

PHD PROGRAM IN COMMUNICATION, NEW MEDIA AND CULTURAL STUDIES (CNMCS) Graduate Student Handbook 2022-2023

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WELCOME!

This package has been developed to help you become familiar with your new surroundings as well as provide you with useful, basic information about McMaster University, the Department of Communication Studies and Media Arts, and items specific to the PhD program in Communication, New Media and Cultural Studies (CNMCS). Also included in this package is information related to the greater Hamilton community, with the hope that it will help you feel at home.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The PhD program in Communication, New Media, and Cultural Studies (CNMCS) is a joint program between the [Department of Communication Studies and Media Arts \(CSMA\)](#) and the [Department of English and Cultural Studies \(ECS\)](#). Our many complementary strengths are in areas including new media arts, performance, policy, visual culture, digital culture, music/sound, gender and sexuality, critical race studies, Indigenous studies, postcolonial and diasporic studies, transnational culture and international communications, critical environmental studies, political economy, professional communication, and media analysis and strategy. The program draws faculty members from CSMA and ECS as well as other departments in the Humanities to act as supervisors of CNMCS doctoral students.

This program brings together three interdisciplinary fields that all originated in attempts to understand and debate big problems using tools from the arts, humanities, and social sciences: cultural studies began by trying to articulate the significance of culture beyond the privileged space of the university, communication studies wanted to understand how mass media was changing modern society, and new media scholars and artists wanted to probe how computing and digital communications were changing human knowledge and creativity. Each of these fields understands that the problems we face today, with all their varied technological, economic, ecological, and political implications, are, fundamentally, problems of communication and culture. Learning to *read*, *critique*, and *create* culture, media, and communication is critical to seeing things, and doing things, in new ways.

UNIVERSITY REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES

Students should consult the general university guidelines for a PhD degree in the School of Graduate Studies Graduate Calendar, available online [here](#).

IMPORTANT ACRONYMS:

CNM	Communication and New Media MA program
CNMCS	Communication, New Media and Cultural studies PhD program
CSMA	Communication Studies and Media Arts
CUPE	Canadian Union of Public Employees (this union represents TAs at McMaster)
ECS	English and Cultural Studies
GSA	Graduate Students' Association
SGS	School of Graduate Studies
TSH	Togo Salmon Hall (our building)

ADMINISTRATIVE DATES

2022

July 5- August 2	Registration online
August 3- September 7	Late Registration (late fee applies)
September 1	CSMA Program Orientation (10:30 – 12:00, TSH 201)
	CSMA TA Training (1:30 – 3:30, TSH 201)
	CSMA Graduate Student Welcome (4:30 – 6:30, The Phoenix)
September 6	Undergraduate classes begin
September 12	Graduate classes begin
September 12	Undergraduate tutorials begin
September 23	Final date to add/change electives for term 1
September 30	Final date to complete SGS 101 and 201
October 3	SSHRC doctoral fellowships submitted by all eligible students
November 11	Final date to drop electives for term 1

2023

January 9	Undergraduate classes begin
January 16	Graduate classes begin
January 20	Final date to add/change electives for term 2
March 17	Final date to drop electives for term 2
May 12	Final date to add electives for term 3
July 14	Final date to drop electives for term 3

Sessional Dates

Graduate and Undergraduate Sessional Dates can be found [here](#).

FACULTY AND STAFF

CHAIR

Christina Baade, Ph.D. (Wisconsin-Madison)
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Lorraine York, B.A., M.A., Ph.D. (McMaster) / Senator William McMaster Chair in Canadian Literature and Culture

