise” Program there

• Continually update webpage to highlight Program’s strengths and activities; among other things to emphasize, grantwriting, strong theoretical and methodological foundations, great access to faculty

• The five year holding pattern on space is unrealistic, identify viable interim options and be in discussion with the Program