



COMPUTING AND SOFTWARE GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK 2019 - 2020



INTRODUCTION

Your all-in-one guide to helpful information for graduate students and other researchers in the Department of Computing and Software at McMaster University. Some of the information is specific to the Department of Computing and Software but other information generic for all graduate studies is also included for your convenience.

All students should familiarize themselves with the regulations in the School of Graduate Studies Calendar, available at <https://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/index.php?catoid=39>

The regulations for graduate studies in effect in the Department of Computing and Software are documented in this Handbook. As changes in the School of Graduate Studies or Departmental regulations occur, the department will endeavor to keep students informed through either email or via its website.

Please note: if there is any discrepancy between a department or program handbook and the School of Graduate Studies Calendar, then the School of Graduate Studies Calendar shall prevail.

Collective Agreements <http://www.workingatmcmaster.ca/elr/>

Campus Map: https://www.mcmaster.ca/welcome/images/campus_map.pdf

Engineering Graduate Society: <http://www.macegs.com/>

Student Clubs: <https://www.eng.mcmaster.ca/cas/resources#student-clubs-and-groups>

Graduate Studies, Gilmour Hall, Room 212, ext 23679, <https://graduate.mcmaster.ca/>

Contact List for Graduate Studies Staff: <https://graduate.mcmaster.ca/contacts>

Health and Safety: <https://www.eng.mcmaster.ca/cas/resources#health-safety>

EMERGENCY! - dial **88** on any campus phone (cell: 905 522 4135)
Security - ext 24281

SWHAT Escort Service ext 27500 (During the months of September through April, students operate an escort service; "Students Walk Home Attended Team). After dark, call ext 27500 and you can arrange to be escorted to your car or residence by a male or female student. This service is provided for your protection and should therefore be utilized.

MUSST Safety APP (McMaster University Safety Security & Transit)

EOHSS - ext 24352 (Environmental & Occupational Health Support Service)

Contact Us:

Departmental Website: <https://www.eng.mcmaster.ca/cas>

Chair

Mark Lawford ext: 24911 office: ITB 160 email: lawford@mcmaster.ca

(Acting) Graduate Associate Chair

Jacques Carette ext 26869 office: ITB 168 email: carette@mcmaster.ca

Graduate Advisor - Software Engineering

Ryan Leduc ext: 27962 office: ITB 247 email: leduc@mcmaster.ca

Graduate Advisor - Computer Science

Emil Sekerinski ext: 27276 office: ITB 215 email: emil@mcmaster.ca

Graduate Advisor – M. Eng

Antoine Deza ext: 23750 office: ITB 127 email: deza@mcmaster.ca

Program Coordinator - eHealth

Reza Samavi ext: 24895 office: ITB 213 email: samavir@mcmaster.ca

Administrator

Laurie LeBlanc ext: 22887 office: ITB 202A email: leblanl@mcmaster.ca

Administrative Assistant

Delcia Aguiar ext: 24614 office: ITB 202 email: aguiad1@mcmaster.ca

Undergraduate Assistant

Otse Umoru ext: 22852 office: ITB 202 email: umorui@mcmaster.ca

Graduate Assistant

Connie Carrabs ext: 27863 office: ITB 202 email: carrabs@mcmaster.ca

For Graduate Inquiries

e-mail: gradcas@mcmaster.ca

Graduate Curriculum and Policy Committee (GCPC)

J. Carette (Chair); W. He; H. Ashtiani; R. Khedri; R. Paige

Please Note: the appropriate Graduate Advisor, then Graduate Associate Chair are the first point of contacts for any issues.

Quick Links:

To obtain / set up your MacID and email:

<https://www.mcmaster.ca/uts/macid/>

For UHIP information:

<https://iss.mcmaster.ca/studentlife/healthcare/>

Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP)

<https://registrar.mcmaster.ca/financial-aid/osap-government-aid/>

GSA Benefits: (health & dental)

http://www.studentcare.ca/View.aspx?locale=en&uid=McMasterUniversity_Home&

Scholarships & Bursaries:

<https://registrar.mcmaster.ca/financial-aid/scholarships-and-bursaries/#tab-4>

Avenue to Learn: (online portal used by many courses)

<http://avenue.mcmaster.ca/>

Departmental Student Clubs/Groups:

<https://www.eng.mcmaster.ca/cas/resources#student-clubs-and-groups>

Graduate Student Association:

<https://gsamcmaster.org/>

GETTING STARTED AS A GRADUATE STUDENT at MCMASTER UNIVERSITY!

Where to find key dates:

- For the most up to date information on Registration dates
<https://registrar.mcmaster.ca/dates-and-deadlines/>
- Information on tuition payment deadlines
<https://student-accounts.mcmaster.ca/payments/important-dates-deadlines/>
- First day of Class: Variable. Please check with the instructor and course schedule.
<https://www.eng.mcmaster.ca/cas/current-graduates#Course-Timetable>

What to do prior to arrival:

- Contact or meet with your supervisor in person or remotely; activate web services; training; OHIP; UHIP; Review departmental/University policies; register; prepare all documentation that is required; if you are an international student, familiarize yourself with Canadian currency and banking, permits/VISA's; housing/accommodations; working while studying; study permits; etc.
- Registration: Make sure to register on time. There are 3 terms in an academic year (fall/winter/summer) You MUST enroll in at least one course for each term you are at McMaster. If you are not taking an academic course, you must enroll in a placeholder course (info you will find within this document on placeholders)
- ENROLLING IN YOUR PROGRAM FOR THE FIRST TIME - Approximately two weeks before enrollment opens (mid-July, mid-November, mid-March) you will receive an email notifying you about the opening of enrollment. If you have any questions in the interim, please contact your program or supervisor directly and check our website periodically for news and updates about how to enroll and information regarding scholarship deadlines and other important information: <https://gs.mcmaster.ca/academic-services/how-enroll>
- Information and instructions for activating your McMaster email account:
http://www.mcmaster.ca/uts/selfservice/student_email.html

When you arrive:

- Visit the main office and advise them of your arrival. Submit all required documentation (study permit, official transcript, etc)
- Bus Pass: is included in your supplement fees for full time students. The pass is also known as Presto Card. You can pick up your Presto Card from Campus Store (bookstore) You will need your student card before this step.
- Student Cards: pickup your student card from Graduate Studies – Gilmour Hall, Room 212 (In Mosaic go to your Student Centre; Demographic Data; upload photo button

- For International students: Banking in Canada: There are 5 major Canadian Banks – Royal Bank, ScotiaBank, TD Bank, Bank of Montreal and CIBC – please note that our office does not endorse any one bank. You can find any of these banks throughout the McMaster community. To open a Canadian bank account you will need your passport, study permit and offer of admission plus address verification
- Budgeting and Cost of Living: You can see updated list of how much things cost in Hamilton here: <https://www.expatistan.com/cost-of-living/hamilton-canada>
- Key point: Check your payment schedule. During TA term, you get paid more – SAVE IT! Take advantage of student discounts on transit (Greyhound/Presto), Phoenix food discount 5% with GSA sticker, etc.
- How to pay your tuition and fees: Bank transfer is the most convenient, secure and recommended method.
- Check your tuition and fee amount on your student account: once enrolled, there are several ways to check your financial account information: Student Centre – Finances section. You will NOT receive a bill or invoice. You can print invoices directly from your student center if needed.
- **Please check your profile on Mosaic to make sure all information is correct – program/plan, etc.**

GENERAL DEPARTMENTAL INFORMATION:

GRADUATE COURSES AND SELECTION

The graduate courses in Computing and Software are listed in the School of Graduate Studies Calendar. The courses which are offered in 2019 - 2020 are shown below.

Graduate Courses Academic Year 2019 - 2020

Term 1 Courses

CAS 701	<u>Logic and Discrete Mathematics</u>	<u>William Farmer</u>
CAS 702	<u>Data Structures and Algorithms</u>	<u>George Karakostas</u>
CAS 703	<u>Software Design</u>	Ridha Khedri
CAS 708	Scientific Computation	<u>Ned Nedialkov</u>
CAS 741	<u>Development of Scientific Computing Software</u>	<u>Spencer Smith</u>
CAS 746	<u>Advanced Topics in Combinatorial Optimization</u>	<u>Antoine Deza</u>
CAS 766	Concurrent Programming	<u>Emil Sekerinski</u>
CAS 781	Advanced Topics: Data Centre Design	<u>Doug Down</u>

Term 2 Courses

CAS 704	Embedded, Real-Time Software Systems	Ryan Leduc
CAS 705	Computability and Complexity	<u>Ryszard Janicki</u>
CAS 722	Computing Patterns in Strings	<u>Bill Smyth/Neerja Mhaskar</u>
CAS 748	Analysis & Synthesis of Sound	<u>Martin v. Mohrenschildt</u>
CAS 756	Advanced Topics in Formal Methods and Software Architecture	Richard Paige
CAS 757	Modern Software Technology for eHealth	Reza Samavi
CAS 763	Certified Programming with Dependent Types	Wolfram Kahl
CAS 764	Advance Topics in Data Management	Fei Chiang
CAS 771	Introduction to Big Data Systems and Applications	Wenbo He

Course selection is done by the graduate student and requires the approval of the research supervisor. All students should endeavor to have their course program selected for both terms and register for these courses by the appropriate dates. Students who have not yet completed the course requirements for their degree are required to sign up for these courses via the online course selection process (Mosaic). Initial course selections, as well as subsequent additions and deletions, are done using this process.