PROFESSORS

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Sarah Brophy, B.A. (Wilfrid Laurier), M.A., Ph.D. (McMaster)
Chandrima Chakraborty, B.A. (Calcutta), M.A., M. Phil. (Jawaharlal Nehru), Ph.D. (York) / University Scholar
Daniel Coleman, B.Ed., M.A. (Regina), Ph.D. (Alberta)
Amber Dean, B.A. (Alberta), M.A. (Simon Fraser), Ph.D. (Alberta)
Paula Gardner, B.A. (SUNY), M.A. (NCSR), Ph.D. (UMass) / Asper Chair in Communications
Henry Giroux, B.S. (Maine), M.A. (Appalachian State), Ph.D. (Carnegie-Mellon) / Chair for Scholarship in the Public Interest
Robert S. Hamilton, M.F.A. (SAIC), M.F.A. (Jan van Eyck Academie)
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Susan Searls Giroux, B.A., M.A.T. (Miami), Ph.D. (Pennsylvania State) / Associate Vice-President, Faculty
Peter Walmsley, B.A., M.A. (Toronto), Ph.D. (Cambridge)

ASSOCIATE PROFESSORS

Sara Bannerman, B. Mus. (Queen's), M.A., Ph.D. (Carleton) / Canada Research Chair in Communication Policy & Governance
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ASSISTANT PROFESSORS

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Andrea Zeffiro, B.A., M.A. (Western), Ph.D. (Concordia)

PROGRAM INFORMATION

COURSEWORK

Students of the program must complete 18 units (eg. 6 three-unit courses) of approved coursework by the end of the second year, including: 4 elective courses, for a total of 12 units, to be completed in year 1; and two 3-unit doctoral seminars, taken in year 1 and year 2. At the discretion of the CNMCS Graduate Committee, those students lacking relevant experience in a minimum of two of the program's three disciplines will be required to complete, in place of electives, 1 or 2 theory and/or methodology courses offered by ECS (CULTR ST 732) or CSMA (CMST&MM 700, 707 and/or 712). With the permission of the CNMCS Graduate Committee, students may fulfil a maximum of 3 elective units from graduate courses offered by programs other than CNMCS.

COURSE OFFERINGS

REQUIRED:

Year 1: CNMCS 700, Doctoral Seminar: This Year 1 Doctoral Seminar will meet every other week in the Fall and Winter terms to share ideas, methods, and practices. Students will have opportunities to workshop their developing research program throughout first year in the lead up to the submission of their short thesis proposals in term 2, encouraging the creation of a community of ideas and discussion as well as the pursuit of individual projects.

Year 2: CNMCS 701, Doctoral Seminar: This Year 2 Doctoral Seminar will meet once a month from September through March to exchange ideas and strategies for the Comprehensive exam process, and to share methods and practices. Students will have opportunities to circulate and workshop their long thesis proposals, conference presentations, and articles/arts and media projects.

Electives:

Students normally take courses in Communication and New Media and English and Cultural Studies as electives. With approval from the Director students may opt to take a maximum of one elective from another department. Students will be notified by email when the course selection each academic year is finalized for CNM and ECS. Only a selection of courses listed in the calendar will be offered in a given academic year.

For a complete list of courses offered please visit:

https://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/preview_program.php?catoid=46&poid=23935&returnto=9235

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

Students in the program will be required to take a Comprehensive Examination in the area of their intended thesis research. This will involve writing two papers, a Field Survey and a Topic Paper, and defending both in an oral examination.

The Field Survey should show broad expertise in the field(s) of knowledge the candidate's research will engage from within Communication Studies, Cultural Studies, and/or New Media/Media Arts. While students may focus part of this paper on subfields of particular relevance to their own research projects (e.g. Feminist Cultural Studies, Political Economy of the media, etc.), the field paper should also demonstrate students' familiarity with the histories of the wider field(s) from which these subfields have emerged, and with the foundational works, theories and methodological approaches and debates of the wider field(s). The Field Survey could take the form of an exploration of two or three foundational concepts that inform the field.

The Topic Paper describes how the candidate's thesis intervenes in the chosen field(s) and the particular contribution it will make. This paper might be conceived as a draft introduction to the student's dissertation project, with particular attention paid to the unique interventions and contributions the student's research will make to field(s) of knowledge in which it will be situated.

