

**REHABILITATION SCIENCE (RS)  
GRADUATE HANDBOOK  
2020-2021**

**HAMILTON, ON**

**SEPTEMBER 2020**

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## WELCOME

Welcome to the Graduate Program in Rehabilitation Science at McMaster University. We are pleased that you have chosen this program for furthering your education. You have made an excellent choice. McMaster University is internationally renowned, has faculty who are leaders in the rehabilitation field, and offers an innovative curriculum that is open to diverse areas of research and practice. We are internationally recognized as innovators, with problem-based learning and evidence-based practice being our hallmark features. Our leadership in research, education and clinical practice, indicates our commitment to excellence and scholarship in these three (3) areas. This leadership is empirically supported by a 2014 publication in *Physiotherapy Canada* evaluating the scientific impact of physical and occupational therapy faculty across Canada (through use of H-index bibliometrics) where McMaster faculty in the School of Rehabilitation Science placed first. The expertise of our faculty and their commitment to graduate training is the foundation of the excellence of our training program.

Upon completion of the Graduate Program in Rehabilitation Science (RS), you should expect the following:

1. To understand the theoretical foundations of rehabilitation science;
2. To have methodological skills in the design, analysis, and critical appraisal of health research;
3. To understand and deal with barriers to moving rehabilitation science research into practice;
4. To have enhanced critical reasoning skills and apply these to a variety of clinical, research, or policy issues;
5. To have enhanced skills in scientific writing and other forms of scholarly communication including knowledge translation;
6. To have developed and written academic papers and resources that contribute to the body of rehabilitation science knowledge; and,
7. To be prepared to assume leadership positions in clinical practice, research, academia, innovation, and/or policy positions.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide information that students will need while studying at McMaster University. We hope that you find the handbook useful. If you have any suggestions on information that we should include in the handbook, please email the Assistant Dean of the Graduate Program in Rehabilitation Science ([Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#)), through the [RS Administrative Staff](#).

Please note that this handbook is a supplement to the information published in the School of Graduate Studies (SGS) Calendar. You should always check information in the SGS Graduate Calendar as it is **your ultimate source for information on general aspects of graduate studies, university regulations pertaining to graduate school, information on university funding opportunities, degree requirements, course information, and faculty listings**. Should there be any discrepancies between the RS Graduate Program Handbook and the [SGS Calendar](#), the information located in the [SGS Calendar](#) supersedes that information found in this

guide. The [SGS Calendar](https://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/index.php) is located on the McMaster University website at <https://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/index.php>

The calendar also has a very useful and intuitive mobile version, so please do take a look.

Mobile version:

<http://m.academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/index.php?theme#home>

We aim to avoid duplicating information in this handbook that should be obtained from the [SGS Calendar](#). Rather, this handbook provides information that is more specific to the RS Graduate Program.

### RS Graduate Program Contact Information:

Assistant Dean (RS)	Julie Richardson	905-525-9140 ext. 27811	<a href="mailto:jrichard@mcmaster.ca">jrichard@mcmaster.ca</a>
RS Program Manager	Michelle Benjamin	905-525-9140 ext. 27831	<a href="mailto:rsgrad@mcmaster.ca">rsgrad@mcmaster.ca</a> <a href="mailto:benjamin@mcmaster.ca">benjamin@mcmaster.ca</a>
RS Program Coordinator	Cindy Permejo	905-525-9140 ext. 26378	<a href="mailto:rsgrad@mcmaster.ca">rsgrad@mcmaster.ca</a> <a href="mailto:permejcr@mcmaster.ca">permejcr@mcmaster.ca</a>
RS Administrative Assistant	Jovana Medic	905-525-9140 ext. 22868	<a href="mailto:rsgrad@mcmaster.ca">rsgrad@mcmaster.ca</a> <a href="mailto:dmitroj@mcmaster.ca">dmitroj@mcmaster.ca</a>

Please note that the [rsgrad@mcmaster.ca](mailto:rsgrad@mcmaster.ca) email is shared between Michelle Benjamin, Cindy Permejo and Jovana Medic. To contact the RS Administrative Staff, please send an email to [rsgrad@mcmaster.ca](mailto:rsgrad@mcmaster.ca)

## I. HISTORY OF THE REHABILITATION SCIENCE GRADUATE PROGRAMS

The McMaster Thesis-based Master of Science degree was established in 2000 to meet the needs of rehabilitation therapy professionals who, after being in practice, wished to pursue advanced training in research. The curriculum emphasized theory, research design, statistics, and substantive content coursework, along with a research-based thesis. Over time, this program has retained the structure of the curriculum, but has integrated new research themes and course options reflecting the diverse research interests of the faculty. The program evolved to include a broad range of students with varied interests and backgrounds reflecting the diversity of rehabilitation science and its principles. Students take this program for personal development and often transition into clinical specialization, leadership roles, or continue research training in a PhD program.

The PhD program was added in 2003 to meet the increasing need for academics trained at the PhD level. The most pressing need at that time was to provide training for faculty positions within RS or related disciplines. Over time, following PhD training graduate have taken roles

which include clinician-scientists, leadership positions, policy-makers, inventors/innovators in business, knowledge brokers, and many other roles related to rehabilitation science. The creation of the PhD program was greatly facilitated by a CIHR Training Program Grant of \$1.8 million (*Rehabilitation Research Training Program – Developing and Using Rehabilitation Research Evidence to Enhance Quality of Life*) awarded in 2002 that was instrumental in funding the first six (6) cohorts of students. The innovative aspects of the PhD program were the emphasis on knowledge translation (the first program to offer a graduate course on this topic) and a comprehensive examination that emphasized experiential learning in academic scholarship with deliverable outputs through a portfolio. These unique features and an emphasis on excellence in clinically relevant research are core values of the current PhD program.

The Course-based Master of Science degree was developed in 2004 to meet the needs of clinicians working in rehabilitation science who wished to pursue academic training that could be applied in clinical practice. The program emphasized recent advances in rehabilitation therapy including evidence-based practice, outcome evaluation, and advanced clinical reasoning. The program was designed as a part-time, distance program so that clinicians could work and apply knowledge in practice while obtaining their MSc degree. Over time the program expanded to include learners from diverse professions, and more educational options including research training and specialized clinical content.

The McMaster Rehabilitation Science Dual Degree option offered a new opportunity in 2017-2018, which allows students to obtain the established Master of Science in Occupational Therapy (OT) and Doctor of Philosophy in Rehabilitation Science (RS) OR the Master of Science in Physiotherapy (PT) and Doctor of Philosophy in Rehabilitation Science (RS) offered within the School of Rehabilitation Science (SRS) in 5 years. The Dual Degree option will provide integrated scholarship training and professional development and stream-lined time efficiency. Completing the two degrees, an OT or PT professional degree and Ph.D. concurrently rather than sequentially will develop clinician scientists who have an understanding of the issues facing the professions, the potential contributions they can make and research expertise to undertake these roles.

### **RS Graduate Program Assistant and Associate Deans**

The RS Graduate Program resides within the School of Rehabilitation Science (SRS), established in 1989. The leadership for the program was originally entitled Program Coordinator and later, as the program developed, was designated as an Assistant Dean Position. The previous people holding these roles were:

- |                 |                           |
|-----------------|---------------------------|
| 1. 2000-2003    | Paul Stratford            |
| 2. 2003-2005    | Jean Wessel               |
| 3. 2005-2010    | Seanne Wilkins            |
| 4. 2010-2014    | Joy MacDermid             |
| 5. 2015-2015    | Julie Richardson (Acting) |
| 6. 2015-2016    | Norma J. MacIntyre        |
| 7. 2016-current | Julie Richardson          |

## II. OFFICE OF THE ASSOCIATE DEAN OF GRADUATE STUDIES (FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES (FHS))

The RS Graduate Program operates within the School of Rehabilitation Science (SRS) in the Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS) at McMaster University as a component of the FHS Graduate Programs. Graduate Studies in the FHS are under the jurisdiction of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS) and are administered by the Graduate Policy and Curriculum Council (GPCC) under the auspices of the SGS, as described in the current [SGS Calendar](#).

The Office of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS) is located in HSC 4N4.

### Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS)

Dr. Steve Hanna	<a href="mailto:adeanhsc@mcmaster.ca">adeanhsc@mcmaster.ca</a>	Ext. 21609
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### Administration:

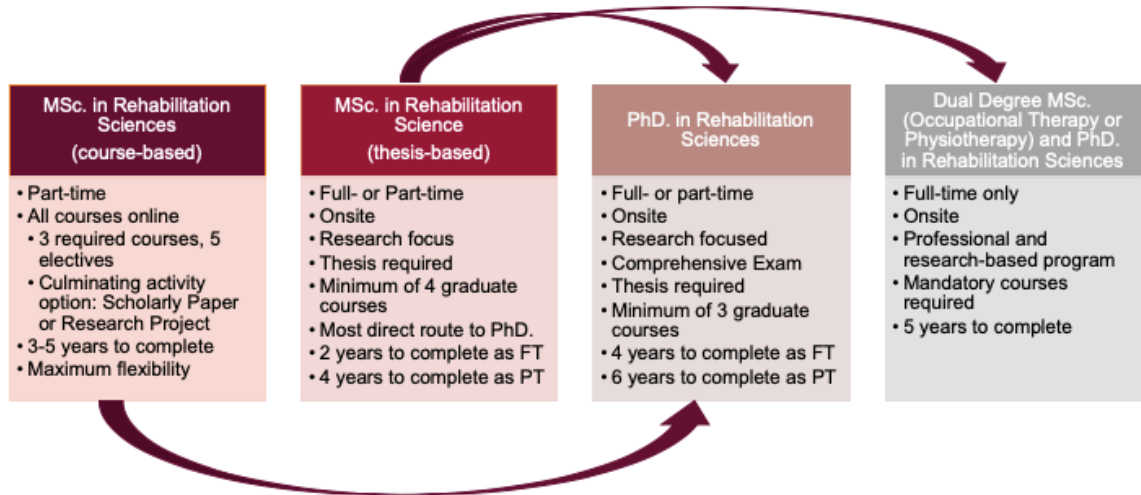
George Bijelic	<a href="mailto:gbijel@mcmaster.ca">gbijel@mcmaster.ca</a>	Ext. 22735
Sherri Keene	<a href="mailto:keenes@mcmaster.ca">keenes@mcmaster.ca</a>	Ext. 21609
Anthony Notenboom	<a href="mailto:notenbaw@mcmaster.ca">notenbaw@mcmaster.ca</a>	Ext. 21609

## III. SCHOOL OF REHABILITATION SCIENCE (SRS)

SRS presently offers four (4) programs:

1. MSc (Occupational Therapy) entry level, professional program for occupational therapists;
2. MSc (Physiotherapy) entry level, professional program for physiotherapists;
3. MSc (Speech Language Pathology) entry level, professional program for speech language pathologists;
4. RS, which includes a PhD program, MSc program with a Thesis option and a MSc Course-based option (including OMPT Specialization), and a MSc/PhD option and,
5. Master of Health Management Program (in collaboration with the DeGroote School of Business), which is a course-based program for part-time students.





The School is located in the Institute of Applied Health Sciences (IAHS) building on the McMaster campus. The School currently has over 390 students, 25 full or part-time faculty members, and over 100 clinical faculty and professional associates. Additional information on the School, its faculty, and their research activities can be found on the SRS website at <http://www.srs-mcmaster.ca/> Please note that the School of Rehabilitation Science is currently working towards launching a new website at the end of July 2020.

The purpose of the RS Graduate Program is to educate rehabilitation scientists who will contribute high quality research that informs rehabilitation therapy practice. Persons who are naturally aligned with Rehabilitation Scientists include physical therapists, occupational therapists, and other rehabilitative disciplines. The program also accepts students from other backgrounds whose interests align with rehabilitation science. Rehabilitation can be defined as a treatment or process that facilitates the process of recovery from injury, illness, or disease to as normal a condition as possible; or, more broadly as the restoration of someone to a useful place in society. The RS Graduate Program expects students to be able to define how their work contributes to advancing RS.

#### IV. GENERAL INFORMATION

##### 1. McMaster Student ID

The McMaster Student ID identifies you as a McMaster University student and permits you access to services on campus.

Please refer to <https://registrar.mcmaster.ca/services/student-card/> for information how to obtain your student ID card. If you will be conducting your research in the hospital, you will also need a hospital photo ID.

##### 2. McMaster Email

The McMaster University student email system is the primary means by which the university communicates with individual students. Information related to records, registration, and

university issues is sent to student email. It is every student's individual responsibility to check their McMaster University student email regularly to ensure important information is received. If you require assistance with your student email, please contact the [Technology Service Desk](#) at ext. 24357 (2-HELP). Students in the RS program **must communicate** with the [Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#) and the RS Administrative Staff **through McMaster email rather than personal emails**.

### 3. Work Space/Mail

The Rehabilitation Science office program offers desk spaces at the Graduate Student Office (IAHS 308) to RS graduate students who are **full-time and on time**. Prior to the start of the Fall (September) term, the RS Administrative Staff will confirm the arrangement of the desk spaces at the Graduate Student Office. If you are interested in a desk space, please contact the RS Administrative Staff at [rsgad@mcmaster.ca](mailto:rsgad@mcmaster.ca). The staff will confirm if there is a desk space available and will provide you with the keypad code for the Graduate Student Office. A \$10.00 deposit is required from each student and is refundable when you leave the program. Mail for on-campus students is delivered to the RS graduate student mailbox in the School of Rehabilitation Science main office IAHS 403 and is then picked up by graduate students for delivery to the shared mailbox in the graduate student room (IAHS 308). The RS Administrative Assistant also checks the student mailbox in IAHS 403. Should mail arrive for an on-campus student, the RS Administrative Assistant will notify the student via email.

### 4. Parking

Applications for a parking permit are available online at <http://parking.mcmaster.ca/>. The Parking Office is located in the T32, Room 106. For general parking inquiries, please contact Parking Services at [parking@mcmaster.ca](mailto:parking@mcmaster.ca)

### 5. Where to Go for Help

The [SGS Calendar](#) is posted annually with the most up-to-date information and should be the first place in your search for information since it is the official version of the policies and procedures. However, it is common for students to need help finding or interpreting this information. It is advisable to direct your concern to the appropriate person to get your answer as quickly and efficiently as possible. Faculty and support staff, within the different levels (School, Faculty, and University), have different roles. While staff across the different offices communicate with each other to optimize coordination, you will get your answers more efficiently if you learn who to contact for different issues. It is advisable to ensure that you have checked University policy when making decisions.

Here are some guidelines to follow when you require assistance:

For administrative details within the SRS (booking meetings with the [Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#), internal procedures and student records, sign-out of internal thesis exemplar and example comprehensive portfolios, submitting forms, study space, online safety training, course registration, drop and add course, and TA, etc.), contact the RS Administrative Staff at [rsgad@mcmaster.ca](mailto:rsgad@mcmaster.ca)

For samples of thesis papers, please visit MacSphere at <https://macsphere.mcmaster.ca/>

For financial matters (e.g., TAs), University policies and procedures, please contact the [RS Program Manager at rsgrad@mcmaster.ca](mailto:rsgrad@mcmaster.ca).

To book a room and/or AV equipment and set-up, contact [rsgrad@mcmaster.ca](mailto:rsgrad@mcmaster.ca). Students are asked to provide the following details when booking a room:

- Meeting name and contact person.
- How many people are planning to participate in the class/meeting.
- The type of room required (classroom/AV/conference).
- Length of the booking (please remember set-up time and take-down time).
- If a specific room is needed, please include room number.

Students will receive a confirmation email when a room has been confirmed. Should you need to cancel the room, immediately contact [rsgrad@mcmaster.ca](mailto:rsgrad@mcmaster.ca)

If you require the teaching key to access the teaching station, please inform the RS Administrative Staff. Students are expected to set up for their own meeting. This includes setting up the AV station. Instructions on how to access and use the teaching station is available in each classroom.

For access to information on academic accommodations/supports, or student counseling for academic or personal challenges, please see [Appendix 1](#).

For information about your registration, tuition payments, student cards, or general graduate student policies, contact the [School of Graduate Studies](#) in Gilmour Hall, room 212, or extension 23679.

Your thesis supervisor or your faculty advisor (in the MSc thesis or course-based option or PhD) is the first person to approach with academic concerns about your training program or any other issues that are affecting your graduate studies. They carry the overall responsibility for overseeing all aspects of your degree work. It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in regular contact with your supervisor to fully inform them of your concerns and progress. Students are responsible for arranging these regular meetings.

If either you or your supervisor want information or support in handling a specific academic issue, it is appropriate to consult with the [Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#). Consultation with the [Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#) about internal processes such as program expectations/opportunities, facilitators/barriers to completion of your training program, concerns/clarification about policies and procedures maybe helpful, etc. To arrange an in-person, telephone, Skype or Zoom meeting with the [Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#) contact the RS Administrative Assistant at [rsgrad@mcmaster.ca](mailto:rsgrad@mcmaster.ca).

For all aspects of MSc oral defences and scheduling of Comprehensive Examinations, administrative matters, including completion of forms such as Leave of Absence (LOA), Education Plans, Change of Status, etc., please contact the RS Administrative Staff at [rsgrad@mcmaster.ca](mailto:rsgrad@mcmaster.ca).

For questions related to PhD thesis oral defences, please contact the RS Administrative staff or the PhD Thesis Coordinator in the [School of Graduate Studies](#), Gilmour Hall, room 212, by email at [gthesis@mcmaster.ca](mailto:gthesis@mcmaster.ca) or at ext. 23680.

## **6. Full-time and Part-time Status**

Students in thesis-based programs of the RS Graduate Program may be registered as either full-time or part-time students. Students in the online program are considered part-time students. Students make decisions about registration while considering the commitments and opportunities that are associated with either type of registration. Full-time students are expected to complete the program more quickly, be more available for on-campus/program responsibilities and are eligible for scholarship/funding opportunities that are not open to part-time students. Part-time status is preferred by students who have work or other obligations that preclude full-time training. Part-time students are not eligible for most scholarships, they have extended timelines for completion and are not expected to be on campus to the same extent as their full-time counterparts. In some cases, part-time students apply for major awards and transfer into full-time status if successful. Students who transition from full-time to part-time are advised to consult the program and graduate handbook about the financial implications. Students are expected to meet program milestones on timelines commensurate with either full- or part-time status. Milestone expectations take into consideration the difference in time commitment (see Student Tracking Sheet for MSc and PhD – [Appendix 10](#) and [Appendix 11](#)). For the academic timeline, please see [Appendix 14](#).

**THE DESCRIPTION OF FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME STATUS** (Excerpt from the [SGS Calendar](#), Section [2.5 Enrollment](#), [2.5.3 McMaster University Regulations for Full and Part-time Status](#)).

### **Provincial Definitions of Full or Part-time Status**

Under the regulations of the Government of Ontario, a full-time graduate student must:

- a) Be pursuing his/her studies as a full-time occupation;
- b) Identify him/herself as a full-time graduate student;
- c) Be designated by the University as a full-time graduate student;
- d) Be geographically available and visit the campus regularly. Without forfeiting full-time status, a graduate student, while still under supervision, may be absent from the university (*e.g.*, visiting libraries, doing field work, attending a graduate course at another institution, etc.) provided that, if any such period of absence exceeds four (4) weeks in any one term, written evidence shall be available in the SGS Office to the effect that the absence has the approval of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS) and the Dean of Graduate Studies; and,
- e) Be considered to be a full-time graduate student by his/her supervisor or equivalent (designated by the University).

In addition, Government regulations place, “a ten-hour limit on university-related employment and encourage(s) full-time students to limit time spent on employment inside or outside the University.”

### **McMaster University's Regulations for Full and Part-time Studies: [SGS Calendar](#), *Section 2.5.3***

The SGS recognizes three (3) academic terms for purposes of interpreting the rule limiting employment with the University to ten hours per week on average.

- Fall (September through December);
- Winter (January through April); and,
- Spring/Summer (May through August).

These are deemed to have 16, 17 and 18 weeks, respectively. The ten-hour limit includes work as a Teaching Assistant (TA) at McMaster.

If the student is to be employed at the University other than as a TA or invigilator, the SGS should be informed in writing of the nature of the employment, and the approval of the supervisor and the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS) is required. The approval of the SGS is required if the student is to be hired for University teaching. If students wish to perform more work for the University than set out in the calendar (average 10 hours/week) then they **must** follow the associated guidelines around overload work (***Section 2.5.4: Employment Regulations***)

Please do not hesitate to contact the Office of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS) (HSC 4H4) if you have any questions on these matters.

### **Maximum Number of Hours You Can Work**

McMaster University regulations state that the maximum number of hours that full-time graduate students can work on campus is 10 hours/week; this includes work from [Teaching Assistantships](#). It is the responsibility of the graduate student to make sure that any work above the teaching assistant duties falls within the guidelines set out by the university and [the union \(CUPE 3906\)](#). **If you work more than the allowed 505 hours per academic year, you risk losing your full-time student status, and therefore, not only your scholarship, but also the high pay rate for Teaching Assistantship work.**

## **7. Financial Support of Students**

### **[SGS Calendar](#), *Section 5.2: Financial Assistance***

Teaching assistantships, supervisor support, and scholarships are the typical sources of funding for graduate students.

The RS Graduate Program does not guarantee Teaching Assistantships (TAships) for all students. Each year, the program reviews the program needs and resources to determine the number of TAs that can be offered. At present, the program typically offers half-TAs (equivalent to **133 hours [including three (3) hours of training] of employment**). Full-time thesis students can receive a maximum of two (2) years of TA support at the MSc level and four (4) years at the PhD level, depending on availability. TA awards and conditions of employment are regulated by the [SGS](#) and [CUPE Local 3906](#). Students **may only apply for TAs as they enter the MSc or**

**PhD programs.** Once students give up their TA option, the university is not obligated to re-instate it.

Major scholarship awards may have their own demands or limitations on hours worked or on total remuneration. Certain students may choose to work in a professional capacity for 10 hours per week rather than accept a TA position, in which case they forfeit this source of income. Students are not required to provide documentation of employment outside of the university. The university does not monitor off-campus employment. Supervisors will become concerned if student employment interferes with their ability to participate in training activities or progress in a timely manner. The supervisory committee evaluates the student's ongoing academic progress.

### **External and Internal Awards**

All students must provide a copy of any external funding (personal awards and research funding) to the [RS Administrative Staff](#). Funding packages may be altered based on the amount of external funding obtained.

Please send a copy of your internal and external funding via email to [rsgrad@mcmaster.ca](mailto:rsgrad@mcmaster.ca)

**External Awards:** A number of external awards are available from numerous agencies. There are very few awards available to part-time students. Notices regarding external awards are provided by the [SGS](#) and the [Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#) where possible. Students are encouraged to discuss opportunities for funding, and external awards in particular, with their supervisor prior to starting training and at regular intervals. Please be advised that many major awards have recently undergone substantial changes in terms of eligibility, adjudication and administration. Therefore, students are advised to regularly check the most recent information from [SGS](#) with respect to current funding guidelines.

Many students apply for [Canadian Institute for Health Research](#) (CIHR) PhD awards starting in the fall of their entry into the program. While this is a competitive funding source, a number of RS trainees have been successful. Students can apply to more than one (1) agency for training awards and should pursue multiple funding sources. Funding organizations all have different restrictions about eligibility that may include issues on citizenship, type of training, length in the program, and research focus. Students should check eligibility before starting an application or asking for support letters. The [Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#) typically offers a session on preparing training applications each fall. The School of Graduate Studies may also provide seminars for certain awards that students should take advantage of. Students should attend these sessions and any grantmanship training sessions offered. *Please see [Appendix 2](#) regarding how to optimize the support letter.*

**NOTE:** Given their highly competitive nature, a strong research and training plan, **a history of publication, strong mentorship/supervision and high academic averages** are needed to be successful in federal funding competitions. These same factors are often considered by other funding agencies and by McMaster University when special competitions or awards are adjudicated.