<https://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/index.php?catoid=39>

Please note that all students must register using this process. If you have completed your course requirements and are working only on a project or thesis, you enroll in the placeholder course, SGS 700 (*this is how Mosaic will recognize you as a student without taking an actual course*)

Graduate students are responsible for ensuring that registration and course information as shown on their Mosaic profile is correct. It is also **your** responsibility to ensure that your course selections meet the course requirements for your program. The department will not consider requests to change the program regulations to accommodate course selections that do not meet the requirements. You are encouraged to complete a "[Course Selection](#)" form and bring it in to the Graduate Assistant in the Departmental Office who will check the course selections against program regulations.

The enrollment process will automatically assign a course towards the primary academic program that a student is enrolled in for a particular term. This process does not determine whether the course will exceed the requirements outlined the curriculum. Where a student wishes to designate a particular course towards a program other than their primary academic program, a special request is required during the normal add period outlined in the sessional dates. The requirement designation form is available on the School of Graduate Studies website: <https://graduate.mcmaster.ca/resources>

PROGRAM DEGREE OPTIONS and REGULATIONS:

For more information, please visit: (Before selecting courses, please discuss with your supervisor)

<https://www.eng.mcmaster.ca/cas/programs/degree-options>

Master of Engineering (M.Eng): This program is intended for those interested in a career as a practicing professional in Computing and Software related fields. Students must complete an independent project demonstrating the ability to carry out independent studies and reach a satisfactory conclusion in an area of Computing and Software. Funding is normally the responsibility of the candidate. Students may also enter the program on a part-time basis. All students will have a supervisor from the department to guide them through the program. All courses should be completed within 16 months of entry into the program and the project should be completed within 20 months of entry into the program.

Course Requirements: A student in the M.Eng. program must complete six half (one term) graduate courses. They must complete at least four 700 level courses; at most two courses may be at the 600 level; at most two courses subject to the approval of the supervisor and graduate advisor can be from another department in the Faculty of Engineering or the Dept of Mathematics and Statistics, or the School of Computational Science and Engineering. The two 600 level courses may be taken as an Advanced Credit in the last year of undergraduate studies in McMaster University.

Master of Applied Science (MASc): This program is focused on advancing knowledge of software lifecycle from design, implementation and testing to documentation and maintaining through intensive research in their chosen area of interest. MASc students must successfully complete the equivalent of four one-term graduate courses and prepare and successfully defend a MASc thesis.

Course Requirements: Graduate courses in the department are grouped in three categories: a) Theory of computation and mathematics of computing (**Theory**); b) Software and its engineering (**Software**); and c) Computer systems and applications (**Systems**). Students must successfully complete two Software courses; one course from Theory; one course from System; one of the non-software courses may be substituted by a graduate course from outside the department subject to approval; at most one 600 level course; a student may be required to take additional courses if requested by the admission authority or supervisor; the student, with the appropriate approvals, proposes the course selection for approvals; outstanding MASc students may be allowed to transfer to a PhD program of the department when they complete their course requirements with at least an A- average and demonstrate exceptional progress in their research project.

Milestones:

Department seminar attendance: Full time students are required to attend a minimum 4 times or 50% per academic year whichever is lower during the first year of the program.

Technical presentation: Full time students are required to participate in the graduate poster & demo competition *once* in the first two years of the program.

Supervisory meeting: A supervisor committee consists of the student's supervisor and at least one other member of the department. Members from outside the department can be included upon approval by the graduate advisor. Supervisory meetings must be scheduled once a year.

Master of Science (MSc) Computer Science: Students in the MSc thesis based program are focused on advancing knowledge in computational theory and practice through intensive research in their chosen area of interest.

Course Requirements: Graduate courses in the department are grouped in three categories: a) Theory of computation and mathematics of computing (**Theory**); b) Software and its engineering (**Software**); and c) Computer systems and applications (**Systems**). Students must successfully complete the equivalent of four one-term

graduate courses in Computer Science, Software Engineering or other relevant areas such as Electrical and Computer Engineering or Mathematics.

Milestones:

Department seminar attendance: Full time students are required to attend a minimum 4 times or 50% per academic year whichever is lower during the first year of the program.

Technical presentation: Full time students are required to participate in the graduate poster & demo competition *once* in the first two years of the program.

Supervisory meeting: A supervisor committee consists of the student's supervisor and at least one other member of the department. Members from outside the department can be included upon approval by the graduate advisor. Supervisory meetings must be scheduled once a year.

Doctor of Philosophy in Engineering (PhD) Computer Science: Students in the PhD thesis based program are focused on advancing knowledge in computational theory and practice through intensive research in their chosen area of interest.

Course Requirements: Graduate courses in the department are grouped in three categories: a) Theory of computation and mathematics of computing (**Theory**); b) Software and its engineering (**Software**); and c) Computer systems and applications (**Systems**). Students must successfully complete at least four one-term graduate courses (beyond those taken for a MSc degree) in Computer Science, Software Engineering or other relevant areas such as Electrical and Computer Engineering or Mathematics.

Milestones:

Department seminar attendance: Full time students are required to attend a minimum 4 times or 50% per academic year whichever is lower during the first two years of the program.

Technical presentation: Full time students are required to participate in the graduate poster & demo competition *once* in the first two years of the program.

Supervisory meeting: Supervisory meetings must be scheduled once a year. Students should submit a supervisory report online at least 1 week before supervisory meetings (except during the years for thesis proposal and dissertation in lieu of supervisory meetings per SGS policies).

Comprehensive Examination: The Comprehensive Examination consists of two parts. In part 1, PhD candidates must demonstrate "graduate level" understanding of the undergraduate computer science material. The 2nd part of the exam is based on the student's thesis proposal. Part two is intended to ensure that the student understands both the theoretical and practical issues in the research area and that

he/she is well prepared to carry out the research described in the thesis proposal. Part 2 of the exam is open to the public.

Doctor of Philosophy in Engineering (PhD) Software Engineering: Students in the PhD thesis based program are focused on advancing knowledge of software lifecycle from design, implementation and testing to documentation and maintaining through intensive research in their chosen area of interest. It is intended for students who wish to teach and/or perform advanced research and development in the field of Software Engineering.

Course Requirements: Graduate courses in the department are grouped in three categories: a) Theory of computation and mathematics of computing (**Theory**); b) Software and its engineering (**Software**); and c) Computer systems and applications (**Systems**). Students must successfully complete the equivalent of four one-term graduate courses in Computer Science, Software Engineering or relevant areas such as Electrical and Computer Engineering or Mathematics.

Milestones:

Department seminar attendance: Full time students are required to attend a minimum 4 times or 50% per academic year whichever is lower during the first two years of the program.

Technical presentation: Full time students are required to participate in the graduate poster & demo competition *once* in the first two years of the program.

Supervisory meeting: Supervisory meetings must be scheduled once a year. Students should submit a supervisory report online at least 1 week before supervisory meetings (except during the years for thesis proposal and dissertation in lieu of supervisory meetings per SGS policies).

Comprehensive Examination: The Comprehensive Examination consists of two parts. In part 1, PhD candidates must demonstrate “graduate level” understanding of the undergraduate computer science material. The 2nd part of the exam is based on the student’s thesis proposal. Part two is intended to ensure that the student understands both the theoretical and practical issues in the research area and that he/she is well prepared to carry out the research described in the thesis proposal. Part 2 of the exam is open to the public.

600 Level Courses:

M.ENG. STUDENTS MAY TAKE AT MOST TWO OF THE REQUIRED GRADUATE COURSES AT THE 600 LEVEL.