Both papers are to be researched and written concurrently by the candidate, and are to be between 25 and 30 double-spaced pages in length. Both papers are due early in the second term of the second year of study. The Oral Examination of both papers will follow within 10 business days of submission.

A meeting between the candidate and the full examining committee will be held in May of the first doctoral year. At this meeting the candidate and the committee will discuss and revise a draft reading list for the Field Survey and Topic Paper prepared by the student. This list should consist of roughly 120 works (with approximately 30 pages of theoretical or critical prose weighted as 1 work, a performance, movie or major exhibition equaling 2 works, and a substantial book counting for 3 works). The Field Survey is meant to be capacious, reaching beyond the candidate's immediate research topic, and should encompass a wide variety of authors and approaches. The list should include works considered canonical or foundational in the field, as well as works highlighting current debates. The Field Survey should broaden the candidate's understanding of his or her chosen field of expertise in preparation not just for the dissertation but also for job interviews and undergraduate teaching in the chosen field(s). When complete, the reading list will be signed by the supervisory committee and submitted to the CNMCS Graduate Committee for review and approval and a copy of the approved reading list placed in the candidate's file.

Once the reading list is approved by the CNMCS Graduate Committee, a schedule of meetings is established so that the candidate may discuss her or his progress in writing both papers with all committee members. Each committee member meets with the candidate on two separate occasions, typically once in the summer and once in the fall terms. **Committee members should not review or comment upon your actual Field Survey or Topic Papers; these are examination papers and, while general discussion with supervisory committee members is encouraged, drafts of the papers should not be read and commented upon by committee members.** The onus is on the candidate to prepare in advance for these

meetings.

The oral examination will normally be two hours in length, with examiners posing specific questions about the candidate's written work, as well as about works on the Field Survey list that are not discussed in either paper. As a means of ensuring sufficient breadth of knowledge, the Department requires that, at the oral examination, candidates demonstrate a mature ability to articulate a range of dominant issues in their field(s) and to show familiarity with a wide range of scholars.

The candidate's mark in the Comprehensive Examination will be calculated on the average of the grades for the Field Survey, the Topic Paper, and the oral examination. The candidate must pass each part of the Comprehensive Examination (a B- grade or better). The student has the option of being informed of his or her grades on the written papers before the beginning of the oral examination. If the student has failed either written paper with a mark under B-, that paper must be rewritten before proceeding to the oral exam. The second attempt must be submitted within three months of the first submission. If the candidate fails the oral examination, he or she must make a second attempt within three months. Failure to pass any part of the examination after two attempts will result in withdrawal from the program. The method for determining the grades for the three parts of the Comprehensive Examination is as follows. Before the oral examination, the three committee members will each submit in writing his or her grade for each of the two written papers. The supervisor will then calculate the average grade for each paper; discussion will follow to arrive at the final grade for each paper. Grades for the written papers should be submitted before the oral examination, and for the oral examination at the end of the exam. The final recorded grade will be a Fail, Pass, or Pass+ (with distinction). The final category denotes that all three committee members independently assigned a grade of "A+" to each paper and to the oral. Two grades of "A+" and one "A" equals a pass, but not a pass with distinction. Students should be informed of their grades immediately after the oral examination.

The overall aim of the comprehensive examination is to ensure that students attain both a specialized knowledge in their specific area of expertise and a broader knowledge of the existing critical conversation in their field(s). Further, the examination determines that the student has the necessary professional skills to carry out cultural, communications, and/or media research at an advanced level, assemble a coherent set of texts for a course syllabus, and participate in sustained discussion and analysis of a specialized field. To successfully pass the comprehensive examination, students must demonstrate, both in their written papers and their oral defense, a significant scholarly maturity and a flexibility of thought and critical circumspection. The comprehensive examination should provide evidence of engagement with historical and current problems in the field(s).