## **Internal Awards (McMaster University Awards and External Awards Administered by the University)**

There are a number of scholarships that are internal or that the university is involved in ranking, including federal government awards such as: [CIHR](#), [SSHRC](#) and [NSERC](#) Master's awards. The Scholarship Committee of [Graduate Council](#) ranks applications for internal awards using the criteria noted above. The RS program is allocated a quota of students from the SGS that they can put forwards. Students are asked to submit their applications to the RS office and then the Assistant Dean reviews these and selects student based on the quota and the review. These students' names and applications are then forwarded to the School of Graduate Studies who then forwards it to the funding agency. A complete list of awards and application criteria is available from the [Scholarships webpage](#) of the [SGS](#) website.

Scholarship funds may be provided directly from the SRS. These are determined annually based on availability of funding and multiple factors.

**Only full-time students are eligible for internal awards.** In some cases, part-time students have applied for major awards and, if successful, transitioned to full-time status. In other cases, full-time status is required to apply. It is important to check eligibility carefully when applying for awards.

## **Financial Statement**

Before the beginning of the academic year (typically in the month of August), a letter with details of the financial support for the coming academic year is sent to each student (with a copy to the supervisor) and kept on file. The details will include any external or internal awards, TA support, and any contribution from the Supervisor's grant(s). A revised letter is required if this package changes, such as when a new award is received. Please ensure that your funding letter is correct as your pay will be based on the description of your funding as outlined in that letter.

## **8. Student Pay**

All aspects of payments to graduate students (including income tax receipts) are handled by [SGS](#) in Gilmour Hall, room 212 (Lorna Thomas, ext. 24258). Address changes **must be** completed in [Mosaic](#). Inquiries about payments, etc. should be directed to this office, not to Financial Services. You must provide a Social Insurance Number (SIN), as soon as possible for payroll.

**NOTE: Your student number is also your employee number.** When asked for your employee number on documents pertaining to payments, please provide your student number.

Students who are receiving scholarships can enter their banking information in [Mosaic](#). Please enter this information carefully. Students who are receiving research scholarships and/or have a TA must complete an [Employee Contact & Deposit Information Form](#). This means that if you are receiving a scholarship, research scholarship and have a TA you will need to provide your banking information in **two (2)** places - [Mosaic](#) and complete the [Employee Contact & Deposit Information Form](#) and hand it in to GH 212.

Scholarships will be paid directly by direct deposit to your bank account. If you haven't entered banking information in Campus Solutions, then a cheque will be mailed to the mailing address

that is provided in the “Contact Information” section. Please ensure that the correct mailing address is listed on MOSAIC. These monies are not taxed. TAs will be paid bi-weekly in the term that they work, and these payments are processed through Human Resources.

Please refer the School of Graduate Studies Scholarship/Payment schedule:

<https://gs.mcmaster.ca/scholarship-payment-schedules/>

**Vacation pay is included in the TA’s monthly wages.** (Please refer to *Article 19.01* in the Collective Agreement between CUPE and McMaster University). You will not receive a lump sum payment at the end of the year. Please visit CUPE’s website at <http://cupe3906.org/tas-unit-1/collective-agreement/>

#### **Other Deductions:**

- a) **Taxes:** The University is required by law to deduct Unemployment Insurance and Canada Pension premiums on all employment income (*e.g.*, TA payments). Federal Income Tax will be assessed on all income (including scholarships and bursaries). You may obtain a Tax Exemption Return (form TD 1) at <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/tax/businesses/topics/payroll/setup-new-employee/filing-form-td1.html> if you have additional exemptions (*e.g.*, you are supporting a spouse in Canada), which will change the rate at which you are taxed. Please return completed forms to the SGS Office (Gilmour Hall, room 212).
- b) If you are receiving a Teaching Assistantship (TA) or a Research Assistantship (RA) in lieu of a TA, you are a member of the Canadian Union of Public Employees, Local 3906, Unit 1. Union dues will be deducted in each month in which you receive TA/RA monies.
- c) **Dental Plan:** An Employee in Classification A (CUPE Unit 1) who is contracted to work at least 130 hours for the academic year, September 1, 2019 to August 31, 2020, will have Dental Plan premiums. For more information on the Dental Plan premium for a single coverage and family coverage, please visit <http://cupe3906.org/>. Provisions for opting-out of the Dental Plan or for obtaining family coverage are covered in two (2) separate documents. Also, see the [SGS Calendar](https://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/index.php) at <https://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/index.php>, **Section 5** Financial Matters, **Section 5.1** Fees for Graduate Students. The CUPE 3906 office is located in the basement of Kenneth Taylor Hall, room B111.

**Student Charge Accounts:** If you have an outstanding student charge account, you may wish to have all or part of it deducted from your monthly cheque. For more information on student charge accounts, please visit:

<https://campusstore.mcmaster.ca/information/student-charge-accounts.html#2>

**Please note:** All outstanding account balances (*i.e.*, bookstore, library and parking fines, etc.) at the end of December, April and July will be deducted from the next month’s pay.

**Direct Deposit:** Student payroll will be made by Direct Bank Deposit. AN EMPLOYEE DEPOSIT INFORMATION application form must be completed, and a VOIDED cheque must



be attached. You may obtain an *Employee Deposit Information Form* from <https://graduate.mcmaster.ca/resources> or from the SGS Office, Gilmour Hall, room 212.

## **9. Petitions for Special Consideration** **SGS Calendar Section 2.5.9**

The University wishes to assist students with legitimate difficulties. It also has the responsibility to ensure that degree, program and course requirements are met in a manner that is equitable to all students. Students may petition the office of the Associate Dean of the School of Graduate Studies for special consideration when there are compelling medical, personal or family reasons to justify an exception to University regulations. The appropriate form may be found on the School of Graduate Studies website: <https://gs.mcmaster.ca/current-students/forms-and-policies-for-graduate-students-staff-and-faculty/>

The student's supervisor and Assistant Dean (RS) are normally required to provide their input on the student's statement in the petition. Supporting documentation will be required but will not ensure approval of the petition. The authority to grant petitions lies with the School of Graduate Studies and is discretionary. It is imperative that students make every effort to meet the originally scheduled course requirements and it is a student's responsibility to write examinations as scheduled.

## **10. Absences from campus/training including Vacation** **SGS Calendar, Section 2.5, LOA and Parenting Leave Policy, Section 2.5.7**

Full-time students are expected to be working full time on their studies and/or research activities. Part-time students who do not have set expectations for time on campus must maintain progress in their program of study that is judged to be acceptable by the program or their supervisory committee.

Full-time students are entitled to take vacation (2 weeks/year) and the timing of this must be discussed with their supervisor.

**LOA time may be used if needed to discontinue studies to focus on other aspects of life, but the leave must conform to University regulations/procedures to avoid problems with registration.** It is important to use a LOA where appropriate, as students may be deemed as failing to progress during times where health or personal issues limit their ability to participate in their training program if such permissions are not in place. **The regulations are outlined in Section 2.5.7 of the SGS Calendar.**

### **Reasons for LOA – SGS Calendar, Section 2.5.7**

Students may require leaves for parental, health, or personal reasons. Please refer to the SGS Calendar, Section 2.5.7 for information about different types of LOA.

If you plan on taking a LOA related to family responsibilities, such as pregnancy and child rearing, please use the *Parental Leave* form located at: <https://gs.mcmaster.ca/current-students/forms-and-policies-for-graduate-students-staff-and-faculty/>

If you are requesting a LOA for health or personal circumstances, please fill out a *Petition for Special Consideration* form entitled, ***Petitions for Special Consideration to the Committee on Graduate Admissions and Study*** located at: <https://gs.mcmaster.ca/current-students/forms-and-policies-for-graduate-students-staff-and-faculty/>

If you are requesting a LOA, you must discuss your intent with your supervisor, Assistant Dean of Rehabilitation Science, and the RS Program Coordinator.

In cases of unauthorized absence, the student will have to apply for re-admission. The Graduate Admissions and Study Committee will rule on each request on a case-by-case basis. No guarantee of re-admission or of renewal of financial arrangements can be made.

**NOTE:** You will require a physician's note for processing of a medical leave request. It is important to discuss with your supervisor whether you will have periods of absence from McMaster University or your program activities.

Full-time students are obliged to be on-campus, except for vacation periods (see Section 2.5.8 of SGS Calendar) or authorized off-campus status, for all three terms of the university year. Other than vacation, for absences of more than one week, approval in writing from the supervisor is required. For absences of more than two weeks, the department chair's approval is also needed. For absences of four weeks or more, this FTOC form needs to be completed and approved. In cases of unauthorized absence, the student will have to petition for readmission. The appropriate Faculty Committee on Graduate Admissions and Study will rule on each request. There is no guarantee of readmission or of renewal of financial arrangements. Permission to be full-time off-campus will not be given for a period longer than ONE YEAR. The Request to be Full-Time Off-Campus can be found [here](https://gs.mcmaster.ca/current-students/forms-and-policies-for-graduate-students-staff-and-faculty/): <https://gs.mcmaster.ca/current-students/forms-and-policies-for-graduate-students-staff-and-faculty/>

### **CONTINUATION OF SCHOLARSHIP FUNDING DURING GRADUATE STUDENT PARENTAL LEAVE FROM STUDIES (See *Section 2.5.7* of the [SGS Calendar](#))**

Whether funding is continued during a LOA depends on the nature of the leave, the source of funding and any associated agency regulations and University rules. Please consult the agency for specific information about their policies. University policies about scholarship funding are found in ***Section 8*** of the [SGS Calendar](#). Policies around TAs would be in the *CUPE Collective Agreement* (<http://cupe3906.org/tas-unit-1/collective-agreement/>).

## **11. Equity, Diversity and Inclusion**

Students within the Rehabilitation Science graduate program are expected to uphold the program's support principles of equity, diversity and inclusion. To review the policies and support services, visit [McMaster's Equity and Inclusion](https://equity.mcmaster.ca/) office: <https://equity.mcmaster.ca/>

## **V. MSc THESIS PROGRAM** **See [SGS Calendar, Section 3.3](#)**

The **M.Sc. thesis option** provides training that will develop knowledge, quantitative and qualitative research skills, and critical evaluation skills in Rehabilitation Science. Students study and apply theory, research design and analysis methods both qualitative and quantitative, to a Rehabilitation Science research thesis.

Students must comply with the SGS and the FHS Graduate Program regulations, successfully complete the required courses, and complete and defend a research thesis. Additional courses may be required of a student by his/her Supervisory Committee or the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS). Courses should be selected by the student in consultation with the Supervisory Committee.

Full-time students should normally take two (2) years (6 terms) to complete the program. For part-time students, the expected duration of the program is three (3) years (9 terms). Please see *Appendix 14* for the academic timeline.

### **MSc THESIS PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES**

1. Apply theory to define and understand a question in rehabilitation science.
2. Define research questions to answer rehabilitation issues.
3. Apply appropriate research designs to address research questions in rehabilitation science.
4. Communicate knowledge within the field of Rehabilitation Science through various platforms (including rounds, conferences, seminars, course discussions, thesis defenses) and to various audiences.
5. Contribute to the advancement of the body of knowledge in Rehabilitation Science through collaborative evidence-based practice.
6. Conduct reviews of rehabilitation literature to synthesize knowledge in Rehabilitation Science.

### **MINIMUM COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

All MSc students must take a minimum of four (4) courses:

1. Theory course: REHAB 700\*
2. An approved substantive content course relevant to thesis, *e.g.*, REHAB 702, REHAB 703, REHAB 704, REHAB 716, or REHAB 725\*
3. An approved research methods course either quantitative or qualitative, *e.g.*, REHAB 707, REHAB 772, NURS/HRM 745 ( Note students are not limited to quantitative or qualitative but may want to pursue training in both.
4. An approved data analysis course either quantitative or qualitative, *e.g.*, REHAB 714, REHAB 758

The student's Supervisory Committee may require students to take additional courses. Students may choose additional courses, which may be taken once approved by the student's Supervisory Committee.

In addition to the above four courses, all new students are required to take the following courses in their first month of study:

1. **SGS 101:** *Academic Research Integrity and Ethics* (an online module take by all graduate students – completed on Avenue-to-Learn at <http://avenue.mcmaster.ca>.)
2. **SGS 201:** Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) (an online module taken by all graduate students – <http://www.mcmaster.ca/accessibility/>)

Students who do not pass SGS 101 or 201 by the first month of their studies will receive an F grade in their record. The F grade will be removed once the student successfully completes both SGS 101 and 201. Please note that failure to complete the two required courses will also result in an SGS Enrolment Hold in the student record.

See **SGS Calendar**, **Section 2.6.5** for more information regarding these online modules.

Students enrolled in the MSc thesis option program must complete a research thesis on an approved rehabilitation science issue and defend the thesis at a final oral examination (please see *Guidelines for Thesis Proposal* found on page 18).

**Course schedules** are posted on the A2L, under RS Graduate Student Resources.

As well as completing the course work and thesis associated with the MSc and PhD degrees students are also expected to complete certain milestones. Milestones are considered to be specific training events such as RS Skills sessions and attending SRS Research Rounds, which you will need in your academic life and attendance and completion of these mark progression along a developmental timeline. Students are also expected to complete an Individualized Development Plan. If students are not in compliance with their milestones, they may not be considered for specific Scholarships and Awards.

*An example Student Timeframe template for students to record milestones of their MSc training plan is included in **Appendix 10**.*

### **INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (IDP)**

All thesis-based students (MSc and PhD) is expected to complete an individualized development plan (IDP) by the first 6months of being in the program. An IDP activates students' career goals by taking the first step on the path to success and planning. An IDP also helps to identify and establish student's career goals and put strategies in place to achieve them.

The IDP form can be accessed here: [https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/documents/training\\_idp\\_form-en.pdf](https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/documents/training_idp_form-en.pdf)

Students are expected to consult with their supervisor to discuss the IDP. Once completed, students meet with the Assistant Dean of Rehabilitation Science to review the completed IDP, discuss plans, and determine areas that students may need assistance (i.e. resources). Meetings typically occur late in the Fall term (November) and Spring/Summer term (July). These IDP should be reviewed and updated by the student annually followed by a meeting with the Asst Dean.

## RESEARCH ROUNDS, RS SKILLS SERIES & SEMINARS

The SRS has a series of research rounds, skills series, and seminars given by rehabilitation scientists, current students, and guest lecturers. Regular attendance at these events is a milestone of your program and **is expected** for all students.

Students must communicate intended absence from the RS Skills Series, Research Rounds, and/or Senior Student Seminar by email to the RS Administrative Staff at [rsgrad@mcmaster.ca](mailto:rsgrad@mcmaster.ca).

### RS Skills Series:

- Normally occurs from 1:00PM – 3:00PM on the second Wednesday of every month
- *Full-time students must attend 80%, and part-time students must attend 60% of all RS Skills sessions per academic year.*

### Research Rounds:

- Normally occurs from 9:00AM – 10:00AM on the second Wednesday of every month
- *Full-time students must attend 80%, and part-time students must attend 60% of all Research Rounds per academic year*. Students are expected to present their work at rounds at least once over 2 years if they are a Masters student or twice as a PhD student.

### Senior Student Seminars:

- Normally occurs from 1:00PM – 3:00PM on the third Wednesday of every month

Students who have previously attended a similar RS Skills Series and/or seminar may be excused from attending. Please send an email to [rsgrad@mcmaster.ca](mailto:rsgrad@mcmaster.ca) if you are unable to attend or would like to be exempt from attending.

## MSc(RS) THESIS

Students conduct research under the supervision of a Supervisor and Supervisory Committee. The topic of research will depend on the interests of the student and the expertise of the Supervisor. Students will prepare and defend a research proposal, conduct the research, prepare a written thesis, and defend the research thesis at a final oral examination.

### GUIDELINES FOR THESIS PROPOSAL

A thesis proposal is a written plan that the student prepares to outline the thesis research. Thesis proposals should be brief, concrete, and focused. The purpose of the proposal is to set out a plan for the thesis research and for writing the thesis. The proposal also functions as a contract between the student and the committee. A concrete thesis proposal, once approved, should eliminate the possibility of later conflict over the scope and nature of the thesis.

There is no single required format for the thesis proposal. Students are advised to discuss with their Supervisor the form that the proposal should take to ensure that it meets student and committee expectations. There are (2) basic approaches used.

1. **Traditional style proposal:** In the traditional style of **thesis proposal**, the student writes a detailed background literature and methods. This background literature component often forms the preliminary version of the first chapter of the thesis. Such documents are

typically 10 - 15 double-spaced pages. This format may be a single description of the thesis research; or, outline a series of manuscripts if these are distinguishable when the work is proposed.

2. **Brief format:** Some research is suited towards a brief proposal where the student briefly outlines the key issues in the background literature, a proposed series of manuscripts and related methods. Such documents are typically 3 - 5 double-spaced pages.

Students are advised to discuss the nature of their research, the nature of the proposal, the potential for manuscripts within the manuscript style thesis, and how the proposal will be presented to the committee with their supervisor. Typically, the thesis proposal is discussed in detail at least at one Supervisory Committee meeting. Students present the thesis proposal using either the written proposal and/or a PowerPoint presentation to their committee. Discussion with the committee may result in changes to the thesis plan.

While the specific format of thesis proposals can vary, the basic principles to be considered include the following elements:

- A clear introductory statement of the problem to be addressed in the research. The rationale for proposing the particular research must be stated.
- A brief, critical review of the relevant theoretical and empirical literature in the specific area of the thesis. The student should discuss the format and extent of the literature review needed with their Supervisor. The options include the preliminary review formatted for a thesis introduction or a brief synopsis of the key background papers to state the current research gap being addressed and the rationale for the planned research. In either case, the student is responsible to ensure that the work proposed will address a current gap in knowledge.
- A statement of the problem and specific research questions to be addressed should be stated.
- A brief description of the research methods that will be used. This section should include the nature of the study participants, (inclusion/exclusion criteria, ethics, sampling methods) tools/scales, test protocols, interview plan, analyses should be explained and referenced where appropriate. It is important to keep the data collection plan realistic and within the means of the student.
- Research “instruments”, such as questionnaires or interview schedules, may be appended as appendices to the proposal.
- A tentative schedule of work, indicating when each part of the thesis is to be completed. Be realistic.
- It must be clear if the student intends to adopt justification for the choice of a traditional integrated or a “sandwich” or “manuscript” format for the thesis. The format and content must be approved by the Supervisory Committee.

The following appendices are provided in case students find them useful in preparation of thesis proposal and manuscript styles theses. These formats are not required and may be customized as needed.

See [Appendix 3](#): *Potential outline for MSc Thesis Proposal Manuscript Style*

### **TRANSFER PROCEDURE FROM MSc TO PhD (see [SGS Calendar](#), [Section 2.1.3](#))**

Eligible students enrolled in the MSc thesis- or course-based options in the RS Graduate Program can apply to transfer to the PhD (RS) program after completing four courses required for the MSc (RS) program, attaining an overall average of A- and demonstrating adequate research potential as determined by the student's Supervisory Committee or, in the case of the course-based MSc (RS) student, proposed Supervisor. **The course requirements to transfer are the same in both the MSc (RS) thesis-based or course-based options.** Students may consider transferring after they have successfully completed a minimum of three (3) MSc (RS) courses, one of which must include a research methods or statistics course.

The objectives of the transfer procedure are:

- a) To assess the progress of the student toward the MSc (RS) degree;
- b) To assess the potential of the candidate to carry out independent, original research; and,
- c) To consider the suitability of the candidate for direct admission to the PhD (RS) program.

The following procedure is to be used by the planned Supervisor and current Supervisory Committee of a thesis-based MSc (RS) student OR by the planned Supervisor in cases where a course-based MSc (RS) student is applying to transfer to the PhD (RS) program without completion of the MSc degree.

#### **PROCEDURE FOR TRANSFER**

Students are required to secure a PhD Supervisor before they can transfer. Students in the thesis-based option may continue with their current Supervisor, or transfer to a new Supervisor. Students in the course-based option must identify an appropriate PhD (RS) Supervisor and complete the transfer process under their guidance.

The planned PhD Supervisor, at the request of the student, initiates the process. The student must have a **minimum overall average of A-** on their MSc (RS) courses to transfer. Normally, these courses should be completed in the first year in the MSc curriculum and the transfer process is normally initiated after twelve (12) months (3 terms) and before 18 months of study. In the case of part-time students, the transfer window will be extended to 16 and 36 months respectively. The supervisor and the student meet with the RS Assistant Dean to review the transfer process and discuss the student's eligibility to transfer.

The process is officially initiated when the student and planned Supervisor complete the ***REQUEST TO TRANSFER FROM MSC TO PHD PROGRAM IN REHABILITATION SCIENCE (RS)*** form (available on A2L: <https://avenue.mcmaster.ca/>) and submit it to the [RS Administrative Staff](#). This notification normally takes place **two (2) months prior** to the date of the expected transfer meeting. The time, date, and place of the Transfer Meeting will be arranged by the Office of the [Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#). **Transfers become effective only on the following**

**dates: September 1<sup>st</sup>, January 1<sup>st</sup> and May 1<sup>st</sup>.** The transfer becomes effective at the start of the next term. For example, if a student successfully passed their transfer exam in the Spring/Summer term, the transfer will become effective on the Fall term. See Appendix 12 of this handbook for the procedures.

To be considered for transfer, the student must write and submit a **Transfer Meeting Report**. The Transfer Meeting Report will consist of a brief description of the reasons for the request to transfer from the MSc to the PhD program, including a proposal of PhD research. The student's planned PhD Supervisor must provide a detailed letter describing the student's suitability for study at the PhD level, the Supervisor's ability to support the student and his/her research, and the planned area of research to the Transfer Meeting Evaluation Committee. **There needs to be a funding plan in place for \$21,300/year for the remaining years for students who transfer to be full time students, which should be documented by the proposed supervisor in the supporting letter.** The letter should be part of the transfer Meeting Report forwarded to the Transfer Committee.

The written documentation (report and letter) is submitted to the [RS Administrative Staff](#) for distribution to each member of the Transfer Meeting Evaluation Committee at least **two (2) weeks prior** to the scheduled date of the Transfer Meeting.

The Transfer Meeting Report will consist of three (3) components written in a brief document (5 pages double-spaced):

1. A brief description of the reasons for requesting to transfer from the MSc to the PhD program.
2. A statement of progress containing a description of the coursework and research work accomplished by the student in his/her MSc (RS) Program.
3. A summary of the area of PhD research that will be undertaken; or, how the MSc work will progress to the PhD level.

The Transfer Meeting Report will be defended to the Transfer Meeting Evaluation Committee through a brief presentation and responses to questions focusing on research progress to date and the proposed PhD thesis plan.

The **Transfer Meeting Evaluation Committee** is composed of:

1. The student's planned PhD Supervisor will be present but not have a vote;
2. One (1) RS graduate faculty member, appointed by the [Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#)
3. One (1) member of the RS Admissions Committee who is independent from the student's committee; and,
4. The [Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#) or his/her delegate, who will chair the meeting.

The RS graduate faculty member, the RS Admissions committee member and the [Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#) or delegate all provide a vote on whether the student should be approved to transfer.

In the event that the [Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#) is also the planned Supervisor of the student requesting the transfer, the [Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#) will delegate the Chair role of the student's Transfer Meeting Evaluation Committee to one of the following:



1. Chair of the Comprehensive Examination Oversight Committee; or,
2. Another RS Faculty Member.

The Transfer Meeting Evaluation Committee, after independent consideration of the Supervisor's letter of recommendation and the student's Transfer Meeting Report, will attend the Transfer Meeting. The student will be expected to present their progress to date and proposed training plan. A maximum of one (1½) hours will be allowed for the Transfer Meeting. Following a brief presentation of the Transfer Meeting Report by the student and a round of questions, the Chair will invite the Committee to evaluate the student's written and oral performance and recommend one (1) of the following options to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS):

1. The student is granted permission to transfer directly to the PhD (RS) program, without completion of the MSc (RS) degree. (This recommendation will require a unanimous committee vote).
2. The student is granted admission to the PhD (RS) program, conditional on successful completion of the MSc (RS) degree. (This decision may be made by a majority committee vote).
3. The student is invited to complete the MSc (RS) and admission to the PhD (RS) Program is not granted at this time. (This decision may be made by a majority committee vote).