ALL OTHER MASTERS STUDENTS AND DOCTORAL STUDENTS IN COMPUTING AND SOFTWARE MAY TAKE AT MOST ONE OF THE PRESCRIBED GRADUATE CREDIT COURSES AT THE 600 LEVEL.

Every graduate student is required to complete **SGS #101** - *Academic Research Integrity and Ethics*, during the first year of their program. This course offering is available on-line with no limited enrollment in each term. Prior to completing the course, please register for it via Mosaic. The course is completed through "Avenue to Learn": <http://avenue.mcmaster.ca/>

Every graduate student is also required to complete **SGS #201** – AODA Training, during the first year of their program. This course offering is available on-line with no limited enrollment in each term. Prior to completing the course, please register for it via Mosaic. The course is offered by Accessibility McMaster and is accessed through the following link: <http://www.mcmaster.ca/accessibility>. This is part of the mandatory requirements to graduate and to register for courses.

IMPORTANT DATES

Sessional Dates: <https://registrar.mcmaster.ca/dates-and-deadlines/#tab-1>
Departmental Comprehensive Examinations are held twice a year (March / November)

CAREER PLANNING

Entering graduate students in Masters or Doctoral programs within the Faculty of Engineering are required to complete a career planning exercise (CARP) within their first academic year (September to August). Students will book through the department, a planning session with a career specialist within the faculty and subsequently produce (at most) a two-page report before the end of their first year. The report must be submitted to the corresponding graduate advisor (for computer science or software engineering) before the end of August in their first year.

Students entering in May of a given year may choose to submit the report in the second academic year instead. Once filled in, please submit it to the Graduate Assistant in the main office for processing.

(This is a degree requirement)

https://www.eng.mcmaster.ca/sites/default/files/career_planning_template_v02.pdf

SUPERVISION

Every graduate student will have a supervisor or a faculty advisor or a properly constituted supervisory committee. ***The supervisor must be declared within the first 5 months of study and the supervisory committee must be declared within the first 12 months of study.*** Supervisory committee members are assumed to continue their participation on student committees unless otherwise replaced by the Associate Chair or Graduate Advisor.

While the supervisor and student have a mutual obligation to meet on a regular basis, the department/program shall ensure there is a formal regular meeting of each Ph.D. supervisory committee at least once within the reporting year (December 1-November 30), and possibly more often, to discuss the student's progress. Each Ph.D. supervisory committee must report at least annually on the student's progress and the department/program chair must forward such reports to the School of Graduate Studies. For Ph.D. students who have entered or transferred into the Ph.D. effective January 1st or May 1st, they must have a Ph.D. Supervisory committee

meeting completed no later than November 30th of that same calendar year; those entering September 1st must have at least one meeting by November 30th of the next year. The report formally documents the supervisory committee's assessment of the progress of the student's program.

It is possible to change supervisors or the membership of a supervisory committee, although this is not the norm. If the direction of the research changes, membership can be changed by mutual consent of the parties involved. Supervisors and/or supervisory committee members may not resign without the department's/program's approval. A change in supervisor is at the discretion of the department/program, not the student or supervisor.

If a student feels that they are receiving unsatisfactory supervision, they should consult the Department Chair or Graduate Advisor. If this avenue is not sufficient, the student is encouraged to speak with the appropriate Associate Dean of Graduate Studies about the problem (see [Section 4.5 - Supervision](#)).

Graduate students and supervisors are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the McMaster University Graduate Work Supervision Guidelines for Faculty and Students, which follow below and to list of policies, policies on accommodations available on the School of Graduate Studies website at <https://graduate.mcmaster.ca/resources>

GRADUATE WORK SUPERVISION GUIDELINES FOR FACULTY AND STUDENTS

Preamble

The relationship between the graduate student and supervisor/advisor is unique and provides a remarkable opportunity to guide and mentor the student engaged in advanced academic learning. What is considered 'good' supervision will vary from discipline to discipline, and it naturally evolves as the student advances through a graduate program. This document provides suggestions to initiate, promote, and sustain successful student-supervisor/advisor relationships.

Guidelines for the Graduate Student

1. Commitment to scholarly activity is a pre-requisite for graduate success.
2. To support mentorship and guidance, the student must engage in effective, timely and on-going communication with the supervisor/advisor regarding the status of their project.
3. The student should discuss expectations with the supervisor/advisor to ensure that there is a mutual understanding of research goals and related activities, coursework, timelines and deadlines.
4. The student must manage their time, meet deadlines, and prepare for regularly scheduled meetings (e.g., with the supervisor/advisor and supervisory committee). Students should recognize that graduate program academic expectations will not be modified if they choose to engage in other activities, such as working outside of their graduate studies, studying for professional program entrance exams or applying for jobs or postdoctoral fellowships. Student-supervisor meetings for thesis work typically occur at least monthly, although meeting regularity will vary amongst disciplines and at various stages. Students are encouraged to discuss concerns about the type and amount of supervision needed for their work with their supervisor. Students are expected to inform the academic head of the graduate program if they are concerned about inadequate or inappropriate supervision.
5. The student is expected to develop effective communication and collaborative skills and to demonstrate respect for others. The student should carefully and earnestly consider advice,

suggestions, comments and criticisms received from the graduate supervisor/advisor. The student should expect timely, but not immediate, responses (regarding meetings, feedback on written work, etc.) from the supervisor/advisor and supervisory committee.

6. The student is obliged to act ethically in conducting graduate work. This includes, but is not limited to, following McMaster University policies on the ethical conduct of research and academic integrity. The student is required to document and honestly report research data, to conscientiously cite information and data sources, and to seek guidance on any data exclusions. He/she must acknowledge contributions of the supervisor/advisor, committee members and others, in accordance with the norms of their academic discipline.
7. It is the student's responsibility to carry out all work safely and in accordance with standard operating procedures. Potentially dangerous tasks should not be done while impaired and should not be done until properly trained. It is the student's duty to learn about safe practices, ask questions, and seek appropriate help and guidance on safety matters.
8. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of all the requirements, regulations, and guidelines outlined in the Graduate Calendar as well as all University policies pertaining to graduate work. See [http://graduate.mcmaster.ca/images/files/graduate/forms/Graduate Work Supervision Guidelines.pdf](http://graduate.mcmaster.ca/images/files/graduate/forms/Graduate%20Work%20Supervision%20Guidelines.pdf) (see Appendix).

Guidelines for Supervisors and Advisors of Graduate Students

1. The supervisor/advisor must be aware of the inherent power imbalance in the relationship with students, behave professionally, and communicate appropriately. He/she must provide a safe, healthy environment that fosters productive scholarly work, curiosity, and freedom of expression. The environment must be free from harassment, discrimination, and intimidation.
2. The supervisor/advisor is expected to have sufficient time and resources (as appropriate for the field) to support the student's work effectively. It is the supervisor's responsibility to ensure that students have appropriate safety training, and that they carry out all work safely, and in accordance with standard operating procedures, once properly trained.
3. The supervisor/advisor should help the student develop a realistic thesis/research plan with reasonable plans, that balance exploration with achievable, manageable and focused goals, and allow completion of scholarly work "in time."
4. The supervisory committee must approve thesis project plans, including those that are part of a larger collaborative project led by others (e.g. research team members or collaborators).
5. The supervisor/advisor may encourage the student to undertake some research that is not formally part of their scholarly paper project or thesis project, provided that it will not negatively impact the student's academic progress. If appropriate, the additional work can be supported by a research assistant stipend.
6. The supervisor/advisor should be aware that a student might experience changes in motivation and productivity. The supervisor/advisor should be prepared to adapt his/her mentorship approach to promote success in a range of different situations.
7. The supervisor/advisor is expected to be aware of accommodation policies, procedures and support services, and to support students with temporary disabilities in designing and organizing accommodations. For students with identified permanent disabilities, the supervisor/advisor is expected to consult with Student Accessibility Services on accommodations. They are expected to be respectful of graduate students who are dealing with stressful situations and personal difficulties. When appropriate, the supervisor/advisor should direct the student to campus resources and other supports. The supervisor/advisor is responsible for promoting a culture of respect and collaboration and encouraging timely conflict resolution when disputes arise, which may require consultation with the supervisory committee or others (e.g. head of the graduate program).
8. The supervisor must regularly communicate and have face-to-face meetings with the student to provide feedback on the student's progress, strengths, weaknesses, gaps in knowledge, and

how well the student is addressing deficiencies. Written summaries of feedback should be prepared when there are significant deficiencies. When a student is struggling with meeting graduate program/thesis work expectations, a supervisory committee meeting should be scheduled early to assess progress and plans, and to provide a clear statement of requirements to meet expectations.