QUALIFYING DOSSIER

Over the course of their graduate study, students in the program will develop a qualifying dossier in consultation with their supervisory committee. Possible components of the qualifying dossier, of which the student will complete at least six, include:

- a grant application
- presentation of a conference paper or artist talk
- submission of an article or artistic piece for peer-reviewed publication or juried exhibition
- a research ethics proposal
- a syllabus and a teaching philosophy statement
- a knowledge translation project
- Education 751 (offered by McMaster's Macpherson Institute for Leadership, Innovation and Excellence in Teaching)
- participation in four professionalization workshops (academic or non-academic), offered by ECS, CSMA, or the Faculty of Humanities
- a published book review/exhibition review in a scholarly journal
- a community-engagement project
- a guest lecture
- participation in conference organizing

Work completed as part of course requirements may be included in the dossier at the discretion of the supervisory committee.

THESIS

The candidate will complete a thesis in one of the following forms:

- A *traditional thesis*, which will normally be between 200 and 250 pages (not including bibliography);
- A *research-creation* or **project-based thesis**, which will consist of a body of work and written commentary on that work of between 100 and 150 pages; such a thesis may involve arts-based research, or it may involve the creation of such things as tool kits, social interventions, learning platforms, databases, new media archives, documentary films, or podcasts;
- A *sandwich thesis*, which, in accordance with McMaster's Thesis Preparation Guide, must consist of a minimum of three scholarly works on a unified theme, either previously published or exhibited, submitted for peer-review, or prepared for publication/exhibition but not yet submitted (in CNMCS, these works may include journal articles submitted for peer review, or art/media/performance pieces submitted for peer-review); these works must be accompanied by substantial introductory and concluding chapters, addressing the methodologies, theories and approaches that unify and inform the research. If the sandwich thesis is used for a series of research creation projects, the student will present an explanatory narrative that connects the projects and argues for their significance. The typical length of a sandwich thesis will be about 200 pages, plus bibliography, but may be adjusted, in consultation with the supervisory committee, for a thesis consisting at least partly of research creation projects.

By March 1 of year 1 of the program, students will submit a short proposal (1000 words plus bibliography) for the thesis, identifying the area of their intended thesis research, for the approval of the CNMCS Graduate Committee. The proposal should be signed by a the supervisor and other members of the student's supervisory committee. With the guidance of their supervisory committee and their peers in the year 2 doctoral seminar, students will develop a long proposal (10-15 pages plus bibliography), to be submitted for the approval of their supervisory committee by August 31 of year 2. Should the committee

feel a proposal needs further development, the student will be asked to revise and resubmit it within three months.

Years 3 and 4 of the degree will be dedicated to the completion of the thesis, which must be defended in an oral examination.

GRADUATE STUDENT GRADING SCALE

Graduate Grading Scale

Grade	Points
A+	12
A	11
A-	10
B+	9
B	8
B-	7
F	0

Pass/Fail
P+
P
F

For a more detailed explanation of graduate grading scale, please see Section 2.6.9 of the School of Graduate Studies Graduate Calendar, <https://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/index.php>

PHD PROGRAM TIMELINE

YEAR I

Preparation of SSHRC doctoral applications (required of all eligible students, each year)	September
SSHRC doctoral fellowship applications submitted (required of all eligible students, each year)	October 3
Course work	September to April
Begin to meet with provisional supervisor regularly; consult with supervisor about first and second reader for supervisory committee (Note: If student is seeking a change to the provisional supervisor, this should be discussed prior to this date with the proposed new supervisor, the provisional supervisor, and the CNMCS Director; otherwise, the provisional supervisor is assumed to be the student's confirmed supervisor as of Nov. 1)	November 1
Student asks first and second reader to join the supervisory committee	By December 1
Preliminary thesis proposal submitted to supervisor and readers for feedback	January 15
Feedback returned to student	Feb 1
Student revises preliminary thesis proposal	Feb 1-15
Final thesis proposal signed by supervisor and readers and submitted for review and approval to CNMCS Graduate Committee	March 1
CNMCS Graduate Committee gives feedback and approval of thesis proposal	March
Draft reading list for comprehensive exams submitted to supervisory committee	May 1
Meeting with supervisory committee; reading list for comprehensive exams discussed and revised at meeting. NB: SGS regulations require that each PhD student has at least one meeting in each academic year with their supervisory committee to assess the student's progress in the program; a record of this meeting is submitted online	Mid-May
Final comprehensive exams reading list submitted to CNMCS PhD chair for verification of compliance with program guidelines on the extent of such lists	June 1
Student begins reading for comprehensive exams and/or works on items for the qualifying dossier	June 1 - July 1
Candidates will meet once with each of the members of the supervisory committee in preparation for the Comprehensive Examination	Summer