The Chair of the Transfer Meeting Evaluation Committee will convey the Committee's decision to the student orally and in writing with a brief explanation of the reason, if the transfer is not approved. The Assistant Dean (RS) will complete the *Request for Change in a Graduate Student's Status* form (<https://graduate.mcmaster.ca/resources>) which will be forwarded to the SGS. The final copy of the transfer documents will be also provided to the RS Administrative Staff to be kept in the student's file.

Upon successful transfer, the student's record will be updated by the School of Graduate Studies. The academic term count will also be re-set once the student starts their PhD studies. Course work that students have previously done in their MSc will be counted towards the PhD degree.

## **VI. PhD PROGRAM** **(see SGS Calendar, Section 4)**

The **Ph.D.** in Rehabilitation Science provides training to develop rehabilitation scientists who will advance rehabilitation research and transfer new knowledge into practice and policy. This competency-based program educates students in rehabilitation theory, research design and methods, grantsmanship, scientific writing, knowledge exchange and translation, and teaching/learning strategies. This option includes coursework, a comprehensive portfolio and a thesis. Graduates will be prepared to take on academic, leadership or research roles.

PhD students must comply with the SGS regulations and successfully complete at least three (3) graduate half courses at the 700 level, which are the minimum course requirements, as well as, complete a Comprehensive Examination and defend a research thesis. Additional courses may be

required of a student by their Supervisory Committee or may be selected by the student in consultation with the Supervisory Committee.

Full-time students should normally take four (4) years (12 terms) to complete the program. For part-time students, the expected duration of the program is six (6) years (18 terms). Please refer to **Appendix 14** for the academic timeline.

## **PhD THESIS PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES**

1. Prepare and contribute to grant applications that are competitive for funding both career award/fellowship and operating grants where Rehabilitation Science is the focus or a component of these funding initiatives.
2. Design methodology to answer research questions which identify a gap in knowledge and create new knowledge that is relevant to Rehabilitation Science.
3. Implement research methods to answer research questions in the areas of: Best practice and knowledge translation; Childhood disability and participation; Functional health with aging or chronic disease; Neuromuskuloskeletal function and mobility; Work, ability and participation; and Orthopedics manipulative physical therapy.
4. Defend and discuss their research orally within various platforms/forums which include conferences, rounds, supervisory committee meeting, comprehensive exams and thesis defenses.
5. Present the results of their research in scholarly papers and publish in peer reviewed journals to advance new knowledge and practice in Rehabilitation Science.
6. Translate their research findings for application to different audiences including faculty, clinicians, clients, students and the general public.
7. Implement effective teaching (i.e. teaching assistantship, rounds, presentations) and learning strategies (i.e. peer mentorships) in their area of expertise.
8. Integrate ethical principles in conducting research and scholarly activities.

## **MINIMUM COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

For course descriptions, please refer to the Course Listings website:

<http://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/content.php?catoid=20&navoid=3567> The courses that are offered in the Rehabilitation Science graduate program is also shared with students and posted on Avenue to Learn prior to the start of the academic year.

The Supervisor and Supervisory Committee provide guidance to ensure that courses and supplemental training activities help the student to attain the scope and depth of knowledge and skills in methods and content required for the associated degree. Students select courses with the following **minimum** considerations:

### **The required PhD (RS) courses include:**

1. Theory course: REHAB 700\*

2. An approved substantive content course relevant to thesis *e.g.*, REHAB 702, REHAB 703, REHAB 704, REHAB 716, or REHAB 718\*
3. An approved research methods course either quantitative or qualitative, *e.g.*, REHAB 707\*  
\*772 NURS/HRM 745
4. An approved data analysis course either quantitative or qualitative, *e.g.*, REHAB 714\*  
REHAB 717, REHAB 758
5. Knowledge Translation Course: REHAB 725

The student's Supervisory Committee may require students to take additional courses. PhD (RS) students are expected to have previously completed MSc level training in research methods, data analysis, and theory. PhD (RS) students should expect to take advanced research and methods courses commensurate with being an independent in their area of research. Many PhD (RS) students have not taken introductory research design and methods during MSc level training, or if they have, these courses have not covered the methods in the same depth as the RS courses. These RS courses are often taken in first year. Most will take additional courses in research methods/analysis to obtain higher level skills. If a course on the theory of science relevant to rehabilitation science has not been completed at the MSc level, students will be required to complete REHAB 700.

**Course schedules** are posted on Avenue to Learn in the RS Graduate Student Resources course.

*An example Student Timeframe template for students to record milestones of their PhD training plan is included in [Appendix 11](#).*

In addition to the required courses, all new students are required to take the following courses in their first month of study:

1. **SGS 101:** *Academic Research Integrity and Ethics* (an online module take by all graduate students – completed on Avenue-to-Learn at <http://avenue.mcmaster.ca>.)
2. **SGS 201:** Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) (an online module taken by all graduate students – <http://www.mcmaster.ca/accessibility/>)

Students who do not pass SGS 101 or 201 by the first month of their studies will receive an F grade in their record. The F grade will be removed once the student successfully completes both SGS 101 and 201. Please note that failure to complete the two required courses will also result in an SGS Enrolment Hold in the student record.

See [SGS Calendar](#), **Section 2.6.5** for more information regarding these online modules.

### **INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (IDP)**

All thesis-based students (MSc and PhD) are expected to complete an individualized development plan (IDP). An IDP activates students career goal by taking the first step on the path to success and planning. An IDP also helps to identify and establish student's career goals and put strategies in place to achieve them.

The IDP form can be accessed here: [https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/documents/training\\_idp\\_form-en.pdf](https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/documents/training_idp_form-en.pdf)

Students are expected to consult with their supervisor when completing the IDP. Once completed, students meet with the Assistant Dean of Rehabilitation Science to review the completed IDP, discuss plans, and determine areas that students may need assistance (i.e. resources). Meetings typically occur late in the Fall term (November) and Spring/Summer term (July).

### **RESEARCH ROUNDS, RS SKILLS SERIES & SEMINARS**

The SRS has a series of seminars given by rehabilitation scientists, current students, and guest lecturers. Regular attendance at these seminars is a milestone of your program and **is expected** for all students.

Student absence from the RS Skills Series, Research Rounds, and Senior Student Seminar must be communicated to the **RS Administrative Staff** at [rsgrad@mcmaster.ca](mailto:rsgrad@mcmaster.ca).

#### **RS Skills Series:**

- Normally occurs from 1:00PM – 3:00PM on the second Wednesday of every month
- *Full-time students must attend 80%, and part-time students must attend 60% of all RS Skills sessions per academic year*

#### **Research Rounds:**

- Normally occurs from 9:00AM – 10:00AM on the second Wednesday of every month
- *Full-time students must attend 80%, and part-time students must attend 60% of all Research Rounds per academic year. PhD students will present their own research work twice over the course of the training.*

#### **Senior Student Seminars:**

- Normally occurs from 1:00PM – 3:00PM on the third Wednesday of every month

Students who have previously attended a similar RS Skills Series and/or seminar may be excused from attending. Please send an email to [rsgrad@mcmaster.ca](mailto:rsgrad@mcmaster.ca) if you are unable to attend or would like to be excused for attending.

### **COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION**

See **SGS Calendar, Section 4.3**

Comprehensive Examination information specific to the RS Graduate Program is in **Appendix 5** of this handbook.

Information provided to Comprehensive Examiners about their role as an examiner is in **Appendix 6** of this handbook.

### **PhD(RS) THESIS**

See **SGS Calendar, Section 4.4**

All students must complete and defend a thesis according to regulations outlined by the SGS ([SGS Calendar](#), [Section 4.4](#)) under the supervision of a Supervisor and Supervisory Committee. The topic of research will depend on the interests of the student and the expertise of the Supervisor. Students will prepare and defend a research proposal, conduct the research, prepare a written thesis demonstrating an original contribution to rehabilitation science and defend the research thesis at a final oral examination. A Supervisory Committee determines when a candidate is ready to write the thesis and ascertains whether the quality is satisfactory. The Committee will document permission to defend in the Committee Report. When students received permission to defend from the committee, students' needs to contact the RS Administrative Staff so that the thesis defence can be coordinated.

Instructions for the PhD Thesis Defence can be found on Avenue to Learn and in this handbook Section XIII. It is highly encouraged that PhD students communicate their intent to defend to the RS Administrative Staff as soon as possible so that the office is made aware.

Please note that the defense needs to be initiated on Mosaic. PhD students should refer to the SGS Calendar for important dates including final date to initiate thesis on Mosaic and final date to file the thesis with Graduate Studies and complete degree requirements. PhD students should also note of the blackout periods listed in the SGS Calendar in which PhD defences cannot be scheduled.

**Students need to have at least one paper from their thesis published or accepted for publication in a peer-reviewed journal prior to their thesis defense.**

### **GUIDELINES FOR THESIS PROPOSAL**

A thesis proposal is a written plan that the student prepares to outline the thesis research. Thesis proposals should be brief, concrete, and focused. The purpose of the proposal is to set out a plan for the thesis research and for writing the thesis. The proposal also functions as a contract between the student and the committee. A concrete thesis proposal, once approved, should eliminate the possibility of later conflict over the scope and nature of the thesis.

There is no single required format for the thesis proposal. Students are advised to discuss with their Supervisor the form that the proposal should take to ensure that it meets student and committee expectations. There are (2) basic approaches used.

Thesis proposal: The student writes a detailed background literature and methods. This background literature component often forms the preliminary version of the first chapter of the thesis. Such documents are typically 10 - 15 double-spaced pages. This format may be a single description of the thesis research; or, outline a series of manuscripts if these are distinguishable when the work is proposed.

Students are advised to discuss the nature of their research, the nature of the proposal, the potential for manuscripts within the manuscript style thesis, and how the proposal will be presented to the committee with their supervisor. Typically, the thesis proposal is discussed in detail at least at one Supervisory Committee meeting. Students often present the thesis proposal

using either a written proposal and/or a PowerPoint presentation to communicate with their committee. Discussion with the advisory committee may result in changes to the thesis plan.

While the specific format of thesis proposals can vary, the basic principles to be considered include the following elements:

- A clear introductory statement of the problem to be researched. The reason for proposing the particular research must be stated. **Note:** For doctoral work, the research problem for the thesis must represent an original contribution to the discipline of rehabilitation science; the nature of this contribution should be made clear in this introductory section of the proposal.
- A brief, critical review of the relevant theoretical and empirical literature in the specific area of the thesis. The student should discuss the format and extent of the literature review needed with their Supervisor. The options include the preliminary review formatted for a thesis introduction or a brief synopsis of the key background papers to state the current research gap being addressed and the rationale for the planned research. In either case, the student is responsible to ensure that the work proposed will address a current gap in knowledge.
- A statement of the problem and specific research questions to be addressed should be stated.
- A brief description of the research methods that will be used. This section should include the nature of the study participants, (inclusion/exclusion criteria, ethics, sampling methods) tools/scales, test protocols, interview plan, analyses should be explained and referenced where appropriate. It is important to keep the data collection plan realistic and within the means of the student.
- Research “instruments”, such as questionnaires or interview schedules, may be appended to the proposal.
- A tentative schedule of work, indicating when each part of the thesis is to be completed. Be realistic.
- It must be clear if the student intends to adopt justification for the choice of a traditional integrated or a “sandwich or manuscript” format for the thesis. The format and content must be approved by the Supervisory Committee.

## **AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION IN REHABILITATION SCIENCES**

SRS has designated areas of training specialization that reflect concentrated areas of focus within the school. These fields are areas of strength in terms of faculty expertise, research resources/infrastructure and curriculum developed. Students are NOT required to specify a field or to limit their work within these areas.

1. **Best Practice and Knowledge Translation:** Developing, evaluating and applying skills in evidence-based practice and strategies to implement best practices.
2. **Childhood Disability (and Participation):** *CanChild* Centre for Childhood Disability Research is a research and educational centre whose research is focused on improving the lives of children and youth with disabilities and their families. Founded in 1989, *CanChild* is a world leader in the field of childhood disability.

3. **Functional Health with Aging or Chronic Disease:** Research that focuses on keeping people healthy and functionally independent despite increasing age or chronic disease.
4. **Neuromusculoskeletal Function and Mobility:** Research that focuses on understanding and optimizing neuromusculoskeletal function and mobility as a vital aspect of overall health.
5. **Work Ability and Participation:** Research that focuses on creating and maintaining safe, healthy, productive work, and participation in valued life roles.
6. **Orthopaedic Musculoskeletal-Manipulative Physiotherapy (OMPT):** Specialty training that advances knowledge, clinical reasoning, manual therapy skills, evidence-based practice and research experience in keeping with national and international standards for clinical specialization.

## COTUTELLE

Doctoral students can complete a joint degree, or cotutelle, at any eligible institution.

A memorandum of understanding signed by the two institutions outlining the agreement about this arrangement. Students completing the cotutelle would be enrolled as doctoral students in the PhD in the Rehabilitation Science program at McMaster, and as external PhD students in the other chosen university. Students who choose to do the cotutelle with McMaster and another university will have members of their committee from both McMaster and another university, 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 the second University. The supervisor at the second university 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 McMaster and then hold a second defense at the second university.

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.

## VII. MSc COURSE-BASED (ONLINE) OPTION See [SGS Calendar, Section 3.2](#)

Students must comply with the SGS and the FHS Graduate Program regulations. The non-thesis course-based (online) option is offered on a part-time basis (minimum one course per term). Courses are available on-line, by distance education through the SRS at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario.

Students are expected to complete the program with a time period, usually 3-4 years, which reflects reasonable progress based on their other commitments, affording as much flexibility as

needed. **If the program is taken at an accelerated part-time pace, it can be finished in 24 months. Although not typical, a full-time student could complete the required eight (8) ½ credit courses in one-year. Requests for a change in a part-time student's status to full-time must be initiated by contacting the [RS Administrative Staff](#).**

## **MSc COURSE-BASED PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES**

1. Demonstrate advanced knowledge in rehabilitation science and apply this to rehabilitation issues in clinical practice.
2. Apply critical thinking and appraisal skills when accessing and evaluating rehabilitation research.
3. Contribute to debates and discussions of evidence\* that pertains to rehabilitation issues for diverse individuals.
4. Apply evidence-based practice\* to resolve issues within clinical practice, focusing on patient-centred care.
5. Conduct scholarship activities that advance knowledge regarding rehabilitation practice.
6. Measure the impact of the clinical decision-making process on improving health outcomes in practice and/or research.
7. Apply learning to develop potential adaptations (solutions) to rapidly changing health and social service systems within local, national, and international contexts.
8. Synthesize and integrate ideas that reflect current knowledge focusing on rehabilitation clinical practice, research, health systems, or education.
9. Assess the depth and breadth of knowledge across current trends in health care (such as knowledge translation, exposure to research methodology, and exploring leadership).

## **MINIMUM COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

**Course schedules** are posted on Avenue to Learn in the RS Graduate Student Resources course.

### **MSc Course-based Option – Required Courses**

A student must complete a total of eight (8) 3.0 credit courses.

1. Three (3) courses are **mandatory**:
  - a. REHAB 705
  - b. REHAB 706
  - c. Either REHAB 774 OR REHAB 772
2. Students are also required to take three (3) additional electives, which are offered through the program or have been approved by the [Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#). Online electives include REHAB 702, REHAB 708, REHAB 710, REHAB 770, REHAB 771, REHAB 772, REHAB 773, REHAB 774, REHAB 775 and REHAB 704 dependent upon the availability of faculty. Students make take a thesis-based course if they are able to be onsite at McMaster University. **Students can also take up to two (2) electives at other universities offering online or onsite courses with prior written permission of the [Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#).**



**There are three (3) options for completing your final two courses – *You may choose ONE of these options:***

**Option 1: REHAB 730 The Scholarly Paper** (1-full course over 2 terms): The Scholarly Paper is designed for course-based MSc students to demonstrate, in writing, their ability to integrate ideas that reflect current knowledge in areas of rehabilitation practice, education, research, and/or policy. A student will identify a topic, and in consultation with a faculty advisor with expertise in the area, develop a proposal that is individualized to the student's area of interest. The student will then develop the paper under the guidance of the advisor. The paper must be 25 to 30 pages, doubled-spaced, excluding references and appendices. The paper does not involve the collection or analysis of primary data or the conduct of research with subjects. It is a scholarly paper, not a thesis. See [Appendix 13](#) for REHAB 730 procedures.

**Option 2: REHAB 735 Rehabilitation Research Project** (1-full course over 3 terms [Sept start]): The Rehabilitation Research Project is a full course, which is completed over three (3) academic terms. Students wishing to take this course need to have completed Research Methods REHAB774 or REHAB772 as a prerequisite.

**Option 3:** Two (2) additional electives (half courses) can be completed.

*OMPT students are encouraged to follow a specific course pathway.*

Students who decide to complete option 3 (completing two additional half courses), would need to notify [rsgrad@mcmaster.ca](mailto:rsgrad@mcmaster.ca) as the student's academic plan would need to be revised from "RESCONLMSC" Scholarly Paper to "RHABCROMSC" Courses only.

## **COMPLETING REQUIREMENTS AND GRADUATION**

Course-based students must communicate with the [RS Administrative Staff](#) once they have completed their course requirements. The [RS Administrative Staff](#) will verify that students have satisfactorily completed their required coursework before submitting the required paperwork to SGS, at which point their academic record will be formally assessed by the SGS for graduation. Students should check their record via Mosaic, and once their record has been marked as complete by SGS they can register to attend convocation.

**NOTE:** Students who have completed their final course requirements in the winter term will attend November convocation. Students who have completed their final course requirements in the summer or fall terms can attend either May or November convocation.

## **VIII. RS COURSE INFORMATION**

### **REQUIRED COURSES FOR ALL GRADUATE STUDENTS**

**ALL** Graduate Students, including part-time students, are required to take the following courses in their first month of study. Students who do not pass SGS 101 or 201 by September 30<sup>th</sup> will have Fs applied to the outstanding courses and an SGS Enrolment Hold applied to their records. You can take these courses by registering for them via Mosaic and completing them via the following links:

1. **SGS 101:** *Academic Research Integrity and Ethics* (an online module take by all graduate students – completed on Avenue-to-Learn at <http://avenue.mcmaster.ca>.)
2. **SGS 201:** Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) (an online module taken by all graduate students – <http://www.mcmaster.ca/accessibility/>)

See **SGS Calendar**, **Section 2.6.5** for more information regarding these online modules.

### **RS COURSES IN THESIS-BASED PROGRAM 2020-2021**

For course descriptions, please refer to the Course Listings website:

<http://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/content.php?catoid=25&navoid=4662>

An online version of the courses being offered by the RS Graduate Program can be found on A2L (RS Graduate Student Resources).

<b>Course</b>	<b>Instructor</b>	<b>Offered</b>
<b>REHAB 700</b> The Development, Evaluation and Utilization of Theories in Rehabilitation	Dr. E. Durocher	Winter 2021
<b>REHAB 704</b> Independent Study in Rehabilitation Science	SRS Faculty Advisor	All terms**
<b>REHAB 707</b> Research Methods in Rehabilitation Science	Dr. J. Richardson	Fall 2020
<b>REHAB 714</b> Statistical Methods in Rehabilitation Science	Dr. L Macedo	Fall 2020
<b>REHAB 716</b> The Role of Rehabilitation Chronic Disease Management	Dr. J. Richardson	Fall 2020
<b>REHAB 717</b> Special Topics in Statistical Methods for Rehabilitation Science	Dr. P. Stratford	Winter 2021
<b>REHAB 718</b> Mobility Across Adult Life Course; A Rehabilitation Perspective	Dr A. Tang	Winter 2021
<b>REHAB 719</b> Measurement of Outcomes in Rehabilitation Science	Dr. A. Kuspinar	Winter 2021

Course	Instructor	Offered
<b>REHAB 725</b> Effective Knowledge Transfer for Rehabilitation Scientists	Dr. T. Packham	Spring/Summer 2021
<b>NUR/HRM 745</b> Qualitative Research Methods ( <i>RS limited to 5 seats only, additional space is likely available</i> )	S. Jack/N. Carter	Winter 2021
<b>REHAB 758</b> Qualitative Research Methods for Collecting, Analyzing and Interpreting Data	S. Moll	Spring 2021

\*\* Courses can be taken any term because they are independent study courses but require a supervisor. Students may not audit courses.

### RS COURSES IN COURSE-BASED PROGRAM 2020-2021

For course descriptions, please refer to the Course Listings website:

<http://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/content.php?catoid=25&navoid=4662>

Course		Offered
<b>REHAB 702</b> Participation and Community Living	J. Shi	Spring/Summer 2021
<b>REHAB 703</b> Selected Topics in Rehabilitation Science	A. Gross	All terms**
<b>REHAB 704</b> Independent Study in Rehabilitation Science	Supervisor/Faculty Advisor	All terms**
<b>REHAB 705</b> Evaluating Sources of Evidence*	L. Santaguida & M. Pryzbek	Fall 2020
<b>REHAB 706</b> Measurement in Rehabilitation*	L. Laakso & J. Vincent	Winter 2021
<b>REHAB 708</b> Clinical Reasoning and Decision-Making	S. Vanderkaay	Spring/Summer 2021
<b>REHAB 710</b> Facilitating Learning in Rehabilitation Contexts	M. Clark	Fall 2020
<b>REHAB 715</b> Advanced Orthopaedic Manipulative Physiotherapy (OMPT) Specialization	A. Gross	Not offered in 2020-2021
<b>REHAB 730</b> Scholarly Paper	S. Dhillon	Full Course (2 terms) Fall 2020-Winter 2021;

Course		Offered
		Winter 2021- Spring/Summer 2021
<b>HLTHMGT 732</b> Strategic Writing for Health Care Professionals (limited seating)	M. Clark	Winter 2021
<b>REHAB 735</b> Rehabilitation Research Project	J. Richardson	Full Course (3 terms) Fall 2020 - Spring/Summer 2021
<b>REHAB 770</b> Leadership in Rehabilitation	L. Knott	Fall 2020
<b>REHAB 771</b> Work, Organization and Health	K. Cullen & J. Law	Winter 2021
<b>REHAB 772</b> Introduction to Qualitative Research*	A. Buettgen	Spring 2021
<b>REHAB 773</b> Knowledge Translation in Rehabilitation Practice	A.F. Khalid	Winter 2021
<b>REHAB 774</b> Quantitative Research Methods*	P. McPhee	Spring/Summer 2021
<b>REHAB 775</b> Technological Innovation and Rehabilitation	K. Wise	Fall 2020 & Spring/Summer 2021

\* These are required courses for the course-based MSc degree (Students can choose either REHAB 772 or REHAB 774)

\*\* Courses can be taken any term because they are independent study courses, but require a Supervisor.

### **COURSE SELECTION**

We recommend that students take their required core courses for their degree as soon as possible during their program of study. Students should speak with their Supervisor and later with their Supervisory Committee members to select an appropriate coursework.

**For the thesis-based program, the course of study must be documented on an *Education Plan* form (A2L – RS Graduate Student Resources) and submitted to the Assistant Dean (RS). The Education Plan will be reviewed by the Assistant Dean of Rehabilitation Science.**

Students register for their courses on Mosaic. In some courses it is necessary to contact the Course Coordinator to obtain approval to take the course before registration can be

completed. If you require approval to take a course, please email the Assistant Dean of Rehabilitation Science and copy the course instructor and the [RS Administrative Staff](#) in the email. If granted permission, the [RS Administrative Staff](#) will provide access for the student to enroll into the course on MOSAIC. Students may take courses in other departments or universities but need to be aware that there may be limitations to consider and must investigate this when planning coursework. Courses taken at other universities have relevant policies and procedures at both McMaster and visiting institution. If you require assistance, please contact the [RS Administrative Staff](#).