9. The supervisor/advisor and supervisory committee are required to provide students with timely, but not instantaneous, feedback. As an example, corrections to a thesis chapter, major research project, or a manuscript optimally should occur within a few weeks. Faculty should be aware that they must respond to a draft of the thesis within the timelines outlined in the graduate calendar.
10. Supervisors/advisors who undertake a research leave or other leaves must communicate to their graduate students, and graduate student applicants, the plans to provide supervision during the leave. Supervisors/advisors who will be away from campus for extended periods of time must name an alternate faculty member, with graduate supervisory privileges, who will have day-to-day responsibility and signing-authority for students.
11. The supervisor/advisor is expected to encourage increasing independence as the student progresses through graduate work. Although the supervisor/advisor is not expected to be a copy editor for the student's written work, he/she should review and provide feedback on materials that the student produces prior to external review or defence.
12. Students' contributions to research must be acknowledged in accordance with the University policies and the norms of the academic discipline.
13. When feasible and appropriate, supervisors/advisors are expected to encourage students to submit their graduate work for presentation at conferences and workshops, and for publication.
14. The supervisor/advisor should recognize that there are multiple career paths available to different students, and should be respectful of the student's choice of career path, providing advice, where appropriate, on the best way for the student to reach their career goals. The supervisor also should be aware of professional development opportunities for the student offered through the Department/Program, Faculty, or University, and should encourage the student to take advantage of such opportunities.
15. It is the supervisor/advisor's responsibility to be aware of all the requirements, regulations, and guidelines outlined in the Graduate Calendar and University policies. See [http://graduate.mcmaster.ca/images/files/graduate/forms/Graduate Work Supervision Guidelines.pdf](http://graduate.mcmaster.ca/images/files/graduate/forms/Graduate%20Work%20Supervision%20Guidelines.pdf) (see Appendix).

SECURITY

From time to time there have been thefts of personal belongings or research equipment from laboratories or offices. **Please ensure that you lock the door each time you vacate a room.** Do not ever leave valuables (wallets, handbags, etc.) where they can be taken, particularly in public areas such as the Library or other common areas. Please do not prop open office or laboratory doors.

***We cannot stress enough the importance of securing our equipment.
Please comply.***

DEPARTMENTAL OFFICE SERVICES

The Departmental Office (Rooms 202) is open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (closed for lunch from 12:00 to 1:00). It is located on the second floor of the Information Technology Building.

The Administrator (Laurie, Room 202/A) manages the departmental office and will assist graduate students in all aspects of financial support, TA's, awards, and issuing of keys and space.

The Graduate Assistant, (Room 202) will assist graduate students with registration, course selection, change in status, supervisory committees, thesis defenses and check out procedures. The Administrator will assist all PDF's and other researchers with Departmental and University Policies, all aspects of employment such as appointment letter, signing in, ID card, e-mail Login ID, extensions, termination, payment, etc., assignment of office, keys, etc.

It should be noted that the Department does not provide stationery, pencils, transparencies, etc., for students or research staff.

MAIL SERVICE, POSTAGE AND USE OF LETTERHEAD

Mail is delivered to the Departmental Office once a day. Delivery and pickup is around 1:00 p.m. daily. Mail will be placed in the students' individual mailboxes in 203. There are trays in room 203 for outgoing mail.

Stamped, properly addressed letters may be mailed from the Departmental Office, however parcels must be taken to a Post Office Location. Visit the Canada Post website to find a Post Office near you. The Campus Store hosts a Canada Post Express outlet which features stamps and Xpress post options for letter delivery.

Please do not have personal mail or parcels sent to the department as we will not accept these items.

Please note:

- a) Graduate students have access to mail only if writing justifiable letters to suppliers regarding equipment, reprint requests and other correspondence relating to your research.
- b) When sending letters of a personal nature, e.g. writing to a company for a job, please buy stamps.
- c) Computing and Software letterhead can only be used on business matters that have to do with your research, and you must have permission from your supervisor.

Copy Procedures – Please direct all queries to our Administrative Assistant (**Delcia**). Departmental copiers are not available for student's personal use. Students needing to make copies directly related to their research or for a course to which they have been assigned as a teaching assistant, must complete the Photocopier Services Request Form, available in the departmental office, and obtain their supervisor's approval before a copier account will be set up. Please discuss appropriate use of the copier account with your supervisor. Please note that copier codes are assigned to individuals and are not to be shared.

KEYS

All keys and access cards are authorized by **Laurie**. Keys are issued by The Hub (JHE 216A). A \$20.00 deposit is required for each key, which will be refunded to the student when the key is returned to The Hub (JHE 216A) upon completion of your studies.

An access ID card is required for after-hours building access and teaching labs. Working at McMaster ID Cards for Post-Doctoral Fellows and other employees (including TA's) are issued by Security at the Campus Store. <https://parking.mcmaster.ca/photoid.html>

Access Cards for graduate students who are not employees are authorized by **Laurie** and are issued by the Hub (JHE 216A). Students will be required to pay a deposit for this card.

KEYS AND ID CARDS ISSUED TO YOU ARE FOR YOUR PERSONAL USE ONLY. DO NOT LEND THEM OUT. YOU ALONE WILL BE TOTALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY CONSEQUENCES THAT MIGHT ARISE FROM USE OF YOUR KEYS AND CARDS, ESPECIALLY IN TERMS OF SECURITY. LOST KEYS OR ACCESS CARDS MUST BE REPORTED IMMEDIATELY TO THE DEPARTMENTAL OFFICE AS WELL AS THE UNIVERSITY SECURITY OFFICE.

REQUEST FOR SPECIAL LETTERS

From time to time special letters are needed for reasons of work such as extension to student's visa, visitor's visa, etc. When graduate students, PDF's or other research staff are requesting such letters, email **Laurie** with the request. Please allow one week for the letter to be prepared and returned to you. Thank you.

BULLETIN BOARD

Departmental bulletin boards are located on both floors of the Information Technology Building. Students should check the boards regularly for scholarship announcements, job postings, departmental news, etc. Please contact the main office for permission prior to posting items on the departmental boards.

JOB POSTINGS

We are occasionally asked to distribute job postings that may be of interest to graduate students. These may be from external individuals or companies, as well as internal to the university or the department (such as TA positions). Such postings will be listed on our departmental website at: <http://www.cas.mcmaster.ca/cas/0template1.php?1700>. Please check this site regularly if you are interested in obtaining employment.

SEMINARS IN THE DEPARTMENT

The Department, as well as various departmental research groups, arranges series of seminars each year at which outstanding scientists and engineers address the faculty, students and research support staff.

OUTSIDE CONFERENCES

We encourage graduate students to report results of their research at Conferences held outside the university, many of which are attended by Computing and Software professors. The preparation involved with such presentations and financial assistance available should be discussed with your research supervisor.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

If there has been a change of address or phone number, either permanent or local even if the change takes place on the last day of your studies in the Department, you are required to change your address online through Mosaic.

THESES OF PAST GRADUATE STUDENTS

The Departmental Office maintains copies of the graduate theses of students who have completed their studies in Computing and Software at McMaster University up to 2011. These may be signed out through the **Graduate Assistant**, and must be returned promptly. The maximum borrowing time is **one month**. If necessary, the thesis could be signed out again. Loss of theses by the person borrowing will result in a fine being levied to cover the cost of reproduction.

Additional copies of these theses are available through the Science Library, and faculty members have copies of the theses of students whose work they have directed.

OTHER THESES

Other theses from Canadian Universities may be obtained from either inter-library loan on micro-card or printed copies and certain copies may be purchased through inter-library loan from University Microfilms.

STUDENT VISA

Visa students are required to provide a photocopy of their study permit at the time they register with the School of Graduate Studies and each time their permit is renewed. Failure to do so will result in the withholding of their pay cheque(s). Also, please provide **the Graduate Assistant** with a copy of your student visa for your student's file. If your immigration status changes you must provide proper documentation to the Department and the School of Graduate Studies.

GRADUATE STUDENT OFFICES:

Most full time students will be assigned a space in a Graduate Student Office in the Information Technology Building. Please be reminded that these rooms are intended to provide students with a quiet study space. Noise should be kept to a minimum and visitors are discouraged. You are expected to maintain your space by keeping it clean and in good condition. **NO EATING** is allowed in these rooms, and any food stored overnight must be placed in a sealed plastic container. There

is a Grad Student Lounge located in ITB / 240. Students are responsible for keeping the room tidy and cleaning the microwave.

MEETING ROOMS:

The department has a limited number of rooms available for meetings and seminars. Students wishing to reserve a meeting room must have written approval of their supervisor. Rooms are booked through **Delcia** in the department office via email.