YEAR II

During the Fall term candidates will meet at least once with each of the members of the supervisory committee in preparation for the Comprehensive Examination.

February: Submission of the Comprehensive Examination Field Survey and Topic Paper by February 28th; oral defense within the next ten days.

April-August: development, review, and revision of the long thesis proposal, in regular consultation with the candidate's supervisory committee.

August 31: By August 31st, the candidate should have submitted a detailed thesis proposal of 2500 words to the CNMCS PhD chair (the "long thesis proposal"), following its final approval by the candidate's supervisory committee. The long thesis proposal should include the proposed full title of the thesis, a description of its scope, methodology and purpose, and an outline of its general structure. It is understood that the proposal represents a provisional working plan, rather than an unalterable contract; the focus, structure and title of theses are always liable to change during the process of composition. Major changes, however, should be approved and signed by the supervisory committee and brought to the PhD Graduate Committee for final approval. Along with the proposal, the candidate should submit a bibliography of the primary and secondary materials he or she intends to use.

YEAR III

Continued research and development of thesis. During this time the candidate should submit the first draft of a substantial portion of work to the supervisor, who will return the draft, with corrections, normally within four weeks. The student and supervisor will consult with the supervisory committee members about the timing of their feedback and corrections. If committee members do not adhere to the agreed-upon schedule, candidates are advised to inform the supervisor first and then, if necessary, the Chair of the CNMCS Graduate Committee. By the end of the first term of Year III the candidate should have submitted a draft of at least one substantial section of the thesis.

YEAR IV

Continued research and development of thesis. Candidates should take note of the School of Graduate Studies deadlines for submission of PhD theses approved for defense (usually around the middle of July to be eligible for the November Convocation, and usually around the end of February to be eligible for the June Convocation) and for final, approved and defended Ph.D. theses (usually around the end of September to be eligible for the November Convocation, and around the end of April to be eligible for the June Convocation). Please check the *exact* dates of submission in the current *School of Graduate Studies Calendar*, since they will vary slightly from year to year.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

SUPERVISORS

Students enter the program with a provisional supervisor (or co-supervisors) in place. The provisional supervisor or co-supervisors, or an alternative supervisor if the student makes other arrangements in the first months of the PhD, must be confirmed by November 1st of the first year of the program. If the student is seeking a change to the provisional supervisor, this should be discussed prior to this date with the proposed new supervisor, the provisional supervisor, and the CNMCS Director; otherwise the provisional supervisor is assumed to be the student's confirmed supervisor as of Nov. 1.

SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE

The Ph.D. supervisory committee consists of a supervisor and two other faculty members selected by the student and supervisor, and approved by the CNMCS Graduate Committee. The supervisor and one reader must be full-time faculty on the list of CNMCS faculty. The other member of the committee may be from outside the CNMCS faculty list in cases where the thesis topic warrants such external advice. Committee members from outside McMaster require special approval by the School of Graduate Studies (consult with the PhD chair in such cases). The *School of Graduate Studies Calendar* requires that the supervisory committee meets at least once annually with the student to discuss, assess, and report on the student's progress in the program.

CHANGES TO SUPERVISOR OR SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE

Requests for a change of supervisor or for a change in the composition of the supervisory committee must be submitted to the CNMCS Graduate Committee for approval. First, the student should consult either the thesis supervisor or the Chair of the CNMCS Graduate Committee (the PhD chair). Whoever receives this request should ensure that the proposed change is communicated to all members of the supervisory committee. The student should then proceed to make her/his request in writing to the Chair of the CNMCS Graduate Committee.