For each of the three (3) academic terms (Fall, Winter, and Spring/Summer), there is a deadline date for registration and changes (delete and add) in graduate course selection. Students who wish to drop a course after the deadline must seek permission to do so. The deadline for adding and dropping courses is located in the 2020-2021 [SGS Calendar \(Sessional Dates\)](#). It is the student's responsibility to initiate and follow through on the completion of the "Drop and Add" feature on Mosaic. A graduate student who informs the course instructor that he/she is adding or dropping the course is NOT sufficient. It is NOT the instructor's responsibility to inform the SGS about students who have dropped in or out of his/her course(s).

## **COURSE OUTLINES**

Course Coordinators are responsible for providing students with a written course outline at the outset of the course which can be found on Avenue to Learn. The outline will specify the following: the content and duration of the course; the nature and timing of course assignments; the method of assessment that will be used to evaluate the students' work; and, any penalties that may be assessed for lateness. In the selected topics courses concerned with the study of topics at the leading edge of research (e.g., REHAB 704), it is difficult to accurately predict the content and direction of the course. Therefore, a Course Coordinator is allowed some flexibility to shift the focus of the course as research and other interests dictate but, in this respect, the Course Coordinator is also responsible for keeping the graduate students informed (in writing if necessary) of any changes as the course progresses. **The Course Coordinator will not alter the amount of work expected, or the schedule of assignments and due dates, or the procedures for evaluation, from what is specified in the original course outlines.**

## **ILLNESS OR UNAVOIDABLE ABSENCE DURING COURSE-WORK**

If a student is ill or legitimately absent (e.g., for personal or family reasons) prior to an examination or course deadline, this must be brought to the attention of the Course Coordinator as early as possible, so that the examination or deadline can be deferred at the Course Coordinator's discretion. Excuses made after the fact are not acceptable. Students may be requested to submit medical or other types of documentation.

## **COURSE ASSESSMENT BY THE STUDENT**

For each course, the [RS Administrative Staff](#) will provide each student with a link to a course evaluation on Survey Monkey, which should be completed by the student. The survey is anonymous, and responses will be shared with the Assistant Dean of Rehabilitation Science and the course instructor. The RS Curriculum Committee is interested in the information provided by the student in order to initiate improvements before the course is given again.

The Rehabilitation Science Program values student's thoughts on what elements of the course went well and what needs improvement.

## **COURSE GRADING**

1. The minimum pass grade for all graduate level courses is B-.
2. Course Coordinators must be prepared to use the full range of grades from F or B- to A+.
3. The grades of "A" and "A+" are reserved for exceptional levels of achievement by students who, by definition, cannot represent more than a small minority of the graduate student population or of the students registered in our courses.
4. Course Coordinators will be responsible for ensuring that faculty who contribute to their courses follow the above approach in grading students.

For more information about how to view grades, GPAs, and GPA calculation, please visit <https://registrar.mcmaster.ca/exams-grades/grades/#tab-1>

## **INCOMPLETE ASSIGNMENTS**

See [SGS Calendar, Section 2.6.4](#)

Under exceptional circumstances, a Course Coordinator may approve an extension for a student for the completion of work in a course and assign an incomplete grade (INC). This extension is usually for a few weeks. A student who receives this permission must complete the work as soon as possible, and in any case early enough to allow the Course Coordinator to report the final grade by the date specified in the [SGS Calendar \(Sessional Dates\)](#). If the "INC" grade is not cleared by the deadline, a failing grade will automatically be recorded.

## **COURSE FAILURE**

See [SGS Calendar, Section 2.6.4](#)

A student who fails to obtain at least a B- grade in a course that is to count towards their degree requirements is normally asked to withdraw from the Graduate Program. In some cases, the student's Supervisory Committee may recommend to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS) that, because of certain circumstances, the student should:

- a) take an alternative course; or,
- b) repeat the course.

Such a recommendation should be made in writing to the Vice Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS) within one month of the student's grade being announced, outlining the possible reasons for the failure. The Vice Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS) will make a decision on the recommendation on behalf of the Faculty Graduate Admission and Study Committee.

**Information on Student Appeal Procedures can be accessed in the [SGS Calendar, Section 6.3.](#)**

## DEADLINES FOR COURSE CANCELLATIONS

Course Coordinators are responsible for cancellation of graduate courses where needed. This should be done in writing, as a formal request sent to the Chair of the RS Curriculum Committee during the week following course registration.

1. FALL: First week of September
2. WINTER: First week of January
3. SPRING/SUMMER: Last week of April

## IX. ORIENTATION SESSIONS

“SGS Graduate Orientation Week” for the academic year 2020-2021 will not be held on-campus due to the pandemic. Students are advised to visit the Student Success Center website for more information regarding Welcome Week schedule:

<https://studentsuccess.mcmaster.ca/welcome-week/>

Due to the pandemic, the RS Orientation day will be held virtually via Zoom. The date and time and link for this orientation will be communicated to students once finalized.

In addition, the Health Sciences Library sessions **are strongly recommended** for all new students. Please note that the listed location and times are subject to changes. For more information, please visit the [Health Sciences Library website](#) or contact them at [hslib@mcmaster.ca](mailto:hslib@mcmaster.ca).

For the **MSc Course-based students**, a self-directed **online orientation** will be available on August 28, 2020 on Avenue to Learn. The [RS Administrative Staff](#), will provide detailed information in August.

## REQUIRED HEALTH AND SAFETY TRAINING

Students who have previously received WHMIS and Fire Safety Training **must update** this training if it is more than one (1) year old. Please visit <http://fhs.mcmaster.ca/safetyoffice/> for more information.

**All TAs must complete the following online training:**

- Slips, Trips and Falls
- Ergonomics
- Asbestos Awareness
- Office WHMIS
- Fire Safety

Please visit <http://fhs.mcmaster.ca/safetyoffice/> to complete the training. Training can be completed online *via* online training portal at <http://c1l.mcmaster.ca/cohss/>. Further information regarding TA training will be communicated to students by the RS Administrative staff once finalized.

All completed tests should be submitted to the [RS Administrative Staff](#), who will keep a copy in your student file and then submit it to the Environmental & Occupational Health Support Services (EOHSS) office.

Safety training requirements are based on the hazards that are encountered as part of the job. Supervisors are responsible for determining the training of those individuals under their supervision. The training matrix outlines the requirements of the institution. Training requirements are different for office and lab settings, since the hazards that are encountered are different. See the training matrices at [https://hr.mcmaster.ca/employees/health\\_safety\\_well-being/our-safety/health-and-safety-training/](https://hr.mcmaster.ca/employees/health_safety_well-being/our-safety/health-and-safety-training/) FHS requires additional training, which asks individuals to maintain annual updates for WHMIS and Fire. This is a requirement of the Healthcare Regulations and since many staff and students are in healthcare facilities, we ask that they maintain their updates. Other legislative requirements require annual updates as well.

You are also encouraged to review Risk Management Manual (RMM) 300 regarding the safety training program at McMaster. It may help to clarify training requirements:

[https://hr.mcmaster.ca/employees/health\\_safety\\_well-being/our-safety/risk-management-manuals-rmms/](https://hr.mcmaster.ca/employees/health_safety_well-being/our-safety/risk-management-manuals-rmms/)

Please **register** in person for “**Introduction to Medline Searching**” at the information desk in the Health Sciences Library (HSC 2B) during the month of **SEPTEMBER**.

## **X. RESEARCH METHODS SEMINAR**

The following one-day Seminar is usually offered during the period of **September to December**: *RESEARCH LITERATURE IN THE CLINICAL HEALTH SCIENCES: FINDING THE RIGHT STUFF* organized by Neera Bhatnagar (ext. 23775, [bhatnag@mcmaster.ca](mailto:bhatnag@mcmaster.ca)).

**No assessment of student performance will be made, and no course credit given.** Students will be notified by email of upcoming seminars at which time they will be given instructions on how to register by the Office of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS), HSC 4H4

## **XI. SUPERVISION AND THE SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE in the MSc and PhD THESIS PROGRAM See [SGS Calendar, Section 2.7](#)**

Each graduate student in the thesis-based MSc or PhD RS Program will be supervised by a **Supervisor** who is an approved member of the Graduate Faculty in the RS Graduate Program. The Supervisor, assisted by a **Supervisory Committee**, will provide leadership and guidance to the student throughout the time that the student is registered in the RS Graduate Program.

### **1. First Meeting and Education Plan**

It is the Supervisor’s responsibility to select a Supervisory Committee to ensure that this committee meets with the student within a maximum of **six (6)** months from the time that the



student first registers in the program. **For both MSc (RS) and PhD (RS) students, the committee consists of the Supervisor, who will chair the committee, and at least two other members of approved McMaster Graduate Faculty.** Typically, at least one (1) additional member in addition to the supervisor comes from RS Faculty, although exceptions can be made. Faculty from McMaster who have graduate status in other departments may be approved to sit on supervisory committees in RS. Contact the [RS Administrative Staff](#) to inquire if specific faculty members from other departments are approved to sit on RS supervisory committees.

Members who do not have a graduate status appointment at McMaster may be invited to join the Supervisory Committee (as an optional fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) member) at the discretion of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS). **The appointment of fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) members, who are not faculty members of McMaster University, requires written permission of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS) and they must hold graduate status at another university.** In requesting such an appointment, supervisor and student will be expected to outline the unique contributions of this fourth member. Along with the external member's curriculum vitae, the outline of unique contributions, explanation of how the external is available to the student, and the current composition of the student's committee must be sent to the RS Assistant Dean through the [RS Administrative Staff](#) in writing. Please note that an external committee member must have a graduate status at another university. If approved within the program, the RS Assistant Dean will send a letter to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS) requesting for the addition of the fourth member. Committee members should be considered with respect to knowledge and experience related to the thesis research undertaken by the student.

Please note that external members cannot be added to a student's supervisory committee without the written permission of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS).

Once a committee is selected, the Supervisor will inform the [Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#) of these potential committee members. Before the first meeting of the Supervisory Committee, the Supervisor will provide both the Vice Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS) and the Assistant Dean (RS) with an *Education Plan* for the student (see the *Education Plan* form under General Forms on A2L under RS Graduate Resources). The *Education Plan* will name the chosen Supervisory Committee members, summarize the student's thesis topic, identify the graduate courses to be taken by the student and provide the date of the first Supervisory Committee meeting. If this *Education Plan* includes a research topic, which can only be undertaken off campus, then all necessary letters of approval (ethics approval, access to data, laboratories, etc.) from the intended site of research must be sent to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS) who will approve (or not) the student to be full-time off campus to the extent required for the proposed research. In the event of any change in the *Education Plan*, the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS) and the Assistant Dean (RS) should be informed by the Supervisor. In order to complete this document on time, there are occasions where supervisory committee membership may not be determined because the thesis research question is still under construction.

## **2. Supervisory Committee Meetings**

**The [Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#) must be given the option of attending the first (1<sup>st</sup>) Supervisory Committee meeting as a non-voting observer to get to know the student and to address any**

**concerns from the committee or student about the planned training program.** The Assistant Dean (RS) may not attend if there are scheduling conflicts or if the Committee is comprised of senior supervisors. The Assistant Dean (RS) is willing to attend any supervisory committee meeting at the request of a student or members of the Supervisory Committee. After the first meeting, each student is expected to meet with his/her Supervisory Committee regularly (usually once every six months) unless the Committee believes that more frequent meetings are necessary. If the student is having academic problems or difficulties with the research project, a meeting can be called immediately by either the Supervisor or the student.

**Note:** It is **mandatory** that **at least one (1)** Supervisory Committee meeting occur each academic year. Annual Supervisory Committee meetings are expected to occur by November 1 to allow administrative tracking. It is the student's responsibility to schedule the date with their Supervisory Committee, book the room and necessary equipment, and ensure that all paperwork is delivered to the RS Administrative Staff following each meeting.

Supervisory Committee Meetings are required for every Academic Year, with a November 1<sup>st</sup> deadline of the following Calendar Year applicable to that Academic Year.

For example: 2020-2021 Academic Year. The student can have a meeting anytime between 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020 and 30<sup>th</sup> November 2021 and count this towards the 2020-2021 requirement.

Once completed, the next meeting is not required until during the following Academic Year. While it is not required, it is still highly encouraged that students meet with their supervisory committee once every 6 months.

For example: 2020-2021 Academic Year, If the student has a meeting in April 2020 then the next meeting is required during the 2021-2022 Academic Year, anytime between 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021 and 30<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

### **New Admits First Meeting**

All newly admitted students must have a committee meeting within that Academic Year.

### **Fall (September) Admits**

- First meeting must be completed by the end of March. This would count towards the 2020-2021 meeting requirement.

### **Winter (January) Admits**

- First meeting must be completed by the end of July. This would count towards the 2020-2021 meeting requirement.

### **Spring (May) Admits**

- First meeting must be completed by the end of November. This would count towards the 2020-2021 meeting requirement.

### 3. Supervisory Committee Reports

The purpose of the Supervisory Committee meeting is for the student to be supported in their training through feedback, advice, and an approved plan for continuation of studies. The purpose of the Supervisory Committee meeting is also for the Committee to evaluate the performance of the student to determine that they are on track with their milestones, making sufficient progress, and their work is meeting expectations in terms of quality. Students should be aware of this dual role and ensure that they present their progress clearly to their Committee, and request whatever input is required to have a clear plan of next steps. Please note that the Master's students must complete the Supervisory Committee Report form accompanied by the Student Tracking Form. PhD students must complete the Supervisory Committee Report online. To initiate a PhD Supervisory Committee report online, please send an email to [rsgrad@mcmaster.ca](mailto:rsgrad@mcmaster.ca). The paper copy of the supervisory committee report is only accepted at a Master's level and not at a PhD level.

Both the Supervisor and student should ensure that Supervisory Committee meetings take place and are officially recorded. MSc students need to complete the Supervisory Committee Report Form and the Student Tracking Form. PhD students need to complete the online supervisory committee meeting form and submit the Student Tracking Form. The Supervisory Committee Report form and the Student Tracking form are located in A2L under RS Graduate Resources. The ***Student Tracking Form*** is an ongoing record of whether students have met milestones and is meant to support the student in meeting milestones and to be reviewed by the Supervisory Committee to evaluate the extent to which students are progressing according to expected timelines.

**For MSc students, the original and not a copy of the completed *Supervisory Committee Report form***, accompanied by the *Student Tracking Form*, must be submitted to the RS Program Coordinator. If the Supervisory Committee Report form is submitted via email, the supervisory must be CC'd in the email. Please submit the completed committee report to the [RS Program Coordinator](#). The report should have the committee members ratings and signatures. Once received by the Program Coordinator, this will be reviewed for approval by the Assistant Dean of Rehabilitation Science. If approved, the Program Coordinator will submit the Supervisory Committee meeting form to the School of Graduate Studies. The Program Coordinator will also update the student milestone to have the completed meeting reflect in the student's academic record. If the meeting is not approved, the Assistant Dean of Rehabilitation Science will meet with the student's supervisor to discuss further. Students should keep a copy of their committee meeting report for their own files.

On the report, each committee member must indicate whether the progress made by the student in course work and thesis research has been "excellent", "satisfactory", "marginal", or "unsatisfactory".

The description of the grading is listed below:

**[E] Excellent:** The student has exceeded expectations in terms of academic and/or research progress. This rating may reflect exceptional initiatives taken by the student to address

unexpected challenges in their course of study.

**[G] Good:** The student is meeting and achieving all expectations in terms of academic and/or research progress. There are no areas of concern with respect to meeting goals and milestones for research and academic progress. This rating is to be used for students who show promise for completing the degree in a timely manner.

**[S] Satisfactory:** The student is meeting and achieving most expectations in terms of academic and/or research progress. There is some concern around the pace and/or the meeting of goals and milestones for research and academic progress. The committee has some concerns with the student's skills growth and subject area expertise. This rating is to be used when the committee identifies areas for improvement and where some expectations at this stage of degree development are not being met. Details about concerns should be provided in the comments.

**[M] Marginal:** The student is meeting and achieving some expectations in terms of academic and/or research progress. There is significant concern around the pace and/or the meeting of goals and milestones for research and academic progress. The committee has significant concerns with the student's skill growth and subject area expertise. This rating is to be used when the committee identifies several areas for improvement and where significant expectations at this stage of degree development are not being met. Areas for improvement should be provided in the comments.

**[U] Unsatisfactory:** There is an unreasonably low rate of academic and/or research progress. The committee has serious concerns about the pace and/or the meeting of goals and milestones for research and academic progress, and whether these goals can be achieved in a reasonable period of time. Areas of serious concern should be provided in the comments. In cases where this category is used, the program should determine whether the student should be required to withdraw or be allowed to continue in the program until their next committee meeting. Students who receive a marginal or unsatisfactory grading by any of the committee will be reviewed by the Associate Dean and receive a letter from the School of Graduate Studies, which will address the concerns arising.

The supervisory committee evaluates the number, quality and timeliness (meeting milestones, substantive progress at each meeting) of the student's coursework and research activities when evaluating progress. **If a "marginal" or "unsatisfactory" grade is given by any one member, another committee meeting must be held within three (3) months to re-assess the student's progress.** The student must schedule a meeting with the Assistant Dean immediately. Contact [RS Administrative Staff](#) to book this meeting. The Assistant Dean (RS) may be invited to attend this meeting (as a non-voting member) at the invitation of either the student or the Supervisor. If an "unsatisfactory" or "marginal" rating is given by all committee members, the Supervisor will confer with the Assistant Dean (RS) and/or the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS) to decide the course of action to take. **The student will normally be recommended to withdraw from the program if ratings are marginal or unsatisfactory at two (2) consecutive Supervisory Committee meetings.**

## PhD Supervisory Committee Meeting Report

For a PhD student, the Supervisory Committee Report is completed online. Paper copy of the committee report will not be accepted. The report must be initiated online by the [RS Administrative Staff](#). If a PhD student is planning to hold a committee meeting, an email must be sent to the [RS Administrative Staff](#) for the online report to be initiated. The student will receive an email of their initiated report. It is the student's responsibility to review the process of completing the PhD Supervisory Committee Report found on Avenue to Learn Student Resources. Questions regarding the process of completing an online supervisory committee report should be directed to the [RS Administrative Staff](#).

The student asks the Supervisor for permission to write the thesis. This request is considered formally at a Supervisory Committee meeting, usually after the student has summarized the research that he/she has done to meet the objectives for the thesis work. The committee must agree unanimously with the request. "Permission to write" indicates that the student has essentially completed the data collection for the research work. The permission is noted on the Supervisory Committee Report. Students should clarify if they will be asking for feedback on the entire thesis or components and clarify expectations of committee members about the nature and timing of feedback. Students must also ensure that the Approval to Defend Form is completed when the thesis is completed and has been approved by their committee. This form can be found under RS resources in A2L.

#### **4. Supervisor's Absence**

If the Supervisor leaves the University temporarily, is on extended research leave, or is required by the University to perform other duties which prevent effective supervision, the Supervisor and the Assistant Dean (RS) must make formal arrangements for an interim Supervisor (usually another Supervisory Committee member) with approval of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS). An interim supervisor is typically a core faculty member from the School of Rehabilitation Science. Where no such person exists or is able to assume supervisory duties from the student's committee, the program may appoint an interim supervisor. The student, Supervisory Committee members and the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS) will be notified in writing about the interim supervisor.

If the Supervisor leaves the University permanently, the Supervisor is expected to arrange, with the cooperation of the student, the Assistant Dean (RS) and Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS), to transfer the supervisory duties permanently to another member of graduate faculty. This is typically a School of Rehabilitation Science core faculty member who is a current Supervisory Committee member.

In the event of pending retirement, the Supervisor will nominate a graduate faculty member who is willing to accept formal responsibility for the supervision of the student to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS). Emeritus faculty may continue *de facto* supervision of their existing students. In special cases, for example early retirees, Emeritus faculty may be permitted to accept new students or supervise their MSc student who transfers to the PhD(RS) Program, but only after approval of an *Application for Post-Retirement Supervision of a Graduate Student* by the Vice Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS), the Dean of FHS, and the Dean of Graduate Studies.

## 5. Appeal Procedures/Student Grievance

See [SGS Calendar, Section 6.3](#)

Generally, if a graduate student is having a disagreement with another person(s) to the extent that present or intended studies/research are upset or interrupted, the student should seek advice from the Supervisor. **If the conflict directly involves the Supervisor, and open discussion has not resolved the issue, the student should consult the [Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#).** In cases where there is conflict between student and Supervisor, a meeting of the Supervisory Committee may be called **by either the Supervisor, Assistant Dean (RS) or the student.** In such cases the Assistant Dean (RS) should be present. If no satisfactory resolution is gained by this process, the Assistant Dean (RS) and Supervisor may consult with the Vice Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS) who will recommend an appropriate course of action.

## 6. Change of Supervisor

See [SGS Calendar, Section 2.7](#)

It is possible, with mutual agreement, to change supervisors or the membership of a Supervisory Committee before the filing of the *Education Plan*. Supervisors cannot tell students that they will discontinue their supervision. However, students who do not progress may be required to leave the program if the supervisory committee determines their progress is not satisfactory and the program recommends their withdrawal.

The supervisory relationship can be altered by mutual agreement if the student's research topic changes substantially, the relationship is not meeting the student's needs or there is a breakdown in the supervisor/student relationship that is unresolvable using the processes outlined above. A request in writing to change the supervisor may be made by the student to the [Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#) and to the Vice Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS) who considers the request and the recommendation from the program. If a student has concerns about their supervision within the program, they should consult the Assistant Dean (RS). Changes to supervisor should be noted on the next *Supervisory Committee Meeting* form. Changes to the Supervisory Committee (advisors) do not require this approval process and can be made by documenting the change on the next *Supervisory Committee Meeting* form.

The [RS Administrative Staff](#) must be notified of any changes in the composition of a student's supervisory committee. The failure to notify the [RS Administrative Staff](#) may result in incorrect listing of supervisory committee on MOSAIC.

## 7. Withdrawal from the Program

Students who wish to withdraw for personal reasons are required to submit a "Change in Status" form, which requires signatures from the Supervisor, and the Associate Dean (FHS) Graduate Studies. The form is available on the SGS website at <https://graduate.mcmaster.ca/resources>.

## XII. MSc THESIS REQUIREMENTS AND DEFENCE

See [SGS Calendar, Section 3](#)

All students should consult the booklet, *GUIDE FOR THE PREPARATION OF MASTER'S AND DOCTORAL THESIS*, published by the SGS (GH 212). (See *Section 2.8* of the [SGS Calendar](#)). The booklet can also be found [here](#).

The thesis may be submitted in the traditional format or a “sandwich” format whereby the thesis is constructed around a number of manuscripts. The program encourages the manuscript format as it facilitates students’ success in publication and provides experience in the publication process expected of academics.

