

PhD GLOBAL HEALTH GRADUATE PROGRAM

HANDBOOK 2020-2021

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this guide is to outline the policies and procedures for the PhD in Global Health Program at McMaster University. The PhD Program Handbook is intended to supplement the policies and procedures contained in the [School of Graduate Studies' Graduate Calendar](#). Additional PhD in Global Health Program information can be found on the [Global Health program website](#). If there is any discrepancy between this Handbook document and the SGS calendar, then the School of Graduate Studies Graduate Calendar shall prevail.

2. Program Vision & Goals

The PhD in Global Health Program is a trans-disciplinary, cross-cultural and inter-professional doctoral program that strives for synergy in global health by integrating education and research from health sciences, social sciences and business. The PhD in Global Health Program is housed within the Faculty of Health Sciences at McMaster University as a component of the Health Sciences Graduate Programs. Graduate studies in the Faculty of Health Sciences are administered by the Graduate Policy and Curriculum Committee under the auspices of the School of Graduate Studies as described in the School of Graduate Studies Calendar.

The goal of this doctoral program is to offer students a high-quality research doctoral program that will develop and enhance their understanding of the current and the emerging principles and practices of global health. In doing so, it will prepare students to deal with the complex problems they will face in health systems, undertaking research in global health, and analyzing complex policy and regulatory issues that shape the field of global health.

McMaster University has existing higher-education partnerships with Maastricht University in The Netherlands, the University of South-Eastern Norway, the Universidad del Rosario in Colombia, and Manipal Academy of Higher Education in India. These partnerships enable McMaster to deliver an international, collaborative learning experience for students in the MSc in Global Health Program and enable opportunities for students in the doctoral program to pursue a cotutelle, which is a joint degree, awarded in combination

between McMaster and another approved university, with Maastricht University being a natural fit (see Section 5.10).

3. Faculty and Program Contact Information

PhD in Global Health address:

Global Health Program
Faculty of Health Sciences,
McMaster University
1280 Main St. West, MDCL 3500
Hamilton, Ontario, Canada L8S 4K1

Phone: +905 525 9140, ext. 22350

Email: askglobalhealth@mcmaster.ca

Academic faculty and program staff are listed in full on the [Global Health program website](#).

4. Structure of the PhD in Global Health Program

The PhD in Global Health Program follows a conventional sequence for doctoral programs through:

1. Establishment of a supervisory committee in the first year.
2. Coursework.
3. Development of a dissertation research proposal with appropriate ethical approvals.
4. Comprehensive evaluation including the oral defense of a comprehensive portfolio.
5. Gathering, processing, and analysis of data for a dissertation based on original research, and interpretation of findings, writing, and defense of the dissertation in the fourth year.

In consultation with their supervisor and supervisory committee, and with the proposed thesis area in mind, students will be required to complete coursework with a strong emphasis on research methods, followed by the submission of their finished thesis proposal by the end of the third term in the

program. Terms three to seven will typically be the data collection phase. During the remaining five terms students will interpret the findings and prepare the dissertation.

Students should conduct original and innovative research that expands upon existing knowledge and meets the rigorous criteria for peer reviewed scholarly publication. Throughout the PhD Program, students should strive to produce at least three peer-reviewed scholarly publications.

5. Curriculum and Evaluation

5.1. Program Curriculum

Overview

The doctoral program will follow a standard PhD timeline. Students will typically complete within 4 years and will have up to 6 years to complete. More information on program progression can be found in [Section 4.5](#) of the Graduate Calendar.

The curriculum of the PhD in Global Health Program reflects the innovative, globalized and trans-disciplinary constitution of the global health field. These elements are reflected in each of the program components: coursework, comprehensive exams, dissertation proposal, and defense.