THE THESIS

After the completion of the Comprehensive Examination, the candidate will begin work on their thesis. The candidate is required to continue meeting with their supervisory committee at least once a year, in addition to regular meetings with the supervisor and other committee members as necessary. The thesis will be developed by the candidate in consultation with the supervisory committee. Portions of the thesis should be presented to the thesis supervisor for comment and approval before they are given to other members of the supervisory committee.

Candidates should study the School of Graduate Studies' pamphlet, *Guide for the Preparation of Theses*, available on the [School of Graduate Studies](#) website. It gives general information about University requirements concerning the writing and submitting of graduate theses, and covers such topics as fonts, sequence of parts, and so forth.

ETHICS APPROVAL

Students whose work involves human subjects, including interviews, will need to develop an ethics protocol for review and approval by the McMaster Research Ethics Board (MREB). It is imperative to initiate the process of application well in advance of any data collection from human subjects, in consultation with supervisors. It is recommended to allow at least one month for the review and approval of a completed ethics protocol, if the ethical issues raised by a particular project are relatively straightforward. Projects with more complex ethical considerations may require further time for the ethics review process. Check the [MREB website](#) for dates of drop-in consultations and seminars on the application process. If you are in doubt about whether your project will require an ethics review, please consult with your supervisor and/or the Graduate Chair.

CHANGES TO THESIS TOPIC AND/OR FORMAT

Any substantive change in thesis topic must be agreed to by the supervisory committee and endorsed by the CNMCS Graduate Committee, which is also responsible for making any changes in the supervisory committee when necessary and possible.

STYLE

It is the candidate's responsibility to make sure that the manuscript has been carefully prepared according to accepted usage and that it meets the University's requirements in every respect. In some instances, a thesis may require special treatment. The candidate should consult the supervisory committee if it appears that a divergence from the standard practice is desirable. Such divergences may be permitted if they are consistent and unambiguous and can be defended with sound, scholarly reasoning at the oral examination. In general, however, adherence to the standard rules is required, and a thesis that is unsatisfactory in this respect will be returned for correction.

SUBMISSION

All other degree requirements must be completed before the thesis is submitted to the School of Graduate Studies.

THE THESIS ORAL EXAMINATION

The candidate will be required to defend the thesis at an oral examination specifically convened by the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies. The *School of Graduate Studies Calendar* contains information on the composition of the examining committee and a description of the procedure for the oral defense.

GRADUATE WORK SUPERVISION GUIDELINES FOR THE GRADUATE STUDENT

- 1) Commitment to scholarly activity is a pre-requisite for graduate success.
- 2) To support mentorship and guidance, the student must engage in effective, timely and on-going communication with the supervisor/advisor regarding the status of their project.
- 3) The student should discuss expectations with the supervisor/advisor to ensure that there is a mutual understanding of research goals and related activities, coursework, timelines and deadlines.
- 4) The student must manage their time, meet deadlines, and prepare for regularly scheduled meetings (e.g. with the supervisor/advisor and supervisory committee). Students should recognize that graduate program academic expectations will not be modified if they choose to engage in other activities, such as working outside of his/her graduate studies, studying for professional program entrance exams or applying for jobs or postdoctoral fellowships. Student-supervisor meetings for thesis work typically occur at least monthly, although meeting regularity will vary amongst disciplines and at various stages. Students are encouraged to discuss concerns about the type and amount of supervision needed for their work with their supervisor. Students are expected to inform the academic head of the graduate program if they are concerned about inadequate or inappropriate supervision.
- 5) The student is expected to develop effective communication and collaborative skills and to demonstrate respect for others. The student should carefully and earnestly consider advice, suggestions, comments and criticisms received from the graduate supervisor/advisor. The student should expect timely, but not immediate, responses (regarding meetings, feedback on written work, etc.) from the supervisor/advisor and supervisory committee.
- 6) The student is obliged to act ethically in conducting graduate work. This includes, but is not limited to, following McMaster University policies on the ethical conduct of research and academic integrity. The student is required to document and honestly report research data, to conscientiously cite information and data sources, and to seek guidance on any data exclusions.