REIMBURSEMENT OF TRAVEL EXPENSES AND OTHER EXPENDITURES

The Departmental Office staff will assist graduate students and researchers in obtaining reimbursement for travel expenses and other expenditures that have been approved by the supervisor. You must obtain your supervisor's approval prior to making any expenditures or travel arrangements for which you will be requesting reimbursement.

You should familiarize yourself with the University's travel and reimbursement policies (http://www.mcmaster.ca/bms/BMS_Policies_Procedures.htm) in order to ensure that all expenditures are within approved limits and that you keep adequate documentation. We will not process requests for reimbursement for any expenditures for which you cannot submit the appropriate detailed receipts, statements, boarding passes, etc. If you have questions regarding requirements, speak to Delcia in the departmental office or your supervisor prior to making any such purchases.

DEPARTMENTAL CHECK OUT REQUIREMENTS

Upon completion of all degree requirements, graduate students will be required to "sign out" from the Department. A checklist has been compiled for this purpose and a copy is appended. PDF's and other research and staff members are also required to complete the checkout form at the end of their work term. Please see the Graduate Assistant.

FINANCIAL MATTERS:

Payment of Departmental Scholarship, Teaching Assistantship, Other

Scholarship payments for the graduate students are handled by the School of Graduate Studies, while the Human Resources department handles employment income. Scholarship payments are paid as a lump sum at the beginning of each term. Employment income is paid bi-weekly in the term of employment. All payments will be deposited directly into your bank account after enrolling in Direct Deposit. Depending on the type of payment(s) you receive you may have to enroll in 2 places: Mosaic Student Centre (online portal) AND Human Resources (paper form).

If you have any questions concerning your financial support contact Laurie in the departmental office (leblanl@mcmaster.ca).

Payroll information has been provided under separate cover and is available

<http://www.workingatmcmaster.ca/hris/employee/teachingassistants/>

SOCIAL INSURANCE NUMBER (SIN)

If you are employed as a Teaching or Research Assistant, it is essential that Human Resources have your Social Insurance Number on file. There is no fee to apply. You will need to bring your passport, study permit and offer of admission letter with you. If you do not have a SIN number, please apply at the Hamilton East Satellite Office at 2255 Barton St. East, Hamilton, Ontario, L8H 7T4 or Hamilton Mountain Human Resource Centre of Canada at 1550 Upper James Street, Hamilton, Ontario, L9B 1K3. Visa students requiring a SIN will need to obtain an Employment Contract from the Department Administrator. Please bring your study permit to ITB 202 when requesting the contract. Once the number is received, please inform the Graduate Assistant, who will ensure that the proper payroll department is notified.

Below is the link for information to apply for a social insurance Number

<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/sin/reports/apply.html#2.9>

UNDERSTANDING YOUR FUNDING

In the graduate payment model, tuition is due term-by-term on September 1st, January 1st and May 1st. Interest on tuition will not begin to be collected prior to the second last business day of those months. Each student receiving research scholarship funds will get a lump sum (whole term) payment by mid-September, mid-January, and mid-May. Employment payments are paid biweekly.

All money goes out to the student and students are solely responsible for paying their tuition.

Example for Fall Term (which assumes that a student has TA, research scholarship, and scholarship support):

September 1:

- Tuition for term is due

Mid-September:

- Bank deposit of all "research scholarship" (i.e. grant-sourced support) funds for term - paid from the MOSAIC HR module
- Bank deposit for first two weeks of TA pay - paid from the MOSAIC HR module
- Bank deposit of all scholarship funds(excluding research scholarships) for the term - paid from the MOSAIC Student Center Module

End of September:

- Bank deposit of second two weeks of TA pay

- Interest begins to accrue on balance outstanding in student account.

Collective Agreement for TA/RA in lieu of TA

GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIPS

The School of Graduate Studies announces scholarship competitions throughout the academic year. Such announcements will be forwarded to graduate students in the department by email, and/or posted on the bulletin board located on the second floor of the Information Technology Building. Students are strongly encouraged to apply to any competition for which they meet the eligibility requirements. For some this is a stipulation in their offer of admission. Some major annual scholarship competitions are: NSERC; OGS (Ontario Graduate Scholarships); McMaster Prestige Scholarships. Note that these applications require official copies of all academic transcripts, so be sure to order these sufficiently early to meet departmental deadlines.

<https://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/content.php?catoid=39&navoid=8159>

****NEW: Policy on Major Graduate Scholarships****

- As of April 12, 2019, there has been a change to “major graduate scholarships”. (NSERC, Vanier, OGS, CREATE, QEII, GSST, CSC ((China)), CNPQ-Brazil KASP ((Saudi Arabia)), and EAA ((Egypt)). The support per year provided to the student who holds a major graduate scholarship be less than the Faculty of Engineering minimum stipend or the value listed in the admissions letter for the student.
- If the student is currently enrolled in an Engineering-hosted program and receiving a graduate scholarship from the University, the total stipend currently being provided by the program cannot be reduced by more than \$2500 per term for each term in which the student holds the award (i.e. maximum stipend adjustment of \$7500 per year.)
- If the student is a new applicant who brings with them a major graduate scholarship, the total support per year provided to the student cannot be less than the Faculty of Engineering minimum stipend.
- Minimum Faculty of Engineering stipend – Sept 2018: PhD Domestic \$23,008 = \$16,000 + \$7,000.

GRADUATE TUITION FEES FOR 2019/20

Please see: <https://student-accounts.mcmaster.ca/tuition-fees/#tab-content-graduate>

(The Board of Governors reserves the right to amend fees after the printing of this statement.) These regulations apply to tuition and mandatory supplemental fees. They cover the various charges which would be incurred for reasons of late payment or late registration. The 2019-2020 fees schedule is in effect for a period of September 1, 2019 to August 31, 2020 and applies to all graduate students whether registered in regular or part-time degree programs. Please consult the Accounts and Cashiers [website](#) for the official graduate fees.

Students with outstanding accounts at the end of the academic year will:

- a. not receive academic results, including but not limited to exams, grades, transcripts, diplomas; and
- b. not be permitted to register for the next academic year until the account is settled.

Notes:

Students promoted to a Doctoral program from a Master's program will be considered as new admissions for the purpose of time limits for completion of the degree requirements, eligibility for financial assistance, and fee assessment.

Some international students may be eligible to pay Canadian fees depending on various immigration policies, and the Ministry Funding Manual.

Program Fees assessed on a term by term basis

Most students will pay regular tuition fees and these fees are assessed on a term by term basis. Part-time fees apply only to those students originally offered admission to a part-time program.

If students change status from full-time to part-time, they will still be required to pay regular (full-time) fees. In most cases part-time fees will allow registration in up to 3 half courses per academic year, in programs where fees are costed on a term by term basis. Students registering in more than 3 half courses will be assessed full-time fees. In situations where a student in a part-time program completes the degree or withdraws from the university, fees for the academic session will be assessed by the number of terms or number of half courses (whichever is the greater). Term count is adjusted if student changes status from part to full time at a ratio of 2:1.

If a full-time student wishes to change their status from full-time to part-time, they will still continue to pay full-time tuition fees for the entire program. The most common occurrence of this situation would be when a student gains full-time employment, changes in status to part-time will be effective at the start of term. Their mandatory supplementary fees however would be reduced to the part-time rate at the start of the next academic year.

McMaster University aims to provide competitive funding offers to highly qualified candidates recommended for admission to our research-based graduate programs. Each program is responsible for determining the level of funding in their offers, although the School of Graduate Studies (SGS) sets a minimum level of funding for full-time doctoral studies for the first four years of full-time enrolment.

Financial support for Doctoral studies will normally be provided for the first four years of full-time enrolment, and will be comprised of funds from the admitting Faculty or graduate program, including departmental scholarships/awards, research scholarship support, and possibly employment (e.g. teaching assistant). The annual level of financial support will meet or exceed the minimum level of support set by SGS, provided all conditions stated in the Financial Support subsections below are satisfied.

Funding for students enrolled in most research-based Master's programs will normally be provided for the nominal duration of the program. There is no minimum level of funding stipulated by SGS for Master's programs.

Teaching Assistantships (TA) (or Research Assistantship-in-lieu under the collective agreement between Canadian Union of Public Employees, Local 3906, Unit 1 and McMaster University) and contract employment income are offered to many graduate students registered in full-time programs. TA duties vary according to department but will normally consist of performance in

connection with undergraduate teaching, such as leading tutorials, demonstrating labs, and marking assignments. The award of a TA may vary but should not exceed 10 hours per week, plus three hours of training per term. TA funding is contingent on fulfillment of the employment obligations and maintaining satisfactory work performance, as stated in the letter of offer or employment contract. No exceptions of more than 505 hours in a single academic year will be approved (see section 2.5.3). Employment is paid as earned over the period in which the work is performed.