5.2. Required Coursework

Students are required to complete four courses for a total of 12.0 Units. The following research methods courses, or an alternative research methods course(s) if those below have already been completed, are required:

1. GLOBHTH 713 Research Methods: A Global Health Perspective (3.0 Units), or alternative research methods course in the event the course was previously completed.
2. BUSINESS C755 Analytics and Decision Making in Healthcare (3.0 Units)

The core research methodology courses will address the challenges in designing and conducting research in the field of global health, affording students the opportunity to design a research study in their field of interest and

have it critiqued by experts in the field of research methodology. For students who have taken these courses as part of the MSc in Global Health, acceptable alternative courses in research methods are determined by the supervisory committee in consultation with the program.

These are examples of courses offered at McMaster University that may be eligible alternatives:

- GEOG 734 Qualitative Approaches to Health Geography
- GLOBALST 709 Designing Global Research- Approaches, Methods & Techniques,
- HLTH AGE 714 Qualitative and Historical Methods in Studies of Health and Aging'
- HRM 721 Fundamentals of Health Research & Evaluation Methods
- HRM 702 Introduction to Biostatistics
- NUR 745 Qualitative Research Methods,
- PUBHLTH 704 Population and Public Health Research Methods

Students are also expected to design and complete two independent study courses on separate topics based on consultation with their supervisory committee:

3. GLOBHTH 715 Independent Study Course I (3.0 Units)
4. GLOBHTH 716 Independent Study Course II (3.0 Units)

Corresponding to the diverse academic background and career goals of global health graduate students, the PhD Global Health Program offers students flexibility when determining an individualized curricular track. Students may elect, or may be required, to take additional courses beyond the four required based on consultation with their supervisory committee. The following courses are offered through the Global Health program and will be available as elective courses to doctoral students:

1. GLOBHTH 707 Global Burden of Disease
2. GLOBHTH 708 Global Health Equity
3. GLOBHTH 709 Refugee Health Policies and Practice

Other elective choices are possible with the approval of the student's supervisor. For full course listings, please refer to McMaster University's [School of Graduate Studies Calendar page on Course Listings](#).

In addition to coursework, all students will be required to participate in a research and professional development seminar. The seminar will be considered a milestone in the program and will therefore not be graded but will be required for students to progress on a pass/fail basis. The seminar will normally be scheduled at the beginning of the second year. Students will be invited to discuss the knowledge and skills relevant to their research project, including scholarship, proposal, grant and report writing, research reviewing, presentation of conference papers and articles for publication in scholarly journals, research networking, and the preparation of application letters and curriculum vitae.

5.3. Course Selections

For each academic term (Fall, Winter, Spring/Summer), there is a deadline date for registration and changes (i.e., drop/add). Students who register in or add a course after the deadline will not receive academic credit for that course. Students who drop a course after the deadline will receive a grade in that course, usually a failure. The deadlines for adding and dropping courses are outlined in the School of Graduate Studies Sessional Dates. Note: The School of Business may have different Drop/Add deadline dates. It is the student's responsibility to initiate and follow through on the completion of the "Drop and Add" features on MOSAIC. Failure to add/drop courses prior to the deadlines will mean the student must submit a "[Petition for Special Consideration](#)".

5.4. Methods of Delivery

The primary modes of delivery will be coursework, comprehensive evaluation, and individual student supervision for dissertation research. Courses will be primarily delivered as seminars, which will require students to complete weekly reading assignments and engage in focused discussions on issues related to the readings. Instructors will be required to provide students with a course outline that specifies the material and topics to be covered, specific learning objectives and outcomes, expectations regarding student and instructor contributions, and the methods of evaluation. Supplementary teaching and learning methods, such as online information distribution and discussion forums, will be encouraged by the Global Health program.

The comprehensive evaluation will require students to integrate the major theoretical writings and pertinent substantive research with their selected research focus. Students will demonstrate an in-depth and broad understanding of the current scholarly literature and methodological

approaches in their relevant field of study in global health. The evaluation will be assessed by the supervisory committee on a pass/fail basis.

All students will produce a doctoral dissertation based on original empirical research situated in relevant scholarly literature, which will become the reference point for conceptualizing and justifying a central research question and interpreting the significance of the principal findings. The thesis must be defended in a PhD Final Oral Examination as outlined in the School of Graduate Studies regulations for the [Doctoral Degree](#).