Many examples of successfully-defended thesis of this type are available for inspection in the Health Sciences Library and on MacSphere (digital database of completed thesis) <https://macsphere.mcmaster.ca/>. Students must seek approval from the Supervisory Committee for the chosen format. A copy of the detailed regulations regarding the use of the above format is available from the SGS office (GH 212) or may be obtained from the SGS website at <https://gs.mcmaster.ca/current-students/completing-your-degree/masters-thesis/> See **Appendix 9** of this handbook for the SRS Departmental Standards for the Manuscript Style Thesis. The procedure for MSc thesis preparation is as follows:

### MSc Thesis Preparation Timeline

Timeline	Step	Action/Responsibilities
	<b>Student receives approval from Supervisory Committee to defend thesis</b>	<p><b>Student:</b> Discuss the intent to defend thesis at a Supervisory Committee Meeting. If committee approves that the thesis is ready for defence, student should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• communicate the intent to RS Program,</li> <li>• initiate thesis defence on Mosaic, and</li> <li>• start filling out the approval the defend form.</li> </ul>
Refer to SGS Sessional Dates for Important Dates	<b>Student initiates thesis defence on Mosaic</b>	<p><b>Student:</b> Initiate thesis defence in Mosaic under My Academics. Select Thesis Intent &gt; Defend Thesis. Instructions can be found <a href="#">here</a>.</p> <p>Student needs to validate the supervisory committee is listed correctly. It is essential that email addresses are up-to-date and correct</p> <p>Students should refer to the <a href="#">SGS Graduate Calendar Sessional Dates</a> for the “Final Date to Initiate Thesis Defence in Mosaic”.</p> <p><b>Note: If the supervisory committee list is incorrect, inform the RS Staff as soon as possible.</b></p>
Minimum of <b>1 month</b> before	<b>Supervisor Submits Approval to Defend</b>	<p><b>Student:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate with your supervisor and committee members to determine three potential dates/times that works for your committee.</li> <li>• List these date/times in Approval to Defend Form (found in A2L).</li> <li>• Submit this form to Supervisor to complete the external examiner section.</li> </ul>

scheduled defence.	<b>Form to RS Program</b>	<p><b>Supervisor:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify three proposed external examiners who is arm's length from the student, supervisor, and the committee members.</li> <li>Supervisor submits the completed Approval to Defend Form to <a href="mailto:rsgrad@mcmaster.ca">rsgrad@mcmaster.ca</a></li> </ul> <p><b>*Note: Supervisors cannot reach out to externals until it is reviewed by Assistant Dean.</b></p>
	<b>Assistant Dean reviews proposed external examiners</b>	<p><b>RS Staff:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forwards the Approval to Defend form to the Assistant Dean for review of the proposed external examiners.</li> </ul> <p><b>RS Assistant Dean:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reviews the three (3) proposed external examiners. Decision communicated to RS Staff.</li> </ul> <p><b>RS Staff:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicates to the Supervisor if the proposed external examiners are approved or declined.</li> <li>Staff will prompt the supervisor to start contacting the approved external examiner(s).</li> </ul>
	<b>Supervisor contacts proposed external examiners</b>	<p><b>Supervisor:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact external examiner in order of preference.</li> <li>Once an external examiner is secured, provide the external examiner with the final copy of the student's thesis.</li> <li>Confirm the name of the external and date and time of the defense to RS Staff.</li> </ul> <p><b>*Note: Copy <a href="mailto:rsgrad@mcmaster.ca">rsgrad@mcmaster.ca</a> to all communication with the external examiner.</b></p>
	<b>RS Program secures a thesis exam Chair</b>	<p><b>RS Staff:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secures a chair for the thesis exam.</li> </ul>
<b>3 weeks</b> before scheduled defence	<b>RS Program Sends out confirmation email</b>	<p><b>RS Staff:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Once an external examiner and chair is confirmed, staff will send a confirmation email to the supervisor, committee, external examiner, chair, and the student.</li> <li>This confirmation email will include the date, time, location, and a copy of the final thesis.</li> <li>The examination chair will receive the thesis binder at least 3 days before the thesis defence.</li> </ul>



		<b>*Note: The email to the student is separate from the email sent out to the supervisor, committee, chair, and external.</b>
Minimum of <b>1 week</b> before defence	<b>Staff invites student for a practice run of thesis before the examination.</b>	<b>RS Staff:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invites students to briefly meet with staff to ensure that they are familiar with the set-up of the defence. This is an opportunity for the student to ask questions about what to expect on the day of the defence.</li> </ul>
<b>THESIS DEFENCE</b>		
	<b>Revision</b>	<p>After the defence, the student will be informed by the examining committee if there are any changes required to the thesis.</p> <b>Student:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If there are changes required, start working on the revisions. Submit the revised thesis to Supervisor for review.</li> </ul>
	<b>Final Submission Sheet</b>	<b>Supervisor:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Committee and/or the Supervisor will review the revisions.</li> <li>If supervisor acknowledges that all necessary and requested changes have been made, supervisor submits the signed Final Thesis Submission Sheet to RS Staff.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note: Please indicate whether or not the thesis requires a delay of publication. Student may request a postponement of digital publication for up to one year at the time of thesis submission to MacSphere.</b></p>
Within <b>4 weeks</b> of a successful defence	<b>Upload Thesis to MacSphere</b>	<b>Student:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>After successful exam and all requested changes have been made, student will upload the final e-thesis to MacSphere. Instructions can be found <a href="#">here</a>. Inform the RS Staff once the thesis is submitted to MacSphere.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note: Inform the RS Staff once thesis is uploaded to MacSphere.</b></p>
	<b>Clear to Graduate</b>	<b>RS Staff:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Once student submitted both the final thesis on MacSphere and the Final Thesis Submission Sheet, SGS will clear the student to graduate, provided that all other program requirements are complete.</li> </ul> <p>Student should be able to see their graduate status on Mosaic changed from “Eligible” to “Approved”.</p>
	<b>Exit Interview</b>	<b>RS Staff:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff will request to meet with the student for an 15-20 mins. exit interview to ask student about their graduate experience in the Rehabilitation Science program.</li> </ul>
<b>CONVOCATE/GRADUATE</b>		

## Notes about MSc Thesis Preparation:

- Students planning to defend their MSc thesis should communicate the intent with the RS Administrative Staff. Informing the staff about the plans to defend is important to ensure that the student is aware of the procedures, timelines, expectations, and responsibilities.
- **The Master's thesis defense is organized by the RS Administrative Staff.** The Examination Committee consists of four (4) graduate faculty members: The student's Supervisor (attendance is mandatory, but they can join remotely if necessary); two (2) members of the student's Supervisory Committee; and an External Examiner.
- The student asks the Supervisor for permission to write the thesis. This request is considered formally at a Supervisory Committee meeting, usually after the student has summarized the research that he/she has done to meet the objectives for the thesis work. The committee must agree unanimously with the request. **"Permission to write"** indicates that the student has essentially completed the data collection for the research work. **The permission is noted on the Supervisory Committee Report.** Students should clarify if they will be asking for feedback on the entire thesis or components and clarify expectations of committee members about the nature and timing of feedback.
- A first complete draft of the thesis or thesis component should be submitted to the Supervisor for feedback and constructive comments. After revisions are completed and the Supervisor approves that the draft thesis is ready for committee review, a complete version is given to each Supervisory Committee member for his/her comments. The Supervisor/Committee may approve sections of the thesis but **must also see a complete version of the entire thesis for approval** before the student can move forwards to the defence.
- The final copy of the thesis must be sent to the RS Administrative Staff. The RS Administrative Staff will be sending attaching the thesis to the confirmation email sent out to the examining committee.
- When suitable revisions have been made, the student submits a completed ***Approval to Defend*** form available on A2L (RS Graduate Resources) to the RS Administrative Staff a minimum of 1 month before the expected date of the defence. The approval to defend form needs to list 3 potential dates/times that works for the student, supervisor, and the committee. The supervisor is responsible for submitting the form to the RS Administrative Staff with a list of 3 proposed external examiners. The supervisor should not contact the proposed external examiners until they have been approved by the RS Assistant Dean. Students should not make contact with the external examiner. **The external examiner must be a member of Graduate Faculty from McMaster University and should not have collaborated on a research project with the Supervisor within the last 6 years.**

- Once the Approval to Defend Form is received by the RS Administrative Staff, it three proposed external examiners will be reviewed by the RS Assistant Dean. Once the examiners have been approved, the RS Administrative Staff will prompt the Supervisor to start contacting the approved external examiners. The Supervisor needs to copy [rsggrad@mcmaster.ca](mailto:rsggrad@mcmaster.ca) in all email communications with the external.
- Once an external is confirmed, the RS Administrative Staff will secure a chair for the defence. Once the external examiner and chair is confirmed, the RS Administrative Staff will send out an email confirmation to the student, supervisor, committee members, external examiner, and chair with the defence details and with the final copy of the thesis. This confirmation email is typically sent out 3 weeks before the scheduled examination.
- The defense will be open to the SRS community. The Examination Chair will ask all persons except the Examination Committee to leave the room in order to discuss the format of the Examination and the responsibilities of the examiners. The Examination will consist of an **oral presentation (15-20 minutes)** of the thesis given by the student, followed by a series of questions asked by the members of the Examination Committee in turn. All examiners are expected to ask at least one (1) relevant question. Typically, two (2) rounds of questioning is conducted and the defense should be completed within two (2) hours.
- At the end of the defense, the Examination Committee will consider their decision in a closed session. The Examination Chair does not normally have voting privileges. The majority rules in case of a split vote but if there is a “tie” then the Chair must vote to break the “tie”. Please refer to the [SGS Calendar \(Section 3.3\)](#) for information on what will happen should there be two or more negative or abstaining votes, with at least one of these votes being from a member of the supervisory committee. The Examination Chair will then call the student into the room and convey the Committee’s decision. When the student has made any corrections and revisions suggested by the examiners to the satisfaction of the Supervisor and Examination Committee, the student needs to follow the instructions on the SGS website to submit the final version (<https://graduate.mcmaster.ca/masters-degree-thesis>).

### **XIII. PhD THESIS REQUIREMENTS AND DEFENCE**

For PhD students, the thesis may either take the traditional form or a “sandwich” form (review Section XII on MSc Thesis of this handbook). For information, please see *Sections 2.8 and 4.4* of the [SGS Calendar](#).

See [Appendix 9](#) of this handbook for the *SRS Departmental Standards for the Manuscript Style Thesis*. See [Appendix 11](#) of this handbook for the *PhD Student Tracking Sheet*.

The RS Program is adopting the Accelerated PhD thesis Defence process. Please see below for more information.

## PhD Accelerated Thesis Defence Timeline

Timeline	Step	Action/Responsibilities
To be completed before thesis may be seen by examining committee including external examiner	<b>Thesis submitted to Urkund for Review (TO BE EFFECTIVE WINTER 2020)</b>	<p><b>Student and Supervisor:</b></p> <p>Prior to thesis defence and, in the case of 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 examiner 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.</p> <p>- Sec 2.8.1 Graduate Calendar</p>
	<b>Student receives approval form Supervisory Committee to defend thesis</b>	<p><b>Student:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss the intent to defend thesis at a Supervisory Committee Meeting.</li> <li>• If committee approves that the thesis is ready for defence, student should communicate the intent to RS Program, initiate thesis defence on Mosaic, and start filling out the approval the defend form.</li> <li>• Student should submit a copy of the final thesis to RS Program.</li> </ul>
Refer to SGS Sessional Dates for Important Dates	<b>Student initiates thesis defence on Mosaic</b>	<p><b>Student:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiate thesis defence in Mosaic under My Academics. Select Thesis Intent &gt; Defend Thesis. Instructions can be found <a href="#">here</a>.</li> <li>• Student needs to validate the supervisory committee is listed correctly. It is essential that email addresses are up-to-date and correct.</li> <li>• Students should refer to the <a href="#">SGS Graduate Calendar Sessional Dates</a> for the "Final Date to Initiate Thesis Defence in Mosaic".</li> </ul> <p><b>Note: If the supervisory committee list is incorrect, inform the RS Staff as soon as possible.</b></p>
Minimum of <b>1 month</b> before scheduled defence.	<b>Supervisor Submits Approval to Defend Form to RS Program</b>	<p><b>Student:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate with your supervisor and committee members to determine three potential dates/times that works for everyone.</li> <li>• List these date/times in Approval to Defend Form (found in A2L).</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submit this form to Supervisor to complete the external examiner section.</li> </ul> <p><b>Supervisor:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify three proposed external examiners who is arm's length from the student, supervisor, and the committee members.</li> <li>Supervisor submits the completed Approval to Defend Form to <a href="mailto:rsgrad@mcmaster.ca">rsgrad@mcmaster.ca</a></li> </ul> <p><b>*Note: The approval to defend for is for the RS Staff's own record.</b></p>
Minimum of <b>1 month</b> before scheduled defence.	<b>Supervisor Initiate Defence and Selects Accelerated Stream</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>After student initiates defence on Mosaic, Supervisor will receive an email from SGS to initiate defence.</li> </ul> <p><b>Supervisor:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initiate the defence and select "Accelerated Stream" and click Continue.</li> <li>You will be directed to a page to enter the External Examiner information. Please nominate 3 external examiners. You must click "Save" after each nominee.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note: Supervisors cannot reach out to externals until it is reviewed and approved by committee and Assistant Dean.</b></p>
	<b>Examining Committee Approves External Examiner Nominees</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>After the Supervisor initiates the defence, each member of the examining committee will receive an email from SGS with the Approval Form for External Examiner Nomination.</li> </ul> <p><b>Committee Members:</b> Review and approve nominees.</p> <p><b>Note: The nominees will not be sent to the Asst Dean for approval until all committee members have approved the list.</b></p>
	<b>Chair Approves External Examiner Nominees</b>	<p><b>RS Assistant Dean:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>After all committee members approve the nominees, the AD will receive an email from SGS with the Approval Form for External Examiner Nomination.</li> <li>Reviews and approves the nominee(s).</li> </ul> <p><b>RS Staff:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicates to the Supervisor if the proposed external examiners are approved or declined.</li> <li>Staff will prompt the supervisor to start contacting the approved external examiner(s).</li> </ul>
		<p><b>Supervisor:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact external examiner in order of preference.</li> </ul>

	<b>Supervisor contacts proposed external examiners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Once an external examiner is secured, provide the external examiner with the final copy of the student's thesis.</li> <li>Confirm the name of the external and date and time of the defense to RS Staff.</li> </ul> <p><b>*Note: Copy <a href="mailto:rsgrad@mcmaster.ca">rsgrad@mcmaster.ca</a> to all communication with the external examiner.</b></p>
	<b>RS Program secures a thesis exam Chair</b>	<p><b>RS Staff:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secures a chair for the thesis exam.</li> <li>RS Staff will communicate with the supervisor who the confirmed chair is.</li> </ul>
	<b>Supervisor Selects Examiner and Enter Defence Details</b>	<p><b>Supervisor:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The supervisor selects the confirmed examiner and enters the defence details by clicking on the link sent to them from SGS. The supervisor would need to indicate the date and time of the defence and list the chair for the examination. The RS Staff will communicate the confirmed chair with the supervisor.</li> <li>The supervisor also needs to upload a PDF file of the final thesis.</li> </ul>
<b>3 weeks</b> before scheduled defence	<b>RS Staff Sends Out Confirmation Email</b>	<p><b>RS Staff:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Once an external examiner and chair is confirmed, staff will send a confirmation email to the supervisor, committee, external examiner, chair, and the student. This confirmation email will include the date, time, location, and a copy of the final thesis.</li> <li>The examination chair will receive the thesis binder at least 3 days before the thesis defence.</li> </ul> <p><b>*Note: The email to the student is separate from the email sent out to the supervisor, committee, chair, and external.</b></p>
Minimum of <b>2 weeks</b> , with an upper maximum of 4 weeks	<b>External Examiner Reviews Thesis and Completes External Examiner Report Online</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>External examiner must have a <b>minimum of 2 weeks</b> to an upper maximum of 4 weeks (if time permitting) to review the thesis. SGS will send email reminders to the External examiner to complete the report.</li> </ul> <p><b>External Examiner:</b> Reviews the thesis and completes the online report.</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The link to the external report is sent via email to SGS.</li> <li>Positive External reports are emailed automatically to the Supervisor, Committee, and RS Staff.</li> </ul>

<p>At least <b>1 week</b> before defence</p>	<p><b>Report Received by SGS and shared with Supervisor, Assistant Dean, RS Staff, and Student</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negative External reports are received by SGS and then distributed by email to the Associate Dean, Committee, and RS Staff.</li> <li>• Reports are always shared with the student.</li> <li>• If SGS does not receive the report 1 week before the defence, the student has the option to defer their defence or to waive their entitlement to the report.</li> <li>• SGS will email the student, with a CC to the supervisor, to confirm in writing that the defence is proceeding on the scheduled date.</li> <li>• If the report isn't received 2 business days before the defence, it will be rescheduled by SGS without exception.</li> </ul>
<p>At least <b>1 week</b> before defence</p>	<p><b>Staff invites student for a practice run of thesis before the examination.</b></p>	<p><b>RS Staff:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invites students to briefly meet with staff to ensure that they are familiar with the set-up of the defence. This is an opportunity for the student to ask questions about what to expect on the day of the defence.</li> </ul>
<p><b>THESIS DEFENCE</b></p>		
	<p><b>Revision</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After the defence, the student will be informed by the examining committee if there are any changes required to the thesis.</li> <li>• <b>Student:</b> If there are changes required, start working on the revisions. Submit the revised thesis to Supervisor for review.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Final Submission Sheet</b></p>	<p><b>Supervisor:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supervisor review the revisions. If there are minor revisions the supervisor will act on behalf of the defence committee to ensure that required changes have been made; if there are major revisions these need to be reviewed by the committee also.</li> <li>• Once the supervisor has ensured all the revisions have been made, supervisor submits the signed Final Thesis Submission Sheet to RS Staff.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note: Please indicate whether or not the thesis requires a delay of publication. Student may request a postponement of digital publication for up to one year at the time of thesis submission to MacSphere.</b></p>
<p>Within <b>4 weeks</b> of a successful defence</p>	<p><b>Upload Thesis to MacSphere</b></p>	<p><b>Student:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After successful exam and all requested changes have been made, student will upload the final e-thesis to MacSphere within 4 weeks of a successful defence. Instructions can be found <a href="#">here</a>. Inform the RS Staff once the thesis is submitted to MacSphere.</li> </ul>

		<b>Note: Inform the RS Staff once thesis is uploaded to MacSphere.</b>
	<b>Clear to Graduate</b>	<b>RS Staff:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Once student submitted both the final thesis on MacSphere and the Final Thesis Submission Sheet, SGS will clear the student to graduate, provided that all other program requirements are complete.</li> <li>Student should be able to see their graduate status on Mosaic change from “Eligible” to “Approved”.</li> </ul>
	<b>Exit Interview</b>	<b>RS Staff:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff will request to meet with the student for an 15-20 mins. exit interview to ask student about their graduate experience in the Rehabilitation Science program.</li> </ul>
<b>CONVOCATE/GRADUATE</b>		

Notes about PhD Accelerated Thesis Defence:

- Students planning to defend their PhD thesis should communicate the intent with the RS Administrative Staff. Informing the staff about the plans to defend is important to ensure that the student is aware of the procedures, timelines, expectations, and responsibilities. The student would need to initiate the thesis defence on Mosaic.
- Prior to sharing the thesis to the examining committee, including 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 examiner 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. This requirement is stated in Section 2.8.1 in the Graduate Calendar.
- The Examination Committee consists of four (4) graduate faculty members: The student’s Supervisor (attendance is mandatory, but they can join remotely if necessary); two (2) members of the student’s Supervisory Committee; and an External Examiner.
- The student asks the Supervisor for permission to write the thesis. This request is considered formally at a Supervisory Committee meeting, usually after the student has summarized the research that they have done to meet the objectives for the thesis work. The committee must agree unanimously with the request. **“Permission to write”** indicates that the student has essentially completed the data collection for the research work. **The permission is noted on the Supervisory Committee Report.** Students should clarify if they will be asking for feedback on the entire thesis or components and clarify expectations of committee members about the nature and timing of feedback.



- A first complete draft of the thesis or thesis component should be submitted to the Supervisor for feedback and constructive comments. After revisions are completed and the Supervisor approves that the draft thesis is ready for committee review, a complete version is given to each Supervisory Committee member for his/her comments. The Supervisor/Committee may approve sections of the thesis but **must also see a complete version of the entire thesis for approval** before the student can move forwards to the defence.
- The final copy of the thesis must be sent to the RS Administrative Staff. The RS Administrative Staff will be sending attaching the thesis to the confirmation email sent out to the examining committee.
- When suitable revisions have been made, the student submits a completed *Approval to Defend* form available on A2L (RS Graduate Resources) to the [RS Administrative Staff](#) a minimum of 1 month before the expected date of the defence. The approval to defend form needs to list 3 potential dates/times that works for the student, supervisor, and the committee. The supervisor is responsible for submitting the form to the RS Administrative Staff with a list of 3 proposed external examiners. The supervisor should not contact the proposed external examiners until they have been approved by the RS Assistant Dean. Students should not make contact with the external examiner. **The external examiner CANNOT be a member of Graduate Faculty from McMaster University and should not have collaborated on a research project or publication with the Supervisor within the last 6 years.** The Approval to Defend form is for the RS Program's own record.
- The Supervisor will need to select "Accelerated" thesis defence when initiating the student's defence. This is completed via a link that will be sent to the Supervisor from SGS once the student initiates the thesis defence on Mosaic.
- The Supervisor can only contact external examiners once they are approved by the committee and the RS Assistant Dean. Once the external examiner is confirmed, it is the responsibility of the Supervisor to contact the external examiners. The supervisor should copy [rsggrad@mcmaster.ca](mailto:rsggrad@mcmaster.ca) in all their email communication to the external examiner.
- Once an external is confirmed, the RS Administrative Staff will secure a chair for the defence. Once the external examiner and chair is confirmed, the RS Administrative Staff will send out an email confirmation to the student, supervisor, committee members, external examiner, and chair with the defence details and with the final copy of the thesis. This confirmation email is typically sent out 3 weeks before the scheduled examination.
- The defense will be open to the SRS community. The Examination Chair will ask all persons except the Examination Committee to leave the room in order to discuss the format of the Examination and the responsibilities of the examiners. The Examination will consist of an **oral presentation (15-20 minutes)** of the thesis given by the student, followed by a series of questions asked by the members of the Examination Committee

in turn. All examiners are expected to ask at least one (1) relevant question. Typically, two (2) rounds of questioning is conducted and the defense would normally be completed within two (2) hours and should be no longer than 3 hours.

- At the end of the defense, the Examination Committee will consider their decision in a closed session. The Examination Chair does not normally have voting privileges. The majority rules in case of a split vote but if there is a “tie” then the Chair must vote to break the “tie”. Please refer to the [SGS Calendar \(Section 3.3\)](#) for information on what will happen should there be two or more negative or abstaining votes, with at least one of these votes being from a member of the supervisory committee. The Examination Chair will then call the student into the room and convey the Committee’s decision. When the student has made any corrections and revisions suggested by the examiners to the satisfaction of the Supervisor and Examination Committee, the student needs to follow the instructions on the SGS website to submit the final version (<https://graduate.mcmaster.ca/masters-degree-thesis>).

#### **XIV. REVIEW OF ACADEMIC DECISIONS**

##### **Review of Course Grades**

1. A student who wishes to question a grade received in a graduate course should request, **in writing**, a review of the grade by the Course Coordinator.
2. If not satisfied with this result, the student can request, **in writing**, a review of the grade by the [Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#). A written decision will be sent to the student.
3. If the student is not satisfied with this result, they can submit a Formal Inquiry request to the School of Graduate Studies as outlined in the *Student Appeal Procedures* available from the University Secretariat, Gilmour Hall, room 210.
4. The final level of appeal is to the Senate Board on Student Appeals or the appropriate Faculty Committee in cases involving substantive academic judgment.

##### **Withdrawal on Academic Grounds**

A student who wishes to contest a recommendation by the SGS that they withdraw on academic grounds should follow the procedures to do so as outlined in the *Student Appeal Procedures*. The document outlining these procedures is available from the Senate Office.

#### **XV. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

See [SGS Calendar, Section 6.1](#)

Academic integrity is a serious issue and students are advised to become familiar with the expectations for proper conduct of their research, appropriate referencing and acknowledgment of the work of others, appropriate collaboration, plagiarism (including self-plagiarism), etc.

Students are responsible for maintaining academic integrity as outline in the [SGS Calendar, Section 6.1](#). Included in that is research integrity, which the university holds a separate policy on that matter that can be viewed at <https://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicIntegrity.pdf>

The RS Program wants to ensure that students are given opportunities to write with academic integrity, and to learn through this process. The Program uses a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal plagiarism. As such, the course folder for “assignments” will be pre-set to automatically provide an originality check using Turnitin.com. Students will be able to view the results of the originality check and will be allowed to submit more than one version of their paper if they wish (as long as all submissions are in advance of the due date). Note that only the final submission will be graded.