GRADUATE STUDY AT MCMASTER UNIVERSITY:

RESPONSIBILITIES OF GRADUATE STUDENTS TO THE UNIVERSITY (Section 1.3 of University Calendar)

Just as the University has responsibilities to graduate students, they have responsibilities to the University.

The students' responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- enroll annually until graduation, withdrawal, or withdrawal in good standing due to time limit;
- paying fees as required;
- complying with the regulations of the School of Graduate Studies as set out in the Calendar.

Where applicable, students are responsible for complying with such conditions as may be laid out in an accepted letter of offer. Students are also responsible for complying with the regulations governing graduate students at McMaster University with respect to full- and part-time status (see sections [2.5.2](#) and [2.5.3](#)). Students are further responsible for informing the School of Graduate Studies within two weeks, which acts as the official keeper of student records, of any change in personal information such as address, name, telephone number, etc. Students are also responsible for reporting through the department any change in student status, course registration, or withdrawal.

Research-Based Programs

With regard to research and study, students are responsible for maintaining contact and meeting regularly with the faculty advisor, thesis/project supervisor or supervisory committee, for observing departmental guidelines, and for meeting the deadlines of the department and the School of Graduate Studies. If there is a problem with supervision, it is the student's responsibility to contact the Department Chair or Graduate Advisor. It is also the expectation that students will seek clarification when necessary on questions regarding elements of academic and research progress. The provisions for changing a supervisor are outlined in [Section 2.7](#).

Students who undertake to write a master's or doctoral thesis assume responsibility both for creating drafts of the thesis and for responding to direction from the Supervisory Committee. The student shall have the responsibility to write and ultimately to defend the thesis, and the Supervisory Committee has the responsibility to offer guidance in the course of the endeavour, and to recommend or not recommend the completed thesis for defence.

Since enrollment permits access to libraries and certain other academic facilities (including off-campus facilities), it also implies a commitment on the part of each graduate student to use such facilities in accordance with applicable rules, including all safety practices, guidelines and policies. Inappropriate behaviour that is deemed to be in violation of such practices and/or policies may lead to denial of access to the facility. If such a denial of access to facilities means that a student can no longer fulfill his/her academic obligations, the student will be required to withdraw involuntarily from his/her academic program. (see also [Section 6.2](#))

Full-time students are obliged to be on campus, except for vacation periods or authorized off-campus status, for all three terms of the university year. Vacation entitlement is discussed in [2.5.8](#). Any student who is away from campus for longer than one week, which is not part of the student's vacation entitlement, requires their supervisor's approval in writing. If this period of time exceeds two weeks, the approval of the department chair is also required. In accordance with government regulations (see [Section 2.5.2](#)) students who will be away from campus for more than four weeks require not only permission from the Department but also that of the appropriate Associate Dean of Graduate Studies and must submit a Request to be Full Time Off Campus. Note that this permission is needed even for field work or study elsewhere in the world, in order to allow the University to comply with the regulation requiring that a written explanation for such absences be lodged in the Graduate School office. Students may arrange, through the Department and the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies, to be "full-time off-campus" for periods of up to a year. Students will also be required to complete the Risk Management Manual (RMM) 801 forms and gain approval through EOHSS. In cases of unauthorized absence the student will be deemed to have withdrawn voluntarily from graduate study and will have to petition for readmission. No guarantee of readmission or of renewal of financial arrangements can be made. An exception to this policy would be programs that deliver their curriculum either partially or fully in on-line formats. Please refer to details in individual program descriptions.

In order to receive a degree, the student must fulfill all departmental or program requirements and all University regulations, including those of the School of Graduate Studies. Students who have outstanding financial accounts at the end of the academic year will not receive their academic results, diplomas, or transcripts.

For complete policies regarding graduate study, students should refer to the Graduate Calendar.

UNIVERSITY REGULATIONS AFFECTING GRADUATE STUDENTS

We draw your attention to Section 6 of the University Graduate Calendar, which addresses Academic Integrity, Academic Dishonesty, Code of Conduct, Appeal Procedures, Ownership of Student Work, Policy with Regard to Students with Disabilities, Student/Faculty Non-Disclosure Agreements, Conflict of Interest Guidelines, Student Academic Records, Environmental Health and Safety and Inter-University Cooperation. Please review.

<https://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/content.php?catoid=37&navoid=7550>

Full and Part-time Studies (Section 2.4.3 of University Graduate Calendar)

PLACEHOLDER COURSES

To complete registration at least one course needs to be added for each term. If the student is not taking an academic course in a term, there are two different placeholder courses.

- SGS 700 - for students who are in programs that are costed on a per term basis
- SGS 711 - for students who are in programs that are costed on a per course basis

If a student does not add a course in each term the student will not have completed their enrollment. This will have impacts on all aspects of student life including scholarships, fee assessment and ordering transcripts.

If a student adds a placeholder course and subsequently adds an academic course the placeholder should be dropped. The placeholder will not be dropped if the only courses remaining include:

- SGS 101, and/or
- SGS 201, and/or
- Courses in the Education series - such as EDUCTN 750

Students who are here as a visiting or exchange student will need to enroll in SGS 302.

Full-Time Status

A full-time graduate student must:

- a. have been admitted to a graduate program as a full-time student;
- b. be pursuing his or her studies as a full-time occupation;
- c. identify himself or herself as a full-time graduate student;
- d. be designated by the university as a full-time graduate student;
- e. for most programs (and all research-based programs) student be geographically available and visit the campus regularly. Other programs may have different requirements and may be conducted fully on-line. Without forfeiting full-time status, a graduate student, while still under supervision, may be away from the university (e.g. visiting libraries, doing field work, attending a graduate course at another institution, etc.) provided that, if any such period exceeds four weeks in any one term, written evidence shall be available in the Graduate Studies Office to the effect that this request has the approval of the department or program Chair and Graduate Associate Dean. For information on full time off campus please consult section 2.5.6.
- f. be considered to be a full-time graduate student by their supervisor or equivalent (designated by the program office)
- g. students who change status from full to part-time, do not receive any more time to complete their program and will continue to be charged tuition fees at the full-time level.
- h. students who change part to full time will have their term count re-set on a ratio of 2:1

All active graduate students other than full-time graduate students as defined above are part-time graduate students. See also section 3.6 or 4.6 for more information on program progression.

In accordance with the above provincial regulations, McMaster requires students to register annually, and to confirm their status as a full-time graduate student. Only full-time graduate students are eligible for scholarship support.

McMaster University complies with the OCGS document “Principles for Graduate Study at Ontario’s Universities” (March 2017) which, in Resolution 5, states the following: “Full-time graduate students are expected to pursue their graduate degree on a full-time basis and make satisfactory progress toward timely completion of all program requirements. It is not possible, or desirable, for the university to monitor and enforce the employment activities of its graduate students outside the university. However, it is both possible and desirable for the university to ensure that it does not itself create a structural situation that jeopardizes the ability of the graduate student to make full-time progress towards the completion of graduate program requirements. Accordingly, OCGS is committed to the principle that full-time graduate students are employed no more than an average of 10 hours per week on campus.”

Full-time students who are participating in McMaster-based paid employment should work no more than an average of 10 hours a week to a maximum of 505 hours in the academic year. Normally students who exceed this limit are asked to drop down to part-time status, to stop working or reduce their hours of work. Changing student status from full-time to part-time will affect a student’s scholarship funding, OSAP, and student visa

The University considers full-time students to be those that have their studies as their priority. All full-time students must be available to conduct research (as appropriate), participate in courses and the other activities required by their program. In some cases award holders may face employment restrictions, but it is the responsibility of the student to ensure their work arrangements are compliant with the terms of their awards.

All active graduate students other than full-time graduate students as defined above are part-time graduate students.

Full Time Off Campus

Full-time graduate students are expected to be on campus for all three terms of the university year, as specified in [Section 1.3](#). In addition to statutory holidays (see [Sessional Dates](#)) and the closure of the University normally late December until early January, normal vacation entitlement for a graduate student is two weeks of vacation during the year, to be scheduled by mutual agreement with the research supervisor. An exception to this allotment requires approval from the supervisor or in the supervisor’s absence a member of the supervisory committee.

Students who are also employees of the University must seek vacation approval from their employment supervisor and are entitled to vacation time pursuant to the terms of their employment contract.