5.5. Experiential Learning

The natural structure of a PhD program is such that experiential learning is a major component as students will acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to formulate a novel research question and protocol, demonstrate this knowledge and skill in practice, and draw critical conclusions that contribute to the academic and public community. The program's structure aims to enrich graduate education by further fostering a multidisciplinary approach to learning. Each stage of the program will integrate the principles of experiential learning, including scholarship and career exploration. Equal emphasis will be given to establishing a broad and in-depth knowledge, as well as professional skills, both of which are necessary for graduates to become influential members of academia and the private or public sector. The program will encourage supervisors to view their role not only as the primary directors of a student's scholarship and research, but also as a personal and professional mentor. Students who decide to complete a cotutelle degree at Maastricht University will benefit from a global academic network; they will also be tasked with the challenge of utilizing various technologies to maintain continuous communication with supervisors and supervisory committees in multiple continents.

5.6. Methods of Assessment

Students will be evaluated throughout the doctoral program using a variety of methods. Courses may be evaluated using written assignments, final essays, or exams. A minimum grade of B- is required in each course to meet requirements of the program.

The students' performance on the comprehensive evaluation will be assessed by the supervisory committee as Pass with Distinction, Pass, or Fail. Students

who fail the first attempt will have a second opportunity to complete the comprehensive exam.

Students will be expected to meet with their supervisors on a regular basis, at minimum once per year (see Section 5.9 for more details). Progress on the dissertation will be assessed and monitored through the [PhD Supervisory Committee Report](#). This report must be submitted annually to the School of Graduate Studies, within two weeks of the end of the academic year. In this report, supervisors will evaluate progress based on a scale ranging from Excellent-Good-Satisfactory-Marginal-Unsatisfactory. Supervisors will also discuss specific goals as well as areas for improvement and additional direction, using the standard SGS Committee Report.

Dissertation research, culminating in a defence at the end of the program, is the primary assessment of the student's ability to undertake novel research and make an original contribution to knowledge. Students will be required to complete a written and oral defence of their thesis, in accordance with requirements as outlined in the School of Graduate Studies regulations for the [Doctoral Degree](#).

5.7. Comprehensive Evaluation

5.7.1. Overview

Following the completion of coursework, students will demonstrate comprehensive knowledge of their specific area of study through the presentation and oral defense of their comprehensive portfolio.

Students will be able to compare and synthesize different perspectives and interpretations of current issues in global health as they relate to the thesis research, and clearly communicate these ideas to both academic and lay-people in a creative and stimulating way. The comprehensive evaluation will strengthen students' confidence in their understanding and will be used to assess their ability to derive and develop a viable research project from critical engagement with the scholarship in their area of study. The comprehensive evaluation will require students to integrate major theoretical writings together with substantive research pertinent to their selected research focus. The aim of the comprehensive portfolio is to demonstrate—through a variety of

modalities—the student’s development: a) over time, b) in the context of actual practice, and c) in relation to the student’s own understanding of their growth.¹

Global Health scholars are unique in terms of their chosen area of study, their fields of professional expertise, and thus also their manner of conducting scholarship. The comprehensive portfolio process allows for sufficient flexibility affording students greater autonomy to demonstrate their scholarly preparation in an meaningful way while providing the supervisory committee an integrated assessment and evaluation process. It is expected that submitted portfolios may look somewhat different from one another, the outline presented below is intended to help clarify the common characteristics and values shared by global health scholars.

The comprehensive evaluation will be supported by the completion of a portfolio that consists of:

- 1) A short essay will preface the portfolio describing the content of the portfolio and its alignment with the student’s academic and professional goals.² Developed in discussion with the student and the supervisory committee additional content of the portfolio may include, but is not limited to, the following:
- 2) A literature review comprised of an independent study reviewing a body of published literature and critically summarizing the findings.
- 3) A review of completed courses describing their contribution to developing the student’s trans-disciplinary skills and knowledge related to current issues in global health and the thesis research.
- 4) A description of any relevant publications authored by the student over the course of the program and contributing to the thesis research; and
- 5) The dissertation proposal.