## **XVI. FEEDBACK AND EXIT INTERVIEWS**

The program regularly consults with students to understand their needs and experiences. One mechanism for trainee feedback is a monthly student meeting where students coordinate their concerns and liaise with the [Assistant Dean \(RS\)](#) to address issues. The RS Program also conducts surveys or focus groups on occasion. When the RS Program is being evaluated additional internal and external evaluations may be conducted. The program values student feedback and endeavors to act upon issues raised. Student feedback has been valuable in the ongoing development of the program and resulted in changes in infrastructure, courses, comprehensive processes, etc.

Students leaving the RS graduate program may be invited for an Exit Interview with the Program Coordinator. The contents of the Exit Interview are confidential and responses will be kept anonymous. The purpose of this interview will be to obtain the graduate’s perspective of strengths, gaps, and potential areas of development for the RS Program. The interview may also be used to collect information on the student’s career plans and organize administrative tasks like returning program keys and documenting future contact information.

The RS Assistant Dean meets with the RS students once a month after each Research Rounds. This is an opportunity for students to raise any general concerns they have and for the RS Dean to communicate any new developments within the university that may affect their training. Students are expected to attend these lunchtime sessions. The RS Assistant Dean also meets 4 times a year with the Dual Option students to ensure they are progressing within this training pathway.

## **APPENDIX 1: STUDENT RESOURCE CONTACTS**

### **Student Accessibility Services Information**

#### **STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES**

Student Accessibility Services offers various supports for students with disabilities. They work with full-time and part-time students. SAS provides or assists with academic and disability-related needs, including:

- Program Coordinator
- Learning Strategies
- Assistive Technologies
- Academic Accommodations for Courses
- Test and Exam Administration
- Note-taking Program
- SAS Events

For further information: <http://sas.mcmaster.ca/>

#### **STUDENT SUCCESS CENTRE**

The Student Success Centre acts as a central resource for academic support providing services for students that will increase their confidence and improve their skills necessary for success at the university.

They offer support services in the areas of:

- Academic and life skills development
- Writing support services
- Education planning
- English as a Second Language (ESL)
- Tutoring services

For further information visit <http://studentsuccess.mcmaster.ca/>. The School of Graduate Studies offers Skills Training that help build your skills for success. For more information, please visit: <https://gs.mcmaster.ca/skills-opportunities/skills-training>

#### **STUDENT WELLNESS CENTRE**

The Student Wellness Centre provides a broad range of health services for graduate students.

For further information, visit <http://wellness.mcmaster.ca/>

Other Student Resources:

#### **Support Services**

- [International Student Services](#)

- Advising services for international students and exchange students
- **Office of Student Financial Aid and Scholarships**
  - Emergency funding, government funds, work programs
- **Ombuds Office**
  - Advice for students, staff, and faculty regarding academic and non-academic concerns
- **Open Circle**
  - Student Open Circles mentors and empowers students from diverse backgrounds in personal and spiritual reflection, community service, and leadership development
- **Sexual Violence**
  - The Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Office provides services, including sexual violent support intake, education, and more.
- **Student Accessibility Services**
  - Disability services, assistive technology support
- **Student Success Center**
  - Academic skills assistance, job search, volunteering
- **Student Support and Case Management**
  - Student rights & responsibilities
- **SWHAT – Walk Safe Program**
  - The Student Walk Home Attendant Team (SWHAT) is a volunteer service within the McMaster Students Union that will walk or bus with students during the evening hours 7 days a week, in all kinds of weather!
- **David Braley Sport Medicine & Rehabilitation Centre**
  - Prevention, assessment, treatment and rehabilitation of injuries
- **MSU Maccess**
  - Maccess is a service that aims to build and maintain a campus that celebrates, advocates, and ensures inclusivity in the area of disability. A central aspect to Maccess is the provision of peer support by trained volunteers with lived experiences with disability such as chronic illness, mental illness, mental health concerns, neurodivergence, and additional identities.
- **Student Health Education Center**
  - SHEC is a peer-run health promotion, education, and referral service for McMaster University students. SHEC focuses on engaging with students about health-related issues through performances, peer support, fundraisers, and events. The service offers peer support, anonymous and confidential pregnancy testing, a resource library, condoms, lubricant, and menstrual products. SHEC's space is located in MUSC 202.
- **Women + Gender Equity Network**
  - WGEN is a service that caters to women, transfolk, people who identify outside the gender binary, and all survivors of sexual assault. WGEN provides a safe(r) space and resource library on campus in MUSC 204. Volunteers in the space offer peer support and the service also runs a support group for survivors of domestic and intimate partner violence.
- **Pride Community Center**

- The Pride Community Centre is a service of the McMaster Students Union. We provide a contact point for McMaster students that may identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer, and/or any of the other diverse identities that make up our community. We offer educational programming and access to resources of interest, as well as peer support and a physical space for students to meet and socialize with each other. As advocates for gender & sexual diversity, the PCC's mandate upholds that LGBTQ+ students are entitled to a safe and supportive campus, absent of homophobia and transphobia, where the expression of one's gender & sexual identity is welcomed and respected.
- **Big White Wall**
  - Big White Wall is an online mental health and wellbeing service offering self-help programmes, creative outlets and a community that cares. When you're dealing with everyday stressors or major life events, we'll help you get through it.
- **Virtual Cafes for International Grad Students**
  - Virtual (or online) Cafés for graduate students are a way to stay connected while self-isolating. Many of the Cafés will feature a theme that includes strategies and supports. Choose from our list of topics below to find related information presented at the Café.
- **Chaplaincy Center**
  - Pastoral support with personal counselling and bereavement support groups.
- **Youth Wellness Mobile Team**
  - Youth Wellness Centre Mobile Team of Mental Health Professionals serving McMaster students who experiencing concerns related to:
    - Substance use
    - Mental health
    - Sexual and gender identity
- **Equity and 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.
- **Food Collective Center**
  - The Food Collective Centre is a service run by students dedicated to cultivating stronger food systems in the McMaster and surrounding community.
- **Indigenous Student Services**
  - Academic & social counselling, employment aid

### **Phone Lines Support Services**

- **Good2Talk**
  - Free, confidential helpline providing professional counselling and information and referrals for mental health, addictions and well-being to post-secondary students in Ontario, 24/7/365.
  - 1-866-925-5454 or dial 211 and ask to be connected to Good2Talk.
- **Empower Me**
  - 24/7 accessible counselling services to empower you to thrive, crisis support, mental health and well-being services.
  - 1-844-741-6389

- **LGBT Youthline**
  - Confidential, non-judgemental & informed LGBTQQ2SI peer support through our telephone, text and chat services. Get in touch with a peer support volunteer from Sunday to Friday, 4:00PM to 9:30 PM.
- **Barett Center for Crisis Support**
  - Provides a safe environment in the community and responds to the needs of individuals, 16 years of age or older, who experience a mental health crisis and do not require a hospital stay. Confidential and free services 24/7/365.
  - 24 Hour Crisis Line: 905-529-7878  
Toll Free: 1-844-777-3571
- **Oakville Distress Center**
  - Distress Centre Halton provides telephone and online support to people to better cope with crisis, loneliness, and emotional stress. Also serves the Hamilton area.
  - 905-849-4541
- **SACHA (Sexual Assault Centre – Hamilton Area)**
  - Confidential, anonymous 24-hour nonjudgmental telephone support for adults who have experienced sexual violence at any point in their lives; will provide accompaniment to hospital or police station for survivors wishing to seek medical attention or report; counselling services & public education
  - 905-525-4162
- **Assaulted Women’s Help Line**
  - Free, anonymous and confidential telephone and TTY crisis telephone line to all women in the province of Ontario who have experienced any form of abuse.
  - Provides crisis counselling, safety planning, emotional support, information and referrals accessible 24/7/365.
  - Toll-free: 1-866-863-0511  
TTY: 1-866-863-7868
- **Bounceback**
  - CBT skills-building for mild to moderate depression and anxiety for people 15 or older. If accessed through self-referral, the client’s primary care provider will be notified.
  - 1-866-345-0224

### **Graduate Writing Support Resources**

- **Graduate Thesis Bootcamps**
  - Thesis Writing Boot Camp is a three-day writing program structured to support productivity of writing. Each day begins at 9 a.m. and ends at 4 p.m.
  - This is intended for PhD students who are working on submitting a dissertation by the next deadline, Masters’ thesis students who are working to submit in time for upcoming convocation, and other graduate students working on writing project that require at least three days production (space permitting).
- **Thesis Writer’s Toolkit**
  - A series of resources, tip sheets, and experiences related to organization, technical aspects, and staying well.
- **Information on Research Article Abstracts**

- The abstract is an increasingly important component of a research article, as it is the one section that both journal editors and researchers alike are certain to read.
- **Edit Slow – Advanced principles to consider when editing your work**
  - Tips to consider when editing your work.
- **Video – Introduction to Graduate Level Writing**
  - An online module for PhD and Masters students. This module is an introduction to graduate-level writing.

### **Resources for English language learners**

- **MODEL – McMaster Office of the Development English Language Learners**
  - The McMaster Office for the Development of English Language Learners – MODEL – is a new student service designed to help current McMaster undergraduate and graduate students whose first language is not English.
  - MODEL offers English-language training, workshops, and support, developed by certified ESL and EAP experts, to meet the needs of McMaster students of all academic backgrounds and levels of English language proficiency. MODEL also has an on-site student advisor with experience in both ESL and counselling who is available to meet with students to discuss personal, social, and academic concerns.
- **MERGE – McMaster English Readiness for Graduate Excellence**
  - The McMaster English Readiness for Graduate Excellence is an intensive certificate program for current or prospective graduate students from any institution who are looking to improve their English-language skills.
  - This comprehensive summer program is taught by the highest-qualified ESL/EAP instructors who have experience teaching in a university environment.
- **Purdue Online Writing Lab**
  - The Purdue Online Writing lab provides a series of resources and tips for ESL students working in North America. Explore many areas of interest, including *Tips for writing in North American Colleges*, *Plagiarism and ESL Writers*, *Writing for a North American Business Audience*, and *Key concepts for writing in North American Colleges*.

### **Graduate Supervision**

- **Getting The Supervisory Relationship Off to a Good Start (PDF)**
  - A template to address expectations between grad students and their supervisors. Created by the School of Graduate Studies.
- **Graduate Supervision Website**
  - 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.
    - Supervision Guidelines for Graduate Students
    - Supervision Guidelines for Supervisors
    - Supervision Guidelines for Programs



- Supervision Guidelines for Supervisory Committee

## **Career and Professional Development**

- **Mentorship, Networking, and Leadership**
  - **Alumni and Partners Advisor Network**
    - Graduate Students and alumni receive one-on-one advice, coaching, and prep from the people who have been there. Features:
      - career conversations
      - resumé critiques
      - mock interviews
      - webinars
      - optimizing your LinkedIn profile
  - **Industry Link**
    - A graduate student-led initiative dedicated to connecting academia with industry through first-hand experiences. Features:
      - company tours
      - part-time internships
      - coffee chats
      - academia-to-industry conference
  - **WISE (Women in Science and Engineering) Initiative in McMaster**
    - Annual conference, mentorship, networking, leadership, and workshop opportunities.
  - **Graduate Student Association**
    - GSA advocates for the needs of the collective, acts as a resource, and provides support and services that improve the graduate student experience.
  - **Spices (Student Proposals for Intellectual Community & Engaged Scholarship)**
    - Small-grant opportunities for graduate students and postdoctoral fellows to design and implement community-focused, non-research projects. Develop leadership and project management skills.
  - **Innovation Factory**
    - A not-for-profit regional innovation centre funded by the Ontario Network of Entrepreneurs. Opportunities include:
      - workshops and programming
      - one-on-one mentoring
      - networking
      - aid with access to funding
      - helping startups commercialize their ideas and small/medium enterprises innovate within their organizations
  - **MaRS Discovery Center**
    - North America's largest urban innovation hub, located in Toronto. Features:
      - advisory services

- connections to talent and capital
  - access to curated community of entrepreneurs, investors, corporates, academics, government partners
- **Tips and Tools for Student Groups**
  - Whether you are a group of students seeking to become recognized or you are already a recognized student group needing guidance for an event, this website is a resource to help with that process management skills.
- **Online Learning**
  - **LinkedIn Learning**
    - An online training database providing access to thousands of high-quality instructional videos on a broad range of topics in the areas of business, education, design, photography, programming, animation, video, audio and music.
  - **E-Campus Ontario**
    - Free online professional development courses and resources from this not-for-profit centre of excellence and global leader in the evolution of teaching and learning through technology
  - **Mitacs Online Learning**
    - Online courses build competencies in:
      - leadership and management
      - communication and relationship building
      - personal and professional management
      - entrepreneurialism
    - Mitacs training is available to graduate students and postdoctoral fellows. You must register on Mitacs portal to access the courses.
- **Career Prep and Job Search**
  - **Career Fairs and Job Postings**
    - Visit Oscarplus for access to job postings and upcoming career fair information available to McMaster students.
  - **Career Opportunities at McMaster**
    - McMaster staff positions, sessional faculty, teaching assistants, faculty positions, postdoctoral opportunities and more.
  - **Career Access Program for Students (CAP)**
    - A program available to students and alumni who identify as a member of an equity-seeking group or have barriers to employment.
  - **Mitacs Training**
    - Mitacs courses offer interactive learning with small class sizes, typically 24 participants. Workshops are facilitated by leading business and industry professionals who are subject matter experts in their respective fields and understand what it takes to succeed professionally. Facilitators deliver hands-on, engaging, and experiential learning.
    - Mitacs Training is available free to McMaster graduate students and postdoctoral fellows.

- **LinkedIn**
  - Build your professional profile and expand your network using LinkedIn.
- **Employment Ontario**
  - Provincial employment and training services in Ontario. Find service locations in Hamilton, job bank postings, live chat
- **Beyond the Professoriate**
  - Job search webinars, online career conference, and coaching for PhDs interested in post-academic career options. This site offers a mix of free and for-a-fee tools and services

## **Graduate Disability and Accommodations**

- **Types of Accommodations**
  - Some accommodations are similar to those for the undergraduate academic environment, however some accommodations will be unique to academic study at the graduate level.
- **Types of Disabilities**
  - A sample of the types of disabilities most commonly accommodated at McMaster. Any questions related to this list of disability types should be directed to [sas@mcmaster.ca](mailto:sas@mcmaster.ca).
- **General Accommodation Examples**
  - A basic list of examples for various types of disabilities. This list may not apply to all individuals. For specific information to accommodate students, contact the SAS program coordinator who is listed on the student's letter of accommodation.
- **SAS – Student Accessibility Services**
  - SAS stands for Student Accessibility Services, the office that provides academic accommodation assistance and related supports to students with disabilities at McMaster.
- **Accessibility Hub**
  - The one-stop shop for all things accessibility at McMaster University.
- **Crippling Grad School**
  - Monthly disability and mad studies reading groups to cultivate a social and intellectual disability community on campus.
- **McMaster Student Union Maccess**
  - Maccess aims to build and maintain a campus that celebrates, advocates, and ensures inclusiveness in the area of disability.

## APPENDIX 2: REFERENCE LETTER INFORMATION

### What information do my referees/sponsors need to write good reference letters?

Letters of Support (LOS) are critical for training applications and are a common request. It requires substantial time to write a strong supporting letter. Letters that reflect this effort are more likely to help your case and distinguish you from other applicants. You can help your referees/sponsors write more engaging letters by giving each of them information that supports your application.

A cover note should include:

- Information on call and deadlines (including links); but DO NOT expect the person writing the letter to determine the agency priorities – make these clear so they can best position their information.
- A clear indication of when the letter is due, to whom it should be addressed, to whom it should be delivered and how it should be submitted.
- What unique perspective the letter should offer (since you may choose people for their different perspectives, make it clear if there are things you assume they are uniquely positioned to comment on). This will avoid “duplicate letters”.
- Your updated CV.
- What you would like emphasized in each letter.
- Any other SPECIFIC information (accomplishments, roles, skills) that is relevant, especially things not evident on your CV.
- Unofficial transcripts or summarize your academic record.
- A draft summary, if possible, of what your application will propose (OR offer to send when ready).
- Open and close your note with thanks and acknowledgement that the letter writer’s time is valuable and that this letter is important to your professional future.

When asking a person to write a letter for you, you should check what support they need to complete the task. Some people may ask you to draft sections, which ultimately they will revise but it might help them be more efficient.

If there is a hard copy Recommendation Form, make it easy for the letter writer to complete forms in a timely manner by completing the following:

- Applicant information typed in.
- Referee/Sponsor’s name, title, contact information (telephone, fax, address, etc.) typed, if you can.
- Addressed envelopes to send letters and forms directly to the appropriate contact.

**Please show respect for your referee/sponsor’s effort on your behalf by putting effort into your request.**

## **APPENDIX 3: MSC THESIS PROPOSAL – OPTIONAL OUTLINE FOR MANUSCRIPT STYLE THESIS**

### **MSc Thesis Proposal Components**

#### **My Research Focus**

Insert two-three (2-3) sentences describing the central theme of your work, *i.e.*, content area. This can be broad or narrow but describe what theme unites the work, if more than one (1) manuscript is developed.

#### **Key Background Knowledge**

Summarize the key background knowledge in this area which summarizes the key literature that informs the foundational work in your research area and the gaps you plan to address (maximum two (2) pages). If there are relevant systematic reviews, include a synopsis. This may include the key headings that will be used for a more detailed literature review that will become the introductory chapter in your thesis.

#### **Paper #1** (maximum one (1) page)

##### **Objectives:**

Insert 1-2 objectives that research will address.

##### **Methods:**

Specify basic methods that will be employed.

##### **Subjects/Recruitment Plan:**

Specify the type of subjects and how they will be obtained, if applicable.

##### **Test/Procedures:**

Specify the basic procedures that will be performed. Reference the reliability of approach, if possible.

##### **Analysis:**

State the basic analysis approach that will be used to answer objectives.

#### **Paper #2** (maximum one (1) page) **NOTE:** Some Master's thesis may only have one (1) manuscript)

##### **Objectives:**

Insert 1-2 objectives that research will address.

##### **Methods:**

Specify basic methods that will be employed.

##### **Subjects/Recruitment Plan:**

Specify the type of subjects and how they will be obtained, if applicable.

**Test/Procedures:**

Specify how the basic procedure will be performed. Reference the reliability of approach, if possible.

**Analysis:**

State the basic analysis approach that will be used to answer objectives.

**Timeline:**

Specify landmarks for completion of thesis elements. Include where applicable milestones like ethics submission, data collection start/completion, data analysis completed, and first draft submitted to Committee for each manuscript.

**References:**

Provide key references.

## **APPENDIX 4: PhD THESIS PROPOSAL – OPTIONAL OUTLINE FOR MANUSCRIPT STYLE THESIS**

### **PhD Thesis Proposal Components**

#### **PhD Thesis Proposal Template: Manuscript Style Thesis**

##### **My Research Focus**

Insert 2-3 sentences describing the central theme of your work, *i.e.*, content area. This can be broad or narrow but describe what theme or issue unites the four (4) papers listed below.

##### **Key Background Knowledge**

Summarize the key background knowledge in this area which summarizes the key literature that informs the foundational work in your research area and the gaps you plan to address. If there are relevant systematic reviews, include a synopsis. If a theoretical framework has been identified, explain how it will inform the thesis. This section might include key headings that will be used for a more detailed literature review that will become the introductory chapter in your thesis. This section can be completed with two (2) pages of content; or, in consultation with your Supervisor contain the more detailed literature review that will be closer to thesis-ready. Regardless of which option is undertaken, the introductory chapter of your thesis will need enhancement as the project evolves and the thesis is finalized. This section should end with a statement of how the thesis work will be divided into manuscripts (minimum of three (3)).

##### **Paper #1 (maximum one (1) page)**

###### **Objectives:**

Insert 1-2 objectives that research will address.

###### **Methods:**

Specify anticipated methods that will be employed.

###### **Subjects/Recruitment Plan:**

Specify the type of subjects and how they will be obtained, if applicable.

###### **Test/Procedures:**

Specify the basic procedures that will be performed. Reference reliability of approach, if possible.

###### **Analysis:**

State the basic analysis approach that will be used to answer objectives.

##### **Paper #2 (maximum one (1) page)**

###### **Objectives:**

Insert 1-2 objectives that research will address.

**Methods:**

Specify basic methods that will be employed.

**Subjects/Recruitment Plan:**

Specify the type of subjects and how they will be obtained, if applicable.

**Test/Procedures:**

Specify how the basic procedure will be performed. Reference the reliability of approach, if possible.

**Analysis:**

State the basic analysis approach that will be used to answer objectives.

**Paper #3** (maximum one (1) Page)**Objectives:**

Insert 1-2 objectives that research will address.

**Methods:**

Specify basic methods that will be employed.

**Subjects/Recruitment Plan:**

Specify the type of subjects and how they will be obtained, if applicable.

**Test/Procedures:**

Specify how the basic procedure will be performed. Reference the reliability of approach, if possible.

**Analysis:**

State the basic analysis approach that will be used to answer objectives.

**Paper #4** (maximum one (1) page)**Objectives:**

Insert 1-2 objectives that research will address.

**Methods:**

Specify basic methods that will be employed.

**Subjects/Recruitment Plan:**

Specify the type of subjects and how they will be obtained, if applicable.

**Test/Procedures:**

Specify how the basic procedure will be performed. Reference the reliability of approach, if possible.



**Analysis:**

State the basic analysis approach that will be used to answer objectives.

**Timeline:**

Specify landmarks for completion of thesis elements. Include where applicable milestones like ethics submission, data collection start/completion, data analysis completed, first draft submitted to Committee for each manuscript.

Component	Ethics	Data Collection Start	Data Complete	Analysis Complete	Draft to Committee	Revision Returned by Committee	Revisions Complete
Chapter 1 - Lit Review							
Paper 1							
Paper 2							
Paper 3							
Paper 4							
Final Chapter							

**References:**

Provide key references.

## APPENDIX 5: COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION OVERVIEW

### OVERVIEW

All Ph.D. candidates at McMaster are expected to acquire, during the course of their studies, a comprehensive knowledge of the discipline or sub-discipline to which their field of research belongs. The Comprehensive Examination is designed to test students for this breadth of knowledge and the ability to integrate ideas.

Students are expected to successfully complete the Comprehensive Examination process by the timelines indicated below, starting from the date of admission to the PhD program.

	Submit Portfolio to Comprehensive Examination Oversight Committee	Complete Comprehensive Oral Examination
Full Time Students	12 Months	20 Months
Part Time Students	20 Months	28 Months

The Comprehensive Examination process includes the submission and oral defence of a Portfolio as described below.

### PURPOSE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

The purpose of the Comprehensive Examination is for students to gain competency and demonstrate a breadth of knowledge and skills that are required to fulfill future roles as Rehabilitation Scientists. Students are expected to demonstrate their competency in areas that extend beyond their thesis work, including the ability to:

- Critically appraise and synthesize concepts and research literature in areas that are distinct from their thesis topic.
- Produce written and oral communications that meet scientific standards for peer-reviewed publication and presentation.
- Produce a funding application that meets scientific standards for funding within a peer-reviewed grant.
- Develop effective strategies to move rehabilitation research into practice .

### CONTENT OF PORTFOLIO

The Portfolio must include the following scholarly materials:

1. **A Scholarly Paper Ready for Submission to a Peer Reviewed Journal:** This paper may consist of a theoretical/conceptual paper or a primary/secondary research study. The scholarly paper must demonstrate that the student has extended their knowledge base beyond their thesis work. **This paper must be distinct from the thesis with respect to content/topic area, (i.e. involving a distinct population, intervention and outcome(s), as applicable) and also utilize different methods.** Students will explain how their proposed paper is distinct from their thesis research in their comprehensive proposal. The standard that will be applied by the Comprehensive Examination Oversight Committee when approving the proposed work is that if a proposed paper could be a viable manuscript within

the thesis, then it does not meet the independence requirements.