On admission to a full-time program, the assumption is that a student will be full-time on-campus. This is known as being “in residence”. If a student wants to spend a period of time away from the university in order to complete their research, they must apply to be full-time off campus and complete the form RMM 801.

Students admitted to a degree program on a part-time basis are responsible for maintaining close contact with faculty members and students in their field of study.

Leaves of Absence:

Graduate students are required to be continuously registered to support the timely completion of their degree. Students may apply for a Leave of Absence in one of four categories (see below for the specifics for each type of leave):

1. Medical or disability leave;
2. Parenting leave;
3. Compassionate or personal leave; or,
4. No course available leave

General Notes for Leaves of Absence

Leaves of Absence (“LOA”) are normally granted on a term-by-term basis. Whenever possible the LOA should start and end at the beginning of a term (i.e., January 1, May 1, or September 1). During an LOA the student will not receive supervision or be entitled to use the University’s academic facilities for the purposes of academic progression. No tuition will be charged, nor will the student be eligible for any scholarship support. Please note students on an LOA have to pay applicable supplemental fees and will be able to use the services associated with those fees (please direct questions to Student Accounts). The length of time for completing the degree, and for scholarship support eligibility (see qualifier below), will be extended by the duration of the LOA on the resumption of studies. If an LOA begins or ends in the middle of a term, term count will be determined upon return in consultation with the Associate Dean.

It is understood that when a student takes a LOA, the duration of the leave will not be counted as time towards the time limits in which the student is required to complete or make progress in his or her graduate studies program. On occasion a student may take a leave of absence starting mid-term. This may have impacts on tuition, pay and term count, students should contact their program office or the School of Graduate Studies for more information.

Students should be aware that in the event of an LOA, continuation of the same research project and/or supervisor cannot be guaranteed. In order that the student’s supervisor and/or program can make suitable arrangements to cover ongoing responsibilities during the student’s LOA, students are expected to provide as much notice as possible of the intention to take a LOA.

Note: Students who hold fellowships, scholarships or grants from NSERC, SSHRC, CIHR, or OGS should be aware that these agencies or any other external funding source may have policies governing the interruption and continuation of awards that may differ from the University’s policy on LOA. Students holding such awards and who intend to keep them are responsible for ensuring that any LOA taken does not conflict with the granting agency’s regulations. The appropriate agency should be contacted for details.

Students returning earlier than planned from an LOA must provide written notice to the School of Graduate Studies a minimum of four weeks in advance of the new return date.

LOA affecting Teaching Assistantship duties are covered by the Collective Agreement with Local 3906 (Unit 1) of the Canadian Union of Public Employees. Please refer to the collective agreement for additional information: <http://www.workingatmcmaster.ca/elr/collective-agreements/cupe-unit1/>

Alternatively, the student may request to withdraw (Withdrawal at the Request of the Student). Should the student opt to withdraw, they may be eligible for reinstatement at the University's discretion upon reapplication.

For full disclosure on Leaves of Absence, please visit:

https://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/content.php?catoid=39&navoid=8154#2-5-7_leaves_of_absence

Supervision (section 2.7 in the Graduate Calendar)

The relationship between the graduate student and supervisor/advisor is unique and provides a remarkable opportunity to guide and mentor the student engaged in advanced academic learning. What is considered 'good' supervision will vary from discipline to discipline, and it naturally evolves as the student advances through a graduate program. Please refer to section 2.7 in the graduate calendar which provides suggestions to initiate, promote, and sustain successful student-supervisor/advisor relationships.

[https://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/content.php?catoid=39&navoid=8154#2.7 Supervision](https://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/content.php?catoid=39&navoid=8154#2.7_Supervision)

GENERAL GUIDELINES OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL:

DEPARTMENTAL AND UNIVERSITY THESIS PROCEDURE

Guidelines for preparation:

https://graduate.mcmaster.ca/sites/default/files/resources/guide_for_the_preparation_of_masters_and_doctoral_theses- december_2016.pdf

For students in a degree program requiring a thesis, the School of Graduate Studies has a comprehensive website entitled "Degree Completion". You are strongly advised to consult this site early in the process of writing your thesis.

<https://gs.mcmaster.ca/academic-services/degree-completion>

Guide to Accessing Academic Advisement Reports:

https://gs.mcmaster.ca/sites/default/files/resources/academic_advisement_-_accessing_advisement_reports.pdf

If the thesis is not presented in the required format, it will not be accepted, nor will the degree be conferred until all the required specifications have been met. Please note it is the student's responsibility to ensure that the thesis is complete and all corrections have been approved prior to final submission.

Departmental policies concerning preparation, submission and defense of a thesis are included in the Program Regulations specific to each program. These regulations have been provided to graduate students under separate cover. These regulations can be found on the following link.

<https://www.eng.mcmaster.ca/cas/programs/degree-options>

It is strongly recommended that a student in a full-time degree program submit a first draft of his/her thesis, acceptable to the supervisor/s, before taking up full-time employment. Past experience has shown that students who do not follow this recommendation are seriously delayed in completing their thesis, and in some cases do not ever graduate.

A thesis may be submitted at any time. The University Graduate Calendar announces annually deadlines for the submission of the thesis to the School of Graduate Studies for Fall or Spring Convocation

<https://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/content.php?catoid=39&navoid=8161>

If a thesis is submitted by the spring date, the candidate is promised graduation at the Spring Convocation, if all other degree requirements have been completed. The same applies in the fall when the fall deadline is met.

Upon completion of all degree requirements, the student is required to “sign out” from the department. A sign out checklist is available from the Departmental Office.

Preparing Theses

Final theses are to be up-loaded on-line. Please refer to the School of Graduate Studies webpage <https://gs.mcmaster.ca/academic-services/degree-completion>

You will see the required forms that need to be completed and submitted to Graduate Studies after they have been signed by the supervisor and the graduate advisor.

Incomplete/Failing Grades: (please refer to section 2.6.8 - https://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/content.php?catoid=39&navoid=8154#2-6-8_milestones)

The minimum passing grade in a graduate course is a B-. Failure in either a course or a milestone is reviewed by the appropriate Faculty Committee on Graduate Admissions and Study or the Associate Dean. The Faculty Committee on Graduate Admissions and Study or the Associate Dean acting on its behalf requests a departmental recommendation regarding the student, and this recommendation is given considerable weight. In the absence of a departmental recommendation to allow the student to continue, the student will be required to withdraw. Those allowed to remain in the program must either repeat or replace the failed course or milestone. A failing grade in a Certificate, Diploma, Master’s or Doctoral course remains on the transcript. Students who fail a second course or milestone will not normally be allowed to continue in the program.

Under exceptional circumstances a course instructor may approve an extension for the student for the completion of work in a course and assign an Incomplete grade (INC). The instructor will submit an incomplete grade with a ‘Lapse To’ grade, which is the grade that will default to at the date to clear incomplete grades. Normally this extension is in the range of a few weeks. A student who receives an incomplete grade must complete the work as soon as possible, and in any case early enough to allow the instructor to report the grade by the ‘Final Date to Submit Results of Incomplete Grades’. If the INC grade is not cleared by the deadline, the lapsed grade will automatically be recorded.

Student Code of Conduct: (please refer to section 6.2 in the graduate calendar)

McMaster University is a community dedicated to furthering learning, intellectual inquiry, and personal and professional development. Membership in the community implies acceptance of the principle of mutual respect for the rights, responsibilities, dignity and well-being of others and a readiness to support an environment conducive to the intellectual and personal growth of all who study, work and live within it.

The Code of Conduct outlines the limits of conduct considered to be consonant with the goals and the well-being of the University community, and defines the procedures to be followed when students fail to meet the accepted standards.

Copies of the Code of Conduct may be obtained from the website at http://studentconduct.mcmaster.ca/student_code_of_conduct.html

Copies of the Professional Behaviour Code may be obtained from the [website](#).

Student Appeals Process: (please refer to section 6.3 in the graduate calendar)

The University has a responsibility to provide fair and equitable procedures for the lodging and hearing of student complaints arising out of University regulations, policies and actions that affect students directly. The procedures described in the [Student Appeal Procedures](#) are intended to provide a mechanism to fairly address alleged injustices.

Students who wish to raise questions or who have a concern are strongly encouraged to communicate informally with their instructors, the Chair of their Supervisory Committee (or the Department Graduate Advisor where no committee exists), the Department Chair and/or the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies, the University Ombuds, or the appropriate administrative officer before seeking a review under the formal procedures. Experience has shown that many complaints can be resolved satisfactorily through informal communication. Students are requested to speak with the University Secretary regarding a complaint before submitting an application.