The focus of the portfolio is a demonstration of depth of knowledge and methodological rigour in the chosen field of study presented in a flexible format.

The portfolio allows the doctoral student to document academic growth in an

¹ Wolf in Canadian Association of Graduate Studies (2017), “Re-Imagining PhD: Doctoral Comprehensive Exam”, page 4.

² Unless stipulated otherwise, and aside from published works, writing conventions and formatting for components the comprehensive portfolio should conform to the School of Graduate Studies’ [Guide for the Preparation of Master’s and Doctoral Theses](#).

organized, coherent, and selective manner that facilitates evaluation by the student's Supervisory Committee. It provides both a formal mechanism for self-reflection and a comprehensive account of the student's experiences and ongoing progress toward their academic and professional goals.

5.7.2. Progression

Upon admission into the program and throughout the coursework period, the student works with their supervisory committee to develop a plan for the content and completion of the portfolio. Students collaborate with their supervisory committee to identify foundational literature and establish scholarly tasks suited to supporting the development of the comprehensive portfolio. Meeting regularly with the supervisor and supervisory committee during the first 12 -18 months of the program provides an opportunity to review these plans as the student progresses through the program. The evaluation of the portfolio will consist of presenting the portfolio in an oral defence.

The timeline for completion of the comprehensive evaluation will align with school of School Graduate Studies policies and will normally be between the 12th and 20th month after the student begins doctoral-level work, with an upper limit of 24 months. The evaluation will be assessed by the supervisory committee on a pass/fail basis and will include an oral defence, the outcome of which will be reported to the School of Graduate Studies. Students must demonstrate an in depth understanding of the current scholarly literature and methodological approaches in their relevant field of study in global health. Through the transdisciplinary and cross-cultural nature of the program, students will be able to analyze topics through various lenses and critically reflect, reason, and communicate their knowledge in different and innovative ways.

Progress towards the completion of the comprehensive portfolio is an important component of the Annual Review with failure to demonstrate either timely or substantive progress constituting grounds for academic probation or involuntary withdrawal from the program.

5.7.3. Components of the Comprehensive Portfolio

1. *Preface essay*

To prepare the supervisory committee to evaluate the comprehensive portfolio, a short essay will preface the portfolio. The essay will describe the content of

the portfolio and its alignment with the student's academic and professional goals. Relevant research, conference proceedings, academic service, public intellectual or additional activities supporting demonstrations of knowledge acquisition are also to be included in this essay. Students are also expected to explain how the scholarly tasks outlined in the comprehensive portfolio provide evidence of their knowledge development in relation to the evaluation criteria listed below and they must include a rationale for how this material helps prepare them to engage in a doctoral dissertation.

2. Literature Review

The literature review is an independent study reviewing a body of published literature and a critical summary of the findings. In consultation with the supervisory committee, the student will determine the specificity and structure of a literature review that will best support the student's learning objectives and knowledge development in their chosen area of global health. The literature review may be incorporated into the final dissertation proposal.

Specific focus may be on, but is not restricted to, the following:

- A review and critique of concepts, theories and issues relevant the area of global health that forms the field of study of the dissertation;
- A review and critique of research methodologies, methods, or analytic frameworks with an aim of outlining that which will be applied in the dissertation research.

3. Review of Completed Courses

Within the preface essay, students are expected to include a summary of course descriptions and assessments completed. Particular emphasis should be placed upon a critical reflection of how the two methods courses and the two independent study courses contributed to an interdisciplinary approach to Global Health and the relationship between the course work and the overall thesis direction. In consultation with the supervisor, the student will determine whether or not including transcripts or course work assignments in the portfolio is relevant.

