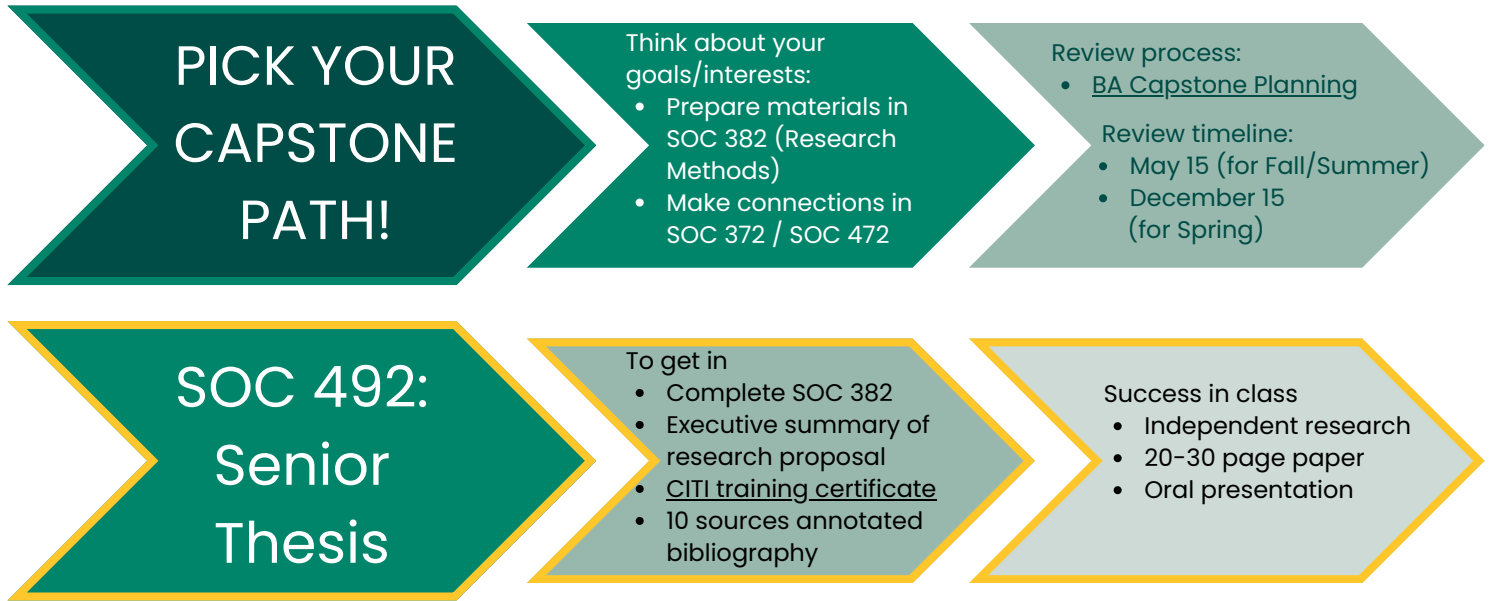


# Department of Sociology

## SOC 492 Senior Thesis Proposal Requirements



### Proposal Submission and Deadlines

In the semester before enrolling SOC 492 Senior Thesis, you should develop a one-to-two page thesis proposal (executive summary). Ideally, you will use some of the research and design work completed for SOC 382 Research Methods. That work, along with the SOC 382 instructor comments and suggestions, should help you to construct a short, coherent and well written executive summary proposal for your senior thesis.

### Proposal Review and Obtaining Your Permission Number to Enroll in SOC 492

The instructor will review your proposal. If it meets requirements the instructor, two weeks after the deadline (5/15 or 12/15), will send you a permission number that will allow you to enroll in SOC 492. At that time, the instructor may also offer suggestions for immediate summer/winter break revisions and work. You may also be asked on a short time table to revise and resubmit your proposal before receiving your permission number for enrollment. As the SOC 492 instructor is responsible for supervising your work, they will ultimately make the final decision on approving your research plans.

### Summer/Winter Break Required and Optional Work

The literature review section of your senior thesis is a great part of your research to work on during summer or winter break. It may also be necessary to develop other parts during this time. If you hope to begin data collection before the first day of the course, you will need to negotiate the IRB process – and the [required IRB application](#) – with your instructor. Given that you will need to collaborate with your instructor to prepare a professional IRB application, there is no guarantee that your instructor will have time to engage in that process with you before the first day of the course. Your IRB application must be approved by your instructor before you submit it for review by the Cal Poly Humboldt IRB Committee and you must have IRB approval before you can begin data collection.

### Executive Summary of Research Proposal Organization

**(1) Introduction & Research Question** (1-2 paragraphs) Introduce the topic, discuss the importance of studying the topic and state your research question. **(2) Theoretical Framework** (1-2 paragraphs; longer for those planning only literature review research) Discuss the theory (and hypotheses where appropriate) that will inform your research. If you are planning an extended literature review, discuss the likely sub areas of research about which you will be writing. **(3) Methods** (empirical research only) [Description of Sample/Participants](#) (1 paragraph) From whom will you collect data? If you are using an unobtrusive method such as content analysis, describe the process through which you will compile your sample of artifacts to analyze. If using an existing dataset, indicate the name and location of the dataset. [Data Collection Methods](#) (1 paragraph) How will you go about collecting data for your study? Will you administer a survey? Conduct face-to-face interviews? If using an existing dataset, describe how the researchers collected the data. [Human Subjects Research](#) (1 sentence if needed) Indicate if you will be submitting an IRB proposal within the first three weeks of the term or if you have already submitted a proposal. In the latter case, indicate the status of your IRB proposal: “My research is supervised by Dr. Jones and we received IRB approval on November 30, 2025.” **(4) Thesis work that builds on Work in Progress** (when applicable describe in 1 paragraph) If your thesis draws on past work, describe specifically how you will expand on that work to earn the additional units of thesis credit: “I developed for my Law and Society class a literature review (attached) based on 10 sources. For thesis credit I will write about an additional 20 sources and collect empirical data on xyz topic.” **(5) Annotated Bibliography** (10 sources in ASA style) using peer-reviewed journal articles, books and/or best practices research.