Students should seek remedies for their grievances as promptly as possible and must do so within the time limitations set out in the Student Appeal Procedures.

A Master's or Ph.D. thesis, and a Ph.D. comprehensive exam are specifically excluded from the re-read procedures identified in the Student Appeal Procedures. If a student does poorly in any of these examinations, the original examining committee is required to allow the student a second opportunity at the examination after at least a week. If the student fails on that second attempt, no additional examinations are permitted.

The Student Appeal Procedures may be found at:

<http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/StudentAppeal.pdf>

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Your attention is drawn to Section 6.9 of the Graduate Calendar with respect to the McMaster University Health and Safety Policy. The office of Environmental and Occupational Health Support Services (EOHSS) is responsible for all health and safety policies and procedures.

SECURITY SERVICES: 905-525-9140 ext 24281, security@mcmaster.ca
Download the app at: http://security.mcmaster.ca/crime_prevention_safetyapp.html

- **905-522-4135**
- **Dial "88" from any University phone**
- **Security Button on all campus pay phones.**
No charge dial
- **Red Assistance Phones**
- **Elevator Phones**

Health and Safety Training Courses

In addition to any site-specific training for research and teaching labs, all CAS graduate students are required to take the following Health and Safety training courses. These are available as either in-person sessions or online. These must be completed within the first week after beginning the graduate program. Online modules are available for each of these courses at: <http://ccl.mcmaster.ca/eohss/>.

WHMIS	
Health & Safety Orientation	Asbestos Awareness
Fire Safety	Ergonomics
Slips, Trips and Falls	Violence and Harassment Program

Each student and supervisor must also complete a Job Hazard Analysis. Details are available at: <http://www.workingatmcmaster.ca/eohss/prevention/job-hazard/>.

Reporting of Safety/Incident Report

In the event of an injury or an incident that could have resulted in an accident to employees and non-employees, **it must be reported immediately**. In case of an incident or an injury, you are asked to report it immediately to Dr. W. He, Chair of the Departmental Safety Committee. **It is extremely important that you adhere to this regulation**. The Safety-Incident Report must be completed – forms are available in the Departmental Office or online at: <https://hr.mcmaster.ca/app/uploads/2018/11/injury-incident-report-fillable-1-36.pdf>

First Aid Stations

First Aid Stations are located in ITB 202 and 242.

Fire Safety Procedure

In case of fire, **GET OUT and STAY OUT.**

If you discover a fire, an explosion, a gas leak or smoke

- **Alert everyone (staff, students and visitors) by activating the pull station**
- Leave the building by the quickest and safest exit (become familiar with at least two different routes)
- Do not use the elevators
- Call 88 (from a university phone line) when away from danger and provide Security Services any necessary information regarding the alarm (location and type of problem)
- Do not re-enter the building unless advised by Security

If you hear a fire alarm

- Quickly and safely leave the building by the nearest exit
- Do not use the elevators
- Meet outside of the North side doors between ITB and IAHS
- Do not re-enter the building unless instructed by Security
- Report anyone missing from your group to your fire warden
- Walk to the meeting place in a safe perimeter away from the building

You are not expected to fight a fire. The Fire Department is located very close to the University and they will respond fully equipped in a few minutes.

Never fight a fire

- Unless someone pulled the alarm station
- Unless you still have a clear exit
- Unless you have the proper fire extinguisher and know exactly how to use it

Fire Wardens

The fire wardens are volunteers from the members of our department. – John Nakamura

Duties of a fire warden

- Ensure safe evacuation
- Shut doors but not lock them
- Help disabled and people with medical conditions in evacuation or by moving them to a safe location
- Do a head count in the evacuation
- Advise Security and the Fire Department of anyone missing
- Participate in fire drills by carrying out responsibilities as in actual fire

If it is unsafe to evacuate

- Stay calm
- Close the door
- Block the cracks with damp towels
- Call 88 and describe your location and distress
- Wait for help to arrive

Email

Most communications from The School of Graduate Studies and the department will be done via email. The University Technology Services (UTS) provides each student with an email address. If you have any problems you can call the UTS help line at x24357

UTS can be found at the following link:
<https://www.mcmaster.ca/uts/index.html>

McMaster Student email accounts are on gmail powered by Google Apps for education. Departmental distribution lists will be updated by mid-September and will contain only McMaster email addresses. Please ensure that you have activated your account by that time.

Information Security Policy can be found at :
<https://informationsecurity.mcmaster.ca/section/policy/>

OHIP (Ontario Health Insurance Plan)

Graduate students who are Canadian citizens or permanent residents who require health coverage under OHIP may obtain application kits from the Campus Health Centre in the Student Centre on campus. Completed applications should be delivered a.s.a.p. to the Ministry of Health Office at 119 King Street West (the 10th Floor of the Convention Centre) in Hamilton. The telephone number is 905- 521-7100. You will be required to produce three pieces of identification (e.g. passports, birth certificate, and driver's license).

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/apply-ohip-and-get-health-card#section-2>

UHIP (University Health Insurance Plan)

Visa students are required to obtain health coverage under the University Health Insurance Plan. For those students with sufficient funding, UHIP premiums will be deducted from their monthly pay. Note, however, that you must enroll your dependents (spouse and children) if they are with you in Canada, and you must arrange payment for the dependents' coverage. Dependents must be enrolled within 30 days of arriving in Canada.

https://www.mcmaster.ca/bms/student/pdf/fees_uhip.pdf

Graduate Transcripts

If you wish to obtain an official McMaster graduate transcript, you can do this by completing the transcript request in the My Academic section of Mosaic.

In-course students who require a notarized transcript from other institutions (both graduate and undergraduate) can obtain this from the School of Graduate Studies.

The School of Graduate Studies' Contacts: If you have administrative questions, and the Department cannot help you, please see the link below for the contacts in the School of Graduate Studies. <http://graduate.mcmaster.ca/contacts>

International Student Services is located in GH, Room 110. Please call ext. 24254 for assistance or you can email iss@mcmaster.ca. Here you will find all the information and resources you need to support you during your time at McMaster or as you prepare for an outbound exchange. We believe in the importance of promoting an inclusive and culturally sensitive community, and are committed to supporting the academic, personal and professional success of McMaster students. Please visit their website at: <https://iss.mcmaster.ca/>

Parking and Transit Services: There are a limited number of parking facilities on campus. Travel to and from the University on foot, by bicycle, by public transportation and in carpools is encouraged. Please visit: <http://parking.mcmaster.ca/>

Student Accessibility Services (SAS) provides academic accommodation assistance and related supports to students with disabilities at McMaster. SAS is available to assist students transitioning from high school, other post-secondary institutions, undergraduate, continuing and graduate students. REMINDER: Approved accommodations of previous undergraduates at McMaster do not automatically apply during graduate studies. Students needing accommodations should return to SAS soon after commencement of their graduate program to implement or update your student status and to activate accommodations. Student Accessibility Services (MUSC/B107 x.28652) Please visit: <http://sas.mcmaster.ca/>

Student Wellness Centre is the place on campus to address your wellness needs providing a range of counselling options, medical services and wellness programs so that a student can get the most out of their McMaster experience, academically and personally. Please visit: <https://wellness.mcmaster.ca/>

Equity & Inclusion Office: The Equity and Inclusion Office (EIO) works closely with staff, students and faculty members to advance equity and inclusion by promoting an environment of respect, safety, collegiality and openness. (UH-104, ext. 27581) You can email them at equity@mcmaster.ca. // Please visit: <https://equity.mcmaster.ca/>

Two Distinct Programs

The Human Rights and Dispute Resolution Program (HRDRP) offers confidential advice, guidance and consultation to students, staff and faculty members on issues related to human rights.

HRDRP is one of four intake offices listed in McMaster's Policy on Discrimination and Harassment: Prevention and Response and the Sexual Violence Policy. It is responsible for facilitating the resolution of concerns and complaints and for investigating formal complaints related to issues of discrimination, harassment and sexual violence.

The Education, Outreach and Support (EOS) engages students, staff and faculty members through education including workshops and special events. The ESP team works closely with on and off campus partners to advance equity and accessibility and to challenge rape culture on campus. EOS also provides support to the President's Advisory Committee on Building an Inclusive Community (PACBIC), the Anti-Violence Network and the McMaster Accessibility Council.

Welcome to the department of Computing and Software and congratulations on your admission to our academic year – September 2019 to August 2020.

At McMaster Engineering, we are committed to the success of our students.

Be part of the change. Be part of McMaster Engineering.