4. Relevant Student-Authored Publications

Included in the portfolio, students are expected to attach all relevant publications completed since entering the program. Publications can include peer-reviewed journal publications as well as reports, policy briefs, critical commentaries, or blog posts and news articles they have authored related to their chosen area of global health studies. In consultation with the supervisor, the student will determine whether or not co-authored and publications

submitted to journals should be included and how they will be contextualized in the portfolio.

5. Dissertation Proposal

The dissertation proposal will identify a viable project of research, which is grounded in a developed body of scholarly literature.

The proposal will include:

- An outline of the project's theoretical perspective and relevance,
- Key research questions,
- Hypothesis and/or arguments,
- The appropriate methodology and methods, and
- Relevant ethical, cultural and practical considerations.

The dissertation proposal will be presented and defended by the student and assessed by the supervisory committee. The dissertation proposal will be submitted by the end of the 24th month of the program as part of the comprehensive evaluation portfolio. Dissertation research may not commence until the student has successfully defended their comprehensive portfolio, which includes approval of the dissertation proposal, and necessary ethics clearance has been granted by the appropriate university research ethics board, and by other relevant organizations, agencies or individuals associated with the proposed research.

Once the student's dissertation proposal has been approved and appropriate research ethics board approval obtained, students can begin research. Annual (at minimum) meetings with the supervisory committee will provide guidance and support for the student as they write their dissertation and prepare for a defence. Meetings between the student and the supervisor may require communication technologies, especially when the supervisor is based in Maastricht. Online communication tools may therefore be used to facilitate supervisory committee meetings as required.

5.7.4. Oral Defence of the Comprehensive Portfolio

Once the portfolio is determined by the student and supervisor to be ready for oral defence, a mutually agreeable date will be determined with the supervisory committee members, the student and the program office. The program office, in consultation with the supervisor and student, will determine a suitable faculty member to act as Chair to the defence. The role of the Chair is to ensure a fair and smooth running of the defence. The Chair may be from

any affiliated program or department and does not have to have disciplinary knowledge of the comprehensive portfolio topic.

At least five weeks prior to the date set for the oral defence of the Comprehensive Portfolio, the supervisor ensures that the student makes copies available of the portfolio to the members of the supervisory committee and to the Program Director. An email notification will be circulated by the program office to notify other doctoral students and program faculty that the defence is taking place. Doctoral students are encouraged to attend each others' oral defence to support their colleagues and to prepare for their own oral defence.

Typically, the oral defence will include a public presentation of the portfolio contents as a means of demonstrating their expertise in relation to the evaluation criteria and to the portfolio material. The presentation should be approximately 20 minutes in length. Following the public presentation, the Chair of the oral defence will invite members of the supervisory committee to ask questions of the student.

The defence, including public presentation, will last no more than two hours. Successful completion of the oral examination of the comprehensive portfolio marks a milestone for doctoral students in this program. From the time of successful examination of the comprehensive portfolio, they are considered doctoral candidates rather than doctoral students.

5.7.5. Evaluation of the Comprehensive Portfolio

Students should take into consideration the following criteria applied by the supervisory committee in their evaluation. Students are also expected to relate these criteria in their explanation of the components of the comprehensive portfolio and their contribution to knowledge development, as part of their preface essay.

Evaluation criteria include:

- Depth of understanding of concepts, theories, and issues in global health with ability to specific links to particular areas of focus related to the dissertation topic;
- Breadth of knowledge of current literature and research methods in global health with ability to specific links to particular areas of focus related to the dissertation topic; and

- Demonstrated ability to analyze, synthesize, and critique research literature and related research paradigms in global health with ability to specific links to particular areas of focus related to the dissertation topic.

Numerous opportunities have been built into the comprehensive portfolio development process for students to seek and receive feedback, and to address any potential deficiencies before the end of the comprehensive evaluation process. Should a student be deemed by their supervisory committee to have failed to demonstrate comprehensive knowledge development, the student will be provided with a second chance to demonstrate their knowledge of the material. This second opportunity will be in compliance of regulations outlined in [Section 4.2](#) of the Graduate Calendar.