2. **An operating grant proposal** of 10-12 single-spaced pages ready for submission to an appropriate agency that conducts peer review. The research grant may request funding for the thesis research, or may request operating funds for a different project. Personal awards do not fulfill this criterion. The grant should follow grant agency guidelines, but must include:

- A review of the literature and rationale for the study.
- A detailed description of the research questions, methods and analysis.
- A section that outlines a knowledge translation component for the research proposal
- The roles and qualifications of the research team.
- A budget explaining how funds will be used, including a justification.
- Key outcome measures as appendices.
- It may but does NOT need to include appendices like support letters, pilot data, publications etc.

## **DISTINCTION OF THE PORTFOLIO FROM OTHER ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTS**

The Comprehensive Proposal meets the learning needs of the student and supplements the knowledge and skills obtained through thesis research. **It is important that work presented for credit in the Comprehensive Portfolio does not duplicate work that has, or will provide academic credit including from previous academic endeavors, current thesis research or coursework.** Comprehensive components, including the scholarly paper, can extend or build on course assignments, but this distinction must be clarified in the portfolio. For example, enhancement and substantial revision of a course paper may be proposed for the comprehensive scholarly paper. The scholarly paper is the opportunity to extend beyond the thesis. The Comprehensive Examination Oversight Committee adjudicates whether it is sufficiently distinct. A paper that uses a different target population, topic and methods from the student's thesis research would be considered sufficiently distinct. Where there is overlap on any of these, the student must explain the distinction between their scholarly paper and thesis research for this adjudication to be completed.

The grant proposal component may propose part, or all, of the thesis work, but must comply with the restrictions/format of the granting agency. To maintain consistency across examinations, students are required to submit a 10-12 page single-spaced grant application.

## **PORTFOLIO PROPOSAL PLANNING**

The Portfolio Proposal will be developed by the student in consultation with the Supervisory Committee. It is expected that students, with support and guidance from their Supervisor and Supervisory Committee, will begin working on the Portfolio upon admission to the program. Students should discuss their Comprehensive Plan with their Supervisory Committee within the first eight (8) months (full-time students) or fourteen (14) months (part-time students) in the program, usually at the first committee meeting. Students may work with a mentor other than their Supervisor or Supervisory Committee members during any of the elements of the comprehensive components. However, the comprehensive plan and how it will be mentored and completed must be discussed with the Supervisory Committee. If a mentor is recruited to help

with a component of the Comprehensive work who is not appointed within RS, then the student must keep their Supervisor involved to ensure departmental standards are met.

Students are expected to obtain approval for their Comprehensive Portfolio Plan from the Comprehensive Examination Oversight Committee within the first **twelve (12) months** (full-time students) or **twenty (20) months** (part-time students) in the program. Students have up to six (6) months (full-time students) or eight (8) months (part-time students) to complete their comprehensive component if it is approved within the aforementioned timelines, but it is the final completion date that is considered the important milestone.

The Portfolio Plan **can be up to** eight (8) single-spaced pages (total length excluding references and appendices). Plans over eight (8) pages will be returned to students for editing. Students who submit brief proposals with insufficient detail will have their portfolio plans returned for further development. The plan **must include** the following:

- a. A brief overview of the intended doctoral thesis research (including chapter titles if known) and a brief summary of the three components of the proposed portfolio.
- b. A list of completed or ongoing courses including titles of the assignments.
- c. An explanation that addresses any potential overlap between proposed portfolio components and thesis or coursework.
- d. A description of each component of the proposed portfolio (Scholarly Paper and the Operating Grant Proposal). Suggested guidelines for each component description include:
  - **Topic:** Provide a title and list of the Purpose(s) or Research Question(s) that will be addressed by the component.
  - **Learning Objective:** A brief description of expected learning outcomes.
  - **Plan:** A description of the proposed approach/methods.
  - **Outcomes:** State the product to be delivered when the task is completed.
    - For the scholarly paper this will require identification of a target Journal.
    - For the grant application the target agency, type of funding call, and research design/approach, and knowledge translation plan will need to be specified.
  - **Feasibility issues:** Potential feasibility concerns that might be barriers to successful, timely completion of the comprehensive portfolio and management of these concerns should be briefly addressed.

Required appendices:

- For the paper: A copy of the target journal's instruction to authors.
- For the grant: The posted grant call and grant guidelines.

### **Portfolio Plan Submission Process**

After receiving feedback from their Supervisory Committee, the student submits their Portfolio Plan to the Chair of the Comprehensive Examination Oversight Committee. The Oversight Committee meets on a monthly basis and will review Portfolio Plans received within two (2)

weeks of the next scheduled meeting. Portfolios received less than two (2) weeks prior to the next scheduled meeting will be held for review at the following month's meeting. Students therefore need to allow for 2-6 weeks before receiving feedback from the Oversight Committee. The Portfolio Plan is reviewed by the Oversight Committee to ensure that the content is complete and congruent with the comprehensive examination requirements. Portfolio Plans that fail to follow the guidelines will be returned for proper formatting.

### **Committee Responsibilities Related to the Proposal Development**

The student's Supervisor and Supervisory Committee are responsible for facilitating the student's development of their Portfolio Plan. The Supervisory Committee provides feedback to the student during completion of the tasks and may facilitate additional mentorship on specific tasks, if needed.

The Comprehensive Examination Oversight Committee has the main responsibility for ensuring the work proposed and conducted complies with program and university policies around the comprehensive process. The Comprehensive Examination Oversight Committee reviews the proposed scope of work and provides feedback to the student about whether they have defined an appropriate scope of work that meets the expected requirements of the comprehensive examination. The Comprehensive Examination Oversight Committee makes decisions about the two (2) criteria listed below. If these two (2) criteria are not met, the student will be *required* to submit a revised plan.

1. The scope of the work proposed is consistent with objectives of the Comprehensive Process to demonstrate breadth of knowledge and skills.
  - a. The tasks outlined are distinct from other work for which the student is receiving academic credit.
  - b. The scholarly paper topic is distinct from the thesis.
2. There are no apparent critical flaws in the proposed work (*e.g.*, ethical violations).

The Comprehensive Examination Oversight Committee does not judge whether optimal methods have been selected based on the Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Examination Oversight Committee *may* make suggestions with respect to feasibility or quality in an advisory capacity. If these are provided, students *may* choose to submit a revised Comprehensive Portfolio Plan since this document outlines the expectations of what must be completed for the Comprehensive Examination. Where a revised portfolio is submitted, it is reviewed by the Chair of the Comprehensive Examination Oversight Committee. The final approved Comprehensive Portfolio Plan contains the tasks that the student must complete and defend at the comprehensive examination.

### **Student Responsibilities in Completion of the Comprehensive Portfolio**

The Student is responsible for:

- Adhering to this and all other McMaster policies; and consulting procedural supporting documents in the RS Graduate Handbook.
- Developing a Comprehensive Plan and obtaining Comprehensive Examination Oversight Committee approval by twelve (12) months (full-time students) or twenty (20) months (part-time students).
- Conducting independent work and seeking feedback during task completion.
- Notifying the Comprehensive Examination Oversight Committee if a need arises for

substantive changes to the approved plan

- It is anticipated that as the work is executed decisions will need to be made to refine the work, or accommodate for unexpected occurrences (like difficulty with recruitment, data issues, equipment failures, etc.). These do not require contact with the Comprehensive Examination Oversight Committee but can be explained when writing the portfolio. Major changes, such as changing the topic of a component or substantial changes in the scope of work, do require an updated approval from the Comprehensive Examination Oversight Committee.
- Maintaining regular communication with their supervisory committee on progress of the approved tasks including at least one committee meeting to discuss the comprehensive components; and providing draft documents to the committee and/or mentors for feedback.
- Completion of the tasks on time and as approved.
- Providing a final complete version of the Comprehensive Portfolio to their Supervisory Committee.
- Submitting a completed portfolio to the Comprehensive Examination Oversight Committee according to criteria described in this policy.
- Defending the Comprehensive Portfolio on time.

### **Approval Process of the Completed Portfolio for Examination**

It is expected that at least two (2) members of the Supervisory Committee will provide feedback on each component of the Comprehensive Portfolio as they are developed.

Timeline of events after the Supervisory Committee has reviewed the student's completed Comprehensive Portfolio:

#### **Step 1**

After receiving feedback from their Supervisory Committee, the student submits their completed Portfolio to the Chair of the Comprehensive Examination Oversight Committee (CEOC). The completed Portfolio is reviewed by the Chair of the Oversight Committee (within 2 weeks) to ensure that the content is complete and congruent with the plan submitted and grants approval to move forward with the defence. Portfolios that fail to follow the guidelines will be returned for proper formatting. Students are required to submit a one-page description of deviations from the initial plan. The CEOC provides feedback on plans up to two (2) weeks after the meeting is held. The student will receive the feedback by email from the Chair of the CEOC. The student is expected to discuss the received feedback with their supervisor.

#### **Step 2**

When the student is ready for examination (within the timelines outlined), they will, in consultation with their Supervisor and Supervisory Committee members, prepare the *Approval to Submit Portfolio* form (available on A2L). The student will submit a version of completed Portfolio, along with the *Checklist for Approval of Completed Portfolio* and signed *Approval to Submit Portfolio* form by email to the Chair of the CEOC and CC the Supervisor and [RS Administrative Staff](#). The form must include possible dates for the examination and 3 potential External Examiners. The recommended timeframe: 18 months from the time you start the program.

*The External Examiner is expected to have knowledge about RS and be independent from the work being conducted by the student. They can be drawn from faculty within the SRS or*

*external to it, as long as they are independent from the student and the Supervisor. Specifically, the proposed External Examiners should not have collaborated on a research project with the Supervisor within the last 6 years.*

*The proposed dates should be held by the student's Supervisory Committee including their Supervisor.*

### **Step 3**

The Chair of the Oversight Committee (CEOC) will confirm eligibility of the proposed External Examiners and ask the RS Administrative Staff to confirm their availability. The RS Administrative Staff confirms the availability of the external, committee members, and arranges a chair for the exam. The room to hold the examination is booked by the RS Administrative Staff. Confirmation of the Comprehensive Exam will be forwarded to the Supervisor, Chair of the CEOC, student, Supervisory Committee, and the external examiner by the RS Administrative Staff.

*The Chair must be a current member of the CEOC. In the event a current CEOC member is unavailable, former members will be contacted.*

### **Step 4**

Once the Examination Committee has been determined, the RS Administrative Staff will email the Comprehensive Examination Process Document (Appendix 6 in the RS Graduate Program Handbook) to the Examination Committee and confirm the logistics of the examination (date, time, location). The CEC will consist of:

- Two (2) members from the student's Supervisory Committee
- A Chair (selected from the Comprehensive Exam Oversight Committee)
- An External Examiner

*The student's Supervisor will attend the exam but does not vote*

The student provides all members of the Examination Committee and the RS Administrative Staff with a copy of the Portfolio a minimum of two (2) weeks prior to the examination date.

- The approved Comprehensive Plan including the appendices
- A description of deviations from the original Comprehensive Plan - with an explanation for the change (one (1) page maximum)
- A one (1) page reflective summary on how the comprehensive tasks contributed to their development as a Rehabilitation Scientist/Educator; and, if indicated, next steps in development.
- Curriculum vitae

**NOTE:** Blackout dates for examination include the month of August, and two (2) weeks before the December break. The comprehensive examination oversight committee (CEOC) meets on the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of each month, except for the month of August.

## **THE COMPREHENSIVE PORTFOLIO EXAMINATION PROCESS**

The Comprehensive Examination is an open defence. The presentation is open to observers; but only the Examination Committee can ask questions. The deliberations of the Examination Committee will be confidential (the Thesis Supervisor and the Assistant Dean are invited to attend the deliberations). The feedback to the candidate will be performed by the examiners with only the candidate, the candidate's Thesis Supervisor, the Assistant Dean of Rehabilitation Science, and the Examination Committee present.

The examination should be completed within two (2) hours. The student will outline the content

of the two (2) components of the Portfolio in an oral presentation and indicate how these projects have contributed to their development as a Rehabilitation Scientist. In addition, the student will describe the potential impact of their work on rehabilitation practice/policy/research.

The presentation will be 15 - 20 minutes (students will be stopped by the Chair after 20 minutes). Following the presentation, the student will respond to questions from the three (3) examiners. The Comprehensive Examination Committee will consist of two (2) members from the student's Supervisory Committee, a member from the Comprehensive Examination Oversight Committee (who Chairs the examination), and an External Examiner. The External Examiner is expected to have knowledge about RS and be independent from the work being conducted by the student. This examiner may be drawn from faculty within the School of Rehabilitation Science (SRS) or external to it, **as long as they are independent from the Supervisor and the student being examined.** Specifically, the proposed External Examiners should not have collaborated on a research project with the Supervisor within the last 6 years. Examiners will evaluate the student on the criteria outlined below. The Thesis Supervisor will not be a member of the Examination Committee but can attend as a silent observer. This will allow the Supervisor to provide appropriate feedback to the student about their performance and future development.

After the examiners complete their questioning and the student and audience have left the room, members of the Examination Committee (except for the Chair) will vote on the performance of the student. The Examination Committee will vote on the written portfolio, the presentation skills, and the oral defense. Both of the two (2) components of the portfolio are equally important in evaluation. If the Portfolio and its defence are considered acceptable to all of the Committee members, the student will receive a "pass". To pass, no negative vote is permitted. If all Committee members agree that the two (2) of the components are "excellent" then the Committee can assign an excellent overall rating to the Comprehensive Examination. Excellent quality for each written component is judged based on standards for a publishable manuscript, and a fundable grant application. An excellent examination rating refers both to the quality of the submitted written work and the quality of the defense. If the result of the examination is a "fail" (if any members vote "fail"), then the Comprehensive Examination Committee must define whether the written or oral components were unsatisfactory for each of the two (2) components of the portfolio.

The student must be given a second opportunity to take either the entire examination, or those portions on which the failure occurred. The Examination Committee will determine the requirements for the second opportunity including which written components must be re-submitted and which components must be orally defended. The second Comprehensive Examination will preferably be conducted with the same Examination Committee. The same procedures are followed in a repeat examination, with the exception that proceedings are not open and the student only presents or responds to areas identified by the Examination Committee. Only the student, the Supervisor, the Assistant Dean of RS (or the assigned alternate if a conflict arises) and the Examiners are present for the 2<sup>nd</sup> examination. The second examination is decided as a pass/fail based on majority vote. **The repeat examination must be completed within two (2) months.**



Students are provided with feedback from the Examination Committee at the completion of the examination. Usually this will take place by each member of the Committee providing verbal feedback to the student at the end of the defence. The student's Supervisor may take notes to ensure that they are able to clarify or reinforce the feedback with the student at a later date.

**Supervisors are not respond to the feedback provided during the examination or advocate for the student.**

### Criteria for Evaluation of the Examination

The purpose of the Comprehensive Examination is for students to demonstrate their ability to synthesize, integrate and apply information. The following are criteria students are expected to demonstrate in their portfolio and/or its oral examination:

- a. The Portfolio document is well-written and organized.
- b. The Portfolio content is of appropriate depth and breadth for the doctoral level and demonstrates the student's advancing knowledge of the chosen topics.
- c. The student is able to critically appraise the literature, synthesize and integrate information, interpret concepts and theories and apply these to their work.
- d. The student can pose a sound research question and design methods to answer it; recognize limitations; and defend his/her decisions.
- e. The student understands knowledge translation in the context of the work described in the portfolio .
- f. The student is effective with written and oral scientific communication.
- g. The student conveys an understanding of how their work fits within the field of RS.

The Comprehensive Examination is evaluated in three different criteria: Written, Presentation, and Response.

### Pass/Fail Criteria

Written	Presentation	Response
The portfolio fulfills the above criteria in the written document.	The presentation fulfills the above criteria and is organized, clear, and describes / highlights key research findings.	80% of Questions must be addressed. Most questions addressed with breadth, depth and understanding.

### Pass with Distinction

(Note that to be awarded Pass with Distinction, the student must complete the comprehensive examination in a timely way e.g., within 24 months or less of doctoral studies)

Written	Presentation	Response
Publishable research manuscript; fundable grant; comprehensive package in its entirety is coherent, clear,	The presentation fulfills all criteria and is organized. engaging, clear, highlighting and describing key research,	All questions addressed. Student should be able to interpret, apply and clearly

well organized and written with insightful reflections.	and student is articulate throughout the presentation.	respond with breadth, depth and understanding.
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## **APPENDIX 6: INFORMATION FOR COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINERS**

### **School of Rehabilitation Science (SRS): Information for Comprehensive Examiners**

The SRS appreciates your contribution to the Comprehensive Examination of our trainee. This is an important step in achieving the learning goals of the candidate and an important milestone in our program.

The philosophy of our Comprehensive Portfolio/Examination is to provide trainees with an opportunity to achieve learning goals that complement those acquired during their thesis research and extend their knowledge, methods and skills with an emphasis on the type of academic productivity expected of Rehabilitation Scientists. The Comprehensive Portfolio is based on two specific tasks that must be completed and then defended orally. The two (2) components include: a paper written in the format and quality expected for scientific publication and a grant proposal written in the format and quality expected for submission to a funding agency;

There are four (4) examiners who adjudicate this defence. Two (2) examiners are selected from the student's Advisory Committee, one is from the Comprehensive Oversight Committee and the other is an external examiner. External examiners are recommended to the Comprehensive Oversight Committee by the student's Supervisory Committee based on their knowledge and experience and its relevance to the candidate's work. The Comprehensive Oversight Committee uses these recommendations to select a candidate who can fulfill the duty at the designated period of time. The candidate will be examined on all Comprehensive Portfolio components during an oral exam. The Comprehensive components are completed by the student during the first half of the program and are required for successful progression through the program. The candidate is expected to continue with their thesis research during this time, but may not have a fully developed thesis research plan at the time the Comprehensive Portfolio is defended. Comprehensive examiners are encouraged to consider that the student is in the midst of their training (may not have finalized their thesis plan) when formulating their questions and when adjudicating the student responses.

Examiners should be aware that the topics of study chosen by the candidate and approved by the student's Supervisory Committee and the Comprehensive Oversight Committee are expected to extend knowledge and experience beyond the thesis research. The examiners are not expected to evaluate whether these questions/tasks were appropriate since they have been approved by both committees. However, examiners can make judgments about whether the student adequately conducted the work, understands its implications and limitations; and, can appropriately explain and defend the choices made.

The process for the oral examination is modeled after a thesis defence. The attendance of all examiners is required for the oral examination. Attendance can be in person, or by conferencing (electronic or telephone) if necessary. There will be an appointed Chair of the Comprehensive Examination who will be selected from the Comprehensive Examination Oversight Committee. Typically, there will be two rounds of questions, with the second round being shorter than the first. The candidate is expected to demonstrate expertise in the selected topics and

discuss/debate the topics with a level of depth and breadth that are consistent with their background and training. After the questioning is complete, the candidate will leave the room and the examiners will be asked to provide comments and vote for a pass, fail, or pass with distinction.

The following is information taken from the *Comprehensive Portfolio Policy* approved by SGS for the RS Graduate Program and provides information on the expectations about the examination.

1. The Portfolio will be presented and defended in an open-door meeting.
  - a. The student will outline the content of the two (2) components of the Portfolio, and indicate how these projects have contributed to his or her development as a Rehabilitation Scientist (15-20 minute presentation). In addition, the student will describe the potential impact of their work on rehabilitation practice/policy/research.
  - b. The Comprehensive Examination Committee will consist of two (2) members from the student's Supervisory Committee, a member from the Oversight Committee, and an External Examiner (a content expert or specialist that is external to the student's supervisory committee). Examiners will evaluate the student on the criteria outlined below (see '*Criteria for Evaluation of the Defence*').
  - c. The Supervisor will not be a member of the Comprehensive Examination Committee, but will be encouraged to attend the oral defence.
2. The Chair of the Comprehensive Examination Committee will be the representative from the Oversight Committee.

All members of the Comprehensive Examination Committee (excluding the Chair) will vote on the performance of the student. The Examination Committee will vote on the written portfolio, the presentation skills, and the oral defense (see '*Criteria for Evaluation of the Defence*'). If the Portfolio and its defence are considered acceptable to all of the Committee members, the student will receive a "pass". To pass, no negative vote is permitted and abstentions are not allowed. If all Committee members are in agreement, the outcome could also be a "pass with distinction". A "pass with distinction" should be considered if all components are considered to be of excellent quality (a publishable manuscript, and a fundable grant application).

If the result of the examination is "fail" (any of members vote "fail"), then the Examining Committee must define whether the written or oral components were unsatisfactory for each of the two (2) components of the portfolio. The student must be given a second opportunity to take either the entire examination, or those portions on which the failure occurred. The Comprehensive Examination Committee will determine the requirements for the second opportunity (e.g., Written components to be re-submitted; components to be orally defended) and, conduct the second Comprehensive Examination; preferably with same examining Committee. The repeat examination **should occur within two (2) months**. On the repeat examination, the Committee should make every effort to achieve consensus on the final pass/fail decision. If the Committee cannot agree, the Assistant Dean of RS adjudicates the final decision. This may require

that the decision be delayed until the Assistant Dean is able to pursue additional investigation and discuss issues with committee members independently.

11. The student will be provided with feedback from the Comprehensive Examination Committee at the completion of the examination. The student's Supervisor will be invited to attend the feedback session.

### Criteria for Evaluation of the Examination

The purpose of the Comprehensive Examination is for students to demonstrate their ability to synthesize, integrate and apply information. The following are criteria students are expected to demonstrate in their portfolio and/or its oral examination:

- a. The Portfolio document is well-written and organized.
- b. The Portfolio content is of appropriate depth and breadth for the doctoral level and demonstrates the student's advancing knowledge of the chosen topics.
- c. The student is able to critically appraise the literature, synthesize and integrate information, interpret concepts and theories and apply these to their work.
- d. The student can pose a sound research question and design methods to answer it; recognize limitations; and defend his/her decisions.
- e. The student understands knowledge translation in the context of the work described in the portfolio .
- f. The student is effective with written and oral scientific communication.
- g. The student conveys an understanding of how their work fits within the field of RS.

The Comprehensive Examination is evaluated in three different criteria: Written, Presentation, and Response.

### Pass/Fail Criteria

Written	Presentation	Response
The portfolio fulfills the above criteria in the written document.	The presentation fulfills the above criteria and is organized, clear, and describes / highlights key research findings.	80% of Questions must be addressed. Most questions addressed with breadth, depth and understanding.

### Pass with Distinction

(Note that to be awarded Pass with Distinction, the student must complete the comprehensive examination in a timely way e.g., within 24 months or less of doctoral studies)

Written	Presentation	Response
Publishable research manuscript; fundable grant; comprehensive package in its entirety is coherent, clear,	The presentation fulfills all criteria and is organized. engaging, clear, highlighting and describing key research,	All questions addressed. Student should be able to interpret, apply and clearly

well organized and written with insightful reflections.	and student is articulate throughout the presentation.	respond with breadth, depth and understanding.
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Please feel free to contact either the Assistant Dean of RS or the Chair of the Comprehensive Oversight Committee for further information.

Thank you for this important contribution to training Rehabilitation Scientists at McMaster University.

**APPENDIX 7: AN EXAMPLE TEMPLATE FOR MSc (RS) STUDENTS TO RECORD THE ELEMENTS OF THEIR MSc (RS) TRAINING PLAN**

**RS GRADUATE PROGRAM: Overview of MSc Training Program**

**Candidate:**  
**Student's Name**

**Program Start Date:**  
**Target Completion**

**Date:**  
**Supervisory Committee:**

A minimum annual meeting with the Supervisory Committee is required; the SRS Calendar recommends that a student hold a Supervisory Committee meeting every six (6) months.