5.7.6. Approval of the Dissertation Proposal

Acceptance of the proposal is a component of the comprehensive portfolio evaluation process (Section 5.7.3.). Research data collection for the dissertation cannot commence until the dissertation proposal has been defended to the satisfaction of the comprehensive portfolio evaluation committee, and ethical clearance has been granted by the relevant university research ethics board, as well as by other institutions, agencies, or individuals associated with the proposed research.

5.8. Doctoral Dissertation

Students will produce original empirical research, situated in relevant scholarly literature, which will become the reference point for conceptualizing and justifying a central research question and interpreting the significance of the principal findings in a dissertation. The dissertation must be defended in a PhD Final Oral Examination as outlined in the School of Graduate Studies regulations for the [Doctoral Degree](#).

The program will then culminate with the defense of the student's thesis. The oral defense will follow standard University procedures.

Prior to the thesis defence and, in the case of a doctoral thesis, before sending out the draft to the external examiner, the entire document must be reviewed for its originality using the University's paid subscription to Urkund. The program/supervisor will review the originality report generated by Urkund and either recommend changes to the document or approve it for the defence. A thesis may not be seen by the thesis examining committee (including the

external reviewer in the case of a doctoral thesis) until the Urkund generated report was reviewed and approved by the supervisor or the program, unless authorized by the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies.

Guidelines for Thesis Preparation

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

McMaster University's Graduate Thesis Toolkit

<https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/macgradthesistoolkit/>

Preparing for the Thesis Defence

https://gs.mcmaster.ca/sites/default/files/resources/the_student_guide_to_the_phd_defence_process_fall_2018.pdf

5.9. Supervision & Supervisory Committee

The supervisor, supervisory committee, and student should meet within the first six months from the time the student enters the program. At the first committee meeting, the student should provide a brief overview of their background, education and thesis plan. The supervisory committee should discuss with the student timelines for completion of PhD program requirements.

The student is expected at minimum, to meet with the supervisory committee once annually. The PhD In Global Health Program recommends monthly supervisory meetings.

The student and supervisor should ensure that a committee report is completed by the student and distributed to committee members in advance of each supervisory committee meeting. The committee reports are to serve as official documentations of each committee meeting and used as reference points for students and the supervisory committee to monitor students' academic progress throughout the program.

Students may benefit from resources such as [Getting the Supervisory Relationship Off to a Good Start](#). For further details regarding supervision and supervisory committee, please refer to [Section 2.7](#) and [Section 4.4](#) of the Graduate Calendar.

5.10. Cotutelle

Doctoral students can complete a joint degree, or cotutelle, at any eligible institution, but Maastricht would be a natural choice. Maastricht is a full-service university with Global Health housed in the Faculty of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences Maastricht. It is a leading institution in global health research.

Building on the relationship established in the MSc in Global Health Program, resources are already in place to support students choosing to complete a cotutelle with Maastricht with a memorandum of understanding signed by the two institutions to this effect. Students completing the cotutelle with Maastricht would be enrolled as doctoral students in the PhD in Global Health Program at McMaster, and as external PhD students in the Faculty of Health, Medicine, and Life Sciences at Maastricht University. Students who choose to do the cotutelle with Maastricht will have members of their committee from both McMaster and Maastricht, with a primary supervisor at each of the universities. Students will be required to submit a cotutelle Letter of Intent to the School of Graduate Studies for approval within the first twelve months of the proposed program and will be assigned a supervisor at Maastricht University. The Maastricht PhD supervisor will provide academic support for the duration of the program in conjunction with the supervisor at McMaster. In order to comply with the cotutelle requirements, students will first defend their thesis in Maastricht and then hold a second defense at McMaster.

More information on McMaster's cotutelle process can be found in [Section 2.1.5](#) of the Graduate Calendar and on the [cotutelle website](#) of the School of Graduate Studies.

6. Funding, Employment and Benefits

6.1. Student Financial Support

Consistent with standard funding practices for doctoral studies at McMaster University, each incoming student will receive funding from a combination of graduate scholarship, teaching assistantship, and research scholarships obtained through external funding sources or from the supervisor's program of research.

Funding for international (visa) students will come primarily from faculty grants.

For additional information about scholarships, please refer to [Section 8 of the Graduate Calendar](#) and visit this link for a list of [Awards & Funding](#).

Students hired as teaching assistants (TAs) or research assistants (RAs) are subject to the School of Graduate Studies guidelines for employment of graduate students.

6.2. Working at McMaster

Collective Agreement for TA/RA in lieu of TA:

<https://cupe3906.org/files/2015/10/CUPE-Unit-1-TA-CBA-FINAL-24FEB2017-1.pdf>

For Doctoral Students wishing to work at McMaster outside of their TA / RA appointment, please refer to [Section 2.5.3 of the Graduate Calendar](#).

6.3 Health Benefits

A Medical Plan is provided by your Graduate Students Association (GSA) for full-year coverage (September 1 to August 31) and can be automatically paid through your payroll deductions. You can opt-out of this plan if you provide proof of other equivalent coverage.

For more information go to:

http://studentcare.ca/rte/en/McMasterUniversity_Home

7. Vacations, Leave of Absence, and Petitions for Special Considerations

7.1. Vacations

As outlined in [Section 2.5.8 of the Graduate Calendar](#), full-time graduate students are expected to be on campus for all three terms of the university year. In addition to statutory holidays (see [Sessional Dates](#)) and the weeklong closing of the University from late December until early January, normal vacation entitlement is two weeks of vacation during the year, to be scheduled by mutual agreement with the research supervisor and the employment supervisor. An exception to this allotment requires approval from the supervisor or in the supervisor's absence a member of the supervisory committee.

7.2. Leave of Absence

If students require a leave of absence for specific reasons (health, parental, or family circumstances), students must seek approval from the School of Graduate Studies. For details on policy and the approval process, please refer to [Section 2.5.7 of the Graduate Calendar](#).

7.3. Petitions for Special Considerations

If students encounter situations requiring a Petition for Special Consideration, such as compelling medical, personal, or family reasons, please consult [Section 2.5.9 of the Graduate Calendar](#).

8. Grades & Appeals

Should a student face an incomplete (INC) or failing grade, refer to [Section 2.6.8](#) of the School of Graduate Calendar.

Students wishing to appeal a course grade or other matters (academic or nonacademic) should consult the [University Policy on Student Appeals](#).

9. Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

In the spirit of Global Health theories and practice, Global Health students are expected to uphold the program's support principles of equity, diversity and inclusion. To review policies and support services, visit McMaster's [Equity and Inclusion Office](#).

Related information can be found in McMaster's [Discrimination and Harassment Policy](#).

10. Accessibility and Accommodations

The proposed program will aim to maintain the highest standard of accessibility for its students and staff by complying with the objectives set-out by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and the

McMaster University Accessibility Plan 2011-2025. Accessibility efforts will be made specifically in areas related to customer service, built environment, information and communication systems, transportation, and employment. Active steps will be taken at all stages to identify and remove any program related or environmental barriers that will prevent persons with disabilities from accessing any element of the proposed program. Program staff and faculty will consult with the McMaster Accessibility Council (MAC) on all related matters, and will work to accommodate students and staff whenever possible. All program staff and faculty involved in the provision of educational and non-educational services to members of the public will complete mandatory training provided by McMaster University regarding accessibility policies and practices.

Related information is available through McMaster's [Policy on Academic Accommodations of Students with Disabilities](#) and McMaster's [Policy on Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous and Spiritual Observances](#).

11. Academic Integrity

Students are 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. For more information, please refer to [Section 6.1 of the Graduate Calendar](#).

For guidance on how to proceed in the case of suspected academic dishonesty, please consult the [complete policy from the Office of Academic Integrity](#). The Associate Deans of Graduate Studies are available for confidential consultations on matters related to academic integrity.