<b>Timeline for Key Milestones</b>		<b>Achieved</b>
<b>TASK</b>	<b>DATE</b>	
<b>Entry to Program</b>	September, 2019	
<b>Program Plan (courses, thesis)</b>		
<b>Supervisory Committee Meeting: Approval of Study Plan</b>		
<b>Required Courses Complete</b>		
<b>Thesis Component 1</b>		
<b>Thesis Component 2</b>		
<b>Thesis Written</b>		
<b>Thesis Defence</b>		

**MSc Thesis Program:**

**Overview of thesis plan:**

**Guide to preparation of thesis:**

<https://graduate.mcmaster.ca/masters-degree-thesis>

THESIS THEME		
Title of Projects/Manuscripts	Study Design/Content	Status
1.		
2.		

Methods/Content Development Plan		
Method/Skill	Formal (Courses)	Experiential/Informal

TA/Educator Role Plan		
Skill/Experience	Formal (Course)	Experiential/TA/Informal

**Funding Status**

Full-time

Part-time

**Plan:**

Set

Continuing to pursue

Not need or Eligible



<b>FUNDING</b>			
<b>Source</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Years</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>External funding Agency</b>			
<b>Internal - TA</b>			
<b>Internal - Other</b>			
<b>Supervisor</b>			
<b>Other</b>			

**NOTE: PROGRAM DEADLINES**

Committee Meetings

Program Expected Milestones

<b>BRIEF PROGRESS UPDATES</b>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Current Focus</b>	<b>Status/Progress</b>

<b>TA/Educator Role Plan</b>		
<b>Skill/Experience</b>	<b>Formal (Course)</b>	<b>Experiential/TA/Informal</b>

**APPENDIX 8: AN EXAMPLE TEMPLATE FOR STUDENTS TO RECORD THE ELEMENTS OF THEIR PhD (RS) TRAINING PLAN**

**RS Graduate Program: Overview of PhD Training Program**

**Candidate:**  
**Student's Name**

**Program Start Date:**  
**Target Completion Date:**

**Supervisory Committee:**

A minimum annual meeting with the Supervisory Committee is required; the SRS Calendar recommends that a student hold a Supervisory Committee meeting every six (6) months.

<b>Timeline for Key Milestones</b>		<b>Achieved</b>
<b>TASK</b>	<b>DATE</b>	
<b>Entry to Program</b>	September, 19	
<b>Funding Application Plan</b>	September, 19	
<b>Program Plan (courses, thesis, and comps)</b>		
<b>Comps Proposal submitted to Supervisor</b>	January, 20	
<b>Supervisory Committee Meeting: Approval of Study Plan</b>		
<b>Comps Committee Approval</b>		
<b>Comps Defence</b>		
<b>Required Courses Complete</b>		
<b>Thesis Component 1</b>		
<b>Thesis Component 2</b>		
<b>Thesis Component 3</b>		
<b>Thesis Component 4</b>		
<b>Thesis Written</b>		
<b>Thesis Defence</b>		

**OVERVIEW OF THESIS PLAN:**

**Guide to preparation of thesis:**

<https://graduate.mcmaster.ca/doctorsal-degree>

<b>THESIS THEME</b>		
<b>Title of Projects/Manuscripts</b>	<b>Study Design/Content</b>	<b>Status</b>
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		

<b>PROPOSED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN</b>		
<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Study Design/Content</b>	<b>Status</b>
1. Manuscript		
2. Grant		

<b>Methods/Content Development Plan</b>		
<b>Method/Skill</b>	<b>Formal (Courses)</b>	<b>Experiential/Informal</b>

TA/Educator Role Plan		
Skill/Experience	Formal (Course)	Experiential/TA/Informal

**Funding Status:**             Full-time                             Part-time

**Plan:**                     Set                     Continuing to pursue             Abandoned/Ineligible

FUNDING			
Source	Amount	Years	Status
External funding Agency			
Internal - TA			
Internal - Other			
Supervisor			
Other			

BRIEF PROGRESS UPDATES		
Date	Current Focus	Status/Progress



## APPENDIX 9: SRS DEPARTMENTAL STANDARDS FOR THE MANUSCRIPT STYLE THESIS

The specific standards for the formatting and content of the manuscript must comply with the University guidelines for thesis preparation and are not described here but in a separate document: <https://gs.mcmaster.ca/current-students/completing-your-degree/masters-thesis/>

University guidelines supersede department guidelines. For the School of Rehabilitation Science, the following standards have been established to provide guidance and consistency for students preparing a manuscript style thesis:

1. **Choice of Manuscript Style:** Trainees should have an early discussion with their Supervisor and then Advisory Committee about their intentions with respect to thesis style. A manuscript format is often the preferred choice in terms of facilitating future publication of the research work. However, the choice of traditional or manuscript style remains a trainee/committee decision. Students selecting the manuscript format should have early discussions about how the proposed thesis research will be divided into specific manuscripts. It can be useful to document this intention early in the training plan. Students (with committee approval) are free to change the specific manuscripts or thesis style at any stage of thesis development, irrespective of what was initially planned or proposed. The specific manuscripts often change/evolve over the course of the training, but this in itself is part of the training process.
2. **Co-authorship:** A statement of co-authorship is mandatory for thesis manuscripts.
  - a. It is common for thesis manuscripts to have multiple authors. Authorship should be discussed at the first thesis committee meeting, and revisited as the thesis evolves. The statement of authorship must outline the contributions to each manuscript by the candidate and any co-authors. Drafting this statement early in the work to define expectations and revise it as the manuscripts evolve may avoid differences in expectations.
  - b. Advisory Committee members are usually expected to make sufficient contributions to the candidate's project to warrant authorship. However, authorship of Advisory Committee members must comply with existing criteria for scientific authorship and is not automatic. Authorship of Advisory Committee members may vary across manuscripts, depending upon their relative contribution.

### **The International Committee of Medical Editors Criteria for authorship**

(<http://www.icmje.org/recommendations/browse/roles-and-responsibilities/defining-the-role-of-authors-and-contributors.html>)

- *Authorship credit should be based on: 1) substantial contributions to conception and design, acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data; 2) drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content; and, 3) final approval of the version to be published. Authors should meet conditions 1, 2, and 3.*
- *Acquisition of funding, collection of data, or general supervision of the research group alone does not constitute authorship.*

- *All persons designated as authors should qualify for authorship, and all those who qualify should be listed.*
  - *Each author should have participated sufficiently in the work to take public responsibility for appropriate portions of the content.*
- c. In certain circumstances, authors who have made substantial contributions to an individual manuscript and who are not part of the thesis community may be included as authors.
  - d. In the case of a Master's thesis, the primary author on at least one manuscript must be the candidate, and not a supervisor or other person. In the case of a PhD thesis, there is an expectation that the candidate will be the primary author on all manuscripts-although exceptions may apply as long as the majority of manuscripts in the thesis have the candidate as the first author. In general, the order of authorship in the thesis should be consistent with that for submission to the scientific journal. In exceptional cases, where students fail to submit the work for publication after their thesis defence (providing a reasonable window of time, i.e., six months or longer), then authorship may need to be reordered to consider the contributions to the submitted manuscript.
  - e. Manuscripts on which the supervisor or another person is first author may be included in the thesis in exceptional circumstances (e.g. a large complex project on which the supervisor had a primary role and the candidate had a major role). However, the candidate is expected to have made a substantial contribution to each manuscript included. This contribution must be outlined in the "Co-authorship" statement, and this statement must be reviewed and approved by the primary supervisor prior to defence.
  - f. Before a manuscript is included in the thesis or submitted for publication, each author listed on the manuscript must approve the submitted version of the manuscript.

### **Thesis Format/Content**

1. **General Introduction/Literature review:** The thesis introduction provides a general introduction to the thesis topic and structure. It also outlines key background knowledge that is fundamental to the overall thesis topic and could not be adequately covered in traditional manuscript introductions. This overview is meant to be a concise and relevant synopsis of the current knowledge foundation to the thesis work at the time that the thesis was developed.
2. **Manuscripts:** Thesis manuscripts may include theoretical, methodological, or empirical papers (qualitative/quantitative research). Brief technical notes are not included in the main thesis, but may exist as supplemental appendices. The number of manuscripts included in this thesis format and their length/breadth is left to the discretion of the candidate and their committee. A common practice is for a Master's thesis to contain usually-2 manuscripts and 3-4 for a PhD; although, the key guiding principle about thesis content relates to the scope and depth of work performed, not the number of manuscripts. Candidates must ensure that the overall thesis complies with the requirements/expectations of the degree.
  - a. Students need to have at least one paper from their thesis published or accepted for publication in a peer reviewed journal prior to their thesis defense.
  - b. The format and quality of manuscripts for the thesis must be considered consistent with publication in a scientific journal.

- c. Submission/publication of one or more of the manuscripts should be written exactly in the form for submission to a peer-review journal (including references), even if that style varies from chapter to chapter. Each manuscript chapter must start with a cover page that provides the title of the manuscript, a list of authors, and information about where the manuscript is to be sent for publication.
  - d. Additional/supplementary Methods and Results that are not covered in the manuscripts, but are important to the overall thesis presentation, may be added in an Appendix.
3. **Thesis Discussion:** The final chapter consists of a summarizing thesis discussion. It should briefly highlight the main findings of the full thesis, but not repeat material in the manuscript chapters. The intention of the thesis discussion is to integrate information and findings across the individual manuscripts – not to reiterate individual study discussion. This chapter should address how the entire thesis advances knowledge, theory or methods. A discussion of strengths and limitations of the overall thesis should be provided; again, not reiterating the limitations cited for individual studies but a higher level discussion of the strengths and limitations of the overall approach/scope of the research. Brief sections should also highlight Overall Conclusions, Implications for Practice and/or Policy, Recommendations for Implementation and Recommendations for Future Research. These sections should attempt to be concise, but specific, and, relate directly to the findings of the thesis.

**Standards for Examination:** The thesis will be examined according to the traditional standards of the department. The defence will include an overall assessment of whether the thesis document is a coherent piece of work. Theses written in the manuscript form will be subject to the policies of the Graduate Student upon examination. For more information visit the following link: <https://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/content.php?catoid=42&navoid=8734>





\*Committee Meetings are recommended every six (6) months but must be held **at least yearly**, i.e., one every academic year (September to August). All Committee Meeting Reports must be submitted to the [RS Administrative Staff](#).

*Action Items to be completed by Next Meeting:*

**OTHER PROGRAM ACTIVITIES/ACHIEVEMENTS:**

Scholarships/Training Support Received	Agency	Start Date	End Date	\$ per year

LOA Details	Start Date	End Date	Date Form Rec'd	Date Returned

Research Grants Received	Agency	Start Date	End Date	\$ per year

<b>List Publications:</b>
<b>List Presentations:</b>

## APPENDIX 11: PHD STUDENT TRACKING FORM

### *Rehabilitation Science Graduate Program – PhD Student Progress Tracking Form*

*This form is to be completed (or updated) by the student prior to his/her Supervisory Committee meeting and reviewed at the meeting. The student must submit this form with each Committee Report to the RS Administrative Staff.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ McMaster Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_


Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Status: FT  or PT  Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Today's Date:     /     /     Program Enrollment Date:     /     Program Completion Date:     /      
M D Y M YYYY M YYYY

<b>PROGRAM MILESTONES</b>					
Activity	Document/Form Required All forms can be found on A2L (RS Graduate Student Resources)	In Progress 	Recommended Timing (Note completion date)		Comments (note exceptions or planned next steps)
			Full-time <i>(Insert dates below)</i>	Part-time <i>(Insert dates below)</i>	
<b>Education Plan</b>			3 months <small>(e.g., Nov 30)</small>	6 months <small>(e.g., Feb 28)</small>	
<b>COURSES COMPLETED</b> (indicate course number):			Suggested 12 months	Suggested 20 months	
• REHAB 700 (Theory, if required)					
• REHAB 725 (KET)					
• Methods/Analysis courses					
• Content course (content includes knowledge or methods/analysis)					
• Courses recommended or approved by Committee (may occur later)					
<b>SGS 101</b>			3 months <small>(e.g., Nov 30)</small>	6 months <small>(e.g., Feb 28)</small>	
<b>SGS 201</b>			3 months <small>(e.g., Nov 30)</small>	6 months <small>(e.g., Feb 28)</small>	
<b>*First Committee Meeting</b> (Assistant Dean (RS) must attend the 1 <sup>st</sup> meeting). Committee approves area of research and training plans.			6 months <small>(e.g., Feb 28)</small>	9 months <small>(e.g., May 30)</small>	
<b>Regular Research Rounds attendance</b>					
<b>Regular RS Skills attendance</b>					
<b>Regular Senior Student Seminar attendance</b>					
<b>Approval of Comprehensive Topics by Supervisory Committee</b>			6 months <small>(e.g., Feb 28)</small>	9 months <small>(e.g., May 30)</small>	
<b>Plan for Comprehensive Exam Portfolio:</b> Approved by Oversight Committee			12 months	18 months	
<b>Comprehensive Exam</b>			18 months	24 months	
<b>Thesis Proposal/Plan:</b> Approved by Supervisory Committee			Recommend maximum of 24 months	Recommend maximum of 36 months	

## PROGRAM MILESTONES

Activity	Document/Form Required All forms can be found on A2L (RS Graduate Student Resources)	In Progress 	Recommended Timing (Note completion date)		Comments (note exceptions or planned next steps)
			Full-time (Insert dates below)	Part-time (Insert dates below)	
*Supervisory Committee Meeting			Year 2 (Sept-Aug)	Year 2 (Sept-Aug)	
Ethics Completed (if required)					
Permission to collect data			20-24 months	28-36 months	
*Supervisory Committee Meeting			Year 3 (Sept-Aug)	Year 3 (Sept-Aug)	
Permission to write thesis			24-30 months	36-44 months	
*Supervisory Committee Meeting			Year 4 (Sept-Aug)	Year 4 (Sept-Aug)	
Permission to defend thesis			38-46 months	58-70 months	
Thesis Defence			40-48 months	60-72 months	
Other					
Other					

\*Committee Meetings are recommended every six (6) months but must be held at least yearly, i.e., one every academic year (September to August). All Committee Meeting Reports must be submitted to the [RS Administrative Staff](#).

***Action Items to be completed by Next Meeting:***

**OTHER PROGRAM ACTIVITIES/ACHIEVEMENTS:**

Scholarships/Training Support Received	Agency	Start Date	End Date	\$ per year

LOA Details	Start Date	End Date	Date Form Rec'd	Date Returned

Research Grants Received	Agency	Start Date	End Date	\$ per year

<b>List Publications:</b>
<b>List Presentations:</b>

## APPENDIX 12: TRANSFER PROCEDURE FROM THESIS-BASED MSc TO PhD (RS) PROGRAM

See SGS Calendar, Section 2.1.3

The following procedure is to be used by the Supervisors and Supervisory Committee of a thesis-based MSc (RS) student when recommending review for transfer to the PhD (RS) program without completion of the MSc degree.

The objectives of the transfer procedure are:

- d) To assess the progress of the student toward the MSc degree;
- e) To assess the potential of the candidate to carry out independent, original research; and,
- f) To consider the suitability of the candidate for direct admission to the PhD (RS) program.

### PROCEDURE

1. The process is initiated by the Supervisor and the Supervisory Committee after the student has successfully completed the four (4) required courses:
  - a. **Theory:** REHAB 700 *The Development, Evaluation and Utilization of Theories in Rehabilitation*
  - b. **Substantive:** REHAB 701, REHAB 702, REHAB 703, REHAB 704, REHAB 716, or REHAB 725, or an alternative substantive course approved by the Assistant Dean
  - c. **Research methods:** REHAB 707
  - d. **Data analysis:** REHAB 714

Normally, these should be completed in the first year in the MSc thesis-based curriculum and the transfer process is normally initiated after 12 months and before 18 months of study. In the case of part-time thesis students, the period will be extended to 24 and 36 respectively.

The process begins with a “Transfer from MSc to PhD form” (Avenue to Learn (A2L): RS Graduate Student Resources) from the student and Supervisor to the Office of the Associate Dean (FHS), stating that the student wishes to transfer from the MSc (RS) program to the PhD (RS) program. This notification normally takes place **three (3) months prior** to the date of the expected transfer. Normally the student and Supervisor will also meet with the Assistant Dean (RS) at this time to discuss the transfer procedure. **Transfers become effective only on the following dates: September 1<sup>st</sup>, January 1<sup>st</sup> and May 1<sup>st</sup>.**

2. The student must have a minimum overall average of A- for the four (4) required courses of the MSc (RS) curriculum.

3. To be considered for transfer, the student must complete a Transfer Proposal to be submitted to each member of the Transfer Committee (in hard copy) one (1) week before the scheduled date of the Transfer meeting. At this time, the student will be expected to have identified a PhD Supervisor and the proposal will be a result of discussions between the student and the proposed supervisor. Students may retain their MSc (RS) supervisor, or transfer supervision to one of their advisors depending on the circumstances of the supervisor and trainee at the time of transfer

The transfer proposal will consist of three (3) components written in a brief document (4-5 pages double-spaced) and will be presented to the transfer committee:

- a. A description of the reasons for the request to transfer from the MSc to the PhD program.
  - b. A statement of progress containing a description of the coursework and research work accomplished by the student in his/her MSc (RS) Program.
  - c. A brief summary of the area of PhD research that will be undertaken; or, how the MSc work will progress to the PhD level.
4. The student's MSc Supervisor must write a letter of support or provide a verbal statement at the transfer meeting with respect to the progress of the student, and their agreement with the transfer. The Transfer Committee is composed of:
    - a. The student's proposed PhD Supervisor;
    - b. Two (2) members of the PhD (RS) Admissions Committee the Assistant Dean (RS);
    - c. One (1) member of the RS Graduate Faculty; and,
    - d. One (1) member who serves as Chair, usually the Assistant Dean (RS) or his/her delegate, who will not have a vote except in the event of a tie.

In the event that the Assistant Dean (RS) is also the proposed Supervisor of the student requesting the transfer, the Assistant Dean (RS) should delegate the role of Chair of the student's Transfer Committee to one of the following RS Graduate Faculty members: 1. Chair of the PhD Admissions Committee; 2. Chair of the Curriculum Committee; or, 3. Chair of the Comprehensive Examination Committee.

5. The student will be expected to present and defend orally the work he/she has accomplished and the future research proposed (as described in the Transfer Report) for the PhD at the Transfer Meeting. A maximum of 1 (one) hours will be allowed for the Transfer Meeting.
6. The time, date, and place of the Transfer Meeting will be arranged by the Rehabilitation Science Graduate Office. Once arrangements have been made, the student, the Transfer Committee, and the Assistant Dean (RS) will be notified.



7. After the examination, the Chair will invite the Committee to appraise the oral defence and, following discussion, will decide to recommend one of the following options to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS):
  - a. The candidate is allowed to proceed directly to the PhD (RS) program, without completion of the MSc (RS) degree. (This recommendation will require a unanimous committee vote.)
  - b. The candidate is allowed to proceed to the PhD (RS) program, but only after completing the MSc (RS) degree. (This decision may be made by a majority committee vote.)
  - c. The candidate is invited to complete the MSc (RS) only, at this time. (This decision may be made by a majority committee vote.)
8. The Chair of the Transfer Committee will convey the Committee's decision to the student orally and in writing with a brief explanation of the reason if the transfer is not approved. The Chair will also complete the "Request for Change in a Graduate Student's Status" form (<https://graduate.mcmaster.ca/resources>), which will be forwarded to the Office of the Vice Dean of Graduate Studies (FHS).
9. If successful, the student will provide a final corrected copy of the Transfer Report to the RS Administrative Staff, to be kept in the student's file.

**REQUEST TO TRANSFER FROM MSC TO PHD PROGRAM  
IN REHABILITATION SCIENCE (RS)**

---

**Student** to complete this section of the form and submit to the RS Administrative Staff

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's name

Brief statement of reasons for transferring from the MSc into the PhD (not more than 100 words)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Provide a brief (not more than 100 words) summary of the area of research (noting if in progress)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ Student's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

The following is to be completed by the **student's PhD Supervisor**. Please write a short summary of the plans for ensuring the student has the research facilities and funding required to become a full-time PhD student; or if transferring into part-time PhD studies a rationale for why part-time studies are required.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

By signing this form, I am indicating my willingness to supervise the student and my assessment based on observations in their Master's program that they are capable of taking on the demands of the PhD program.

Please indicate the date(s) the transfer should be arranged:

\_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## **APPENDIX 13: REHAB 730 THE SCHOLARLY PAPER**

Each Course-Based MSc (RS) student has the option to complete a Scholarly Paper (REHAB 730), which demonstrates integrative thinking at a general and abstract level and is designed as an opportunity for Course-Based MSc (RS) students to demonstrate, in writing, their ability to integrate ideas that reflect current knowledge in areas of rehabilitation practice, education, research, and/or policy. A student will identify a topic, and in consultation with a faculty advisor with expertise in the area, develop a proposal that is individualized to the student's area of interest. The student will then develop the paper under the guidance of the faculty advisor. The paper must be 25 to 30 pages double-spaced, excluding references and appendices. The paper does not involve the collection or analysis of primary data or the conduct of research with subjects. It is a scholarly essay, not a thesis.

The Scholarly Paper is a full course, which is completed over two (2) academic terms.

### **1.0 Timing**

Under normal circumstances students are expected to begin the Scholarly Paper in the academic term following completion of their course work or during the term that the student is completing the last course, if taking more than one (1) course that term. The student should declare any potential conflicting event, which may take place during the Scholarly Paper process so that the faculty advisor and course coordinator can take the time into consideration.

### **2.0 Steps in the Scholarly Paper Process**

- 2.1 A faculty advisor will be approved for the Scholarly Paper. The student will arrange an in-person, online, or telephone meeting with his/her faculty advisor to begin exploring possible client, research, health-system, or education-focused topics that are complementary to his/her course work. The topic cannot be one on which the student has previously written a paper or done a substantive presentation (*e.g.*, worth 40% or more of a course grade).
- 2.2 The student will meet as necessary with their faculty advisor to discuss topics and prepare a proposal. This proposal becomes the student's contract with the examiners and their roadmap for writing the paper.
- 2.3 The student will complete a proposal for the Scholarly Paper (two (2) single-spaced pages exclusive of references). This should consist of:
  - a) A paragraph which provides the rationale for choosing the topic;
  - b) A paragraph which describes the purpose of the paper; and,
  - c) A point-form outline of the main areas of content to be included in the paper. Note that the rationale, purpose and outline headings should be supported with appropriate references.
- 2.4 Once the proposal is submitted, the Course Coordinator will notify the student and advisor of the outcome usually within two (2) weeks.

- 2.5 The student should consult with the faculty advisor during the writing period regarding resources and points of clarification, and the faculty advisor may read drafts of the paper. However, they should not read the final paper or drafts in the two weeks prior to submission.
- 2.6 **By 9:00am EST/EDT** on the day that the Scholarly Paper is due, upload an electronic copy of the Scholarly Paper in Microsoft Word format to the REHAB 730 assignment submission folder on Avenue to Learn.
- 2.7 The paper is evaluated by the faculty advisor and an external evaluator, approved by the course coordinator. The evaluators are sent copies of the *Scholarly Paper Evaluation Form* (see Appendix 2 of the REHAB 730 Scholarly Paper Course Outline), the criteria for written assignments and the approved proposal for the paper. The evaluators will review the paper independently and submit a completed evaluation form with a recommended letter grade to the course coordinator within two (2) weeks of receipt of the paper.
- 2.8 Written feedback and a letter grade will be given to the student by the course coordinator. If the paper is deemed unsatisfactory (lower than B-), one (1) rewrite will be allowed (within a four (4) week period) after formal written notification of the unsatisfactory grade to the student is given by the course coordinator. A pass/fail decision will be made and feedback given within one (1) week (with consideration of availability of both evaluators).

The Scholarly Paper, like final papers for courses, is to be written **solely by the student**. It is essential that the student references information appropriately and avoids any suggestion of plagiarism.

## APPENDIX 14: ACADEMIC TIMELINE

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