He/she must acknowledge contributions of the supervisor/advisor, committee members and others, in accordance with the norms of their academic discipline.
- 7) It is the student's responsibility to carry out all work safely and in accordance with standard operating procedures. Potentially dangerous tasks should not be done while impaired and should not be done until properly trained. It is the student's duty to learn about safe practices, ask questions, and seek appropriate help and guidance on safety matters.
- 8) It is the student's responsibility to be aware of all the requirements, regulations, and guidelines outlined in the Graduate Calendar as well as all University policies pertaining to graduate work.

Please read the full section about [Graduate Work Supervision Guidelines for Faculty and Students](#) provided in the School of Graduate Studies Graduate Calendar and on the School of Graduate Studies website.

ARRIVAL AND REGISTRATION

The McMaster Graduate Student Welcome is part of the orientation for graduate students hosted by the School of Graduate Studies. You will be notified by SGS about any orientation events that you may wish to attend. These are not mandatory events but are an enjoyable way to get used to the campus and surrounding areas, as well as meet graduate students from other programs. Some events may require advance registration, so please read emails from SGS carefully.

In addition to attending these orientation events, incoming students are expected to attend their home department's own orientation, typically held in the first doctoral seminar. You will be expected to attend the department's TA orientation. The date and time of each event is listed under Important Dates at the beginning of this handbook.

Much of the communication with students both by the Department and the University takes place via email. Be sure to use your McMaster email account as soon as it is activated. Once you have your email account set up, it is REQUIRED that you inform the CSMA Department by sending an email to gradcnm@mcmaster.ca. This email address will be used by the Department and University to communicate with you, and for you to communicate with students as a Teaching Assistant.

SGS 101 and 102

You will be required to register for **SGS 101**, Academic Integrity and **SGS 201**, AODA (Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities) training, unless you have taken these courses at McMaster in another graduate program. These are online courses that do not take very long to complete, but they are mandatory. **You must complete these courses before the end of September in your first year of study. You will not be able to graduate if you do not take these courses.**

DEPARTMENTAL SUPPORT AND RESOURCES

Office Space

Office space is at a premium within the university. The CSMA Department provides all PhD students shared office space for quiet study. There are currently three PhD student offices (TSH 312, TSH 313, and TSH 323), as well as access to a fridge, coffee maker and kettle. There is a keypad lock for all three student rooms. The codes will be sent to you by email. Office doors should be kept closed for theft prevention and noise reduction. Students are responsible for keeping the office clean. There will also be access to a shared office for TA office hours if required.

Mail/Photocopying/Printing

Your student mailboxes are located across the CSMA main office in TSH 317. A photocopier/printer is also available in this room for students to photocopy and/or print course and TA-related items. The password to use the photocopier is posted in each student room and instructions will be sent by email.

Conference and Research Travel Funding

Limited funding is available through the CSMA Department for conference and exhibition-related travel. Details of how to apply for this funding will be shared with you in early Fall and early Winter. Note that funding for research and/or conferences is also available through the Graduate Students' Association (see [GSA funding](#)).

TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIPS

Most full-time graduate students are offered a teaching assistantship as part of their funding package. TA duties involve an average of 10 hours a week of work and will include a combination of leading tutorials/labs (usually 1 or 2 hour-long tutorials per week), grading assignments and meeting with students during regularly scheduled office hours or other duties as discussed with the course instructor.

CUPE Local 3906 Collective Agreement and Hours of Work

The Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), Local 3906, Unit 1, represents all part-time employees at McMaster, including teaching assistants, demonstrators, tutors and super tutors, markers, and research assistants who receive a research assistantship in lieu of teaching assistantship. A copy of the current collective agreement can be found [here](#).

The collective agreement has important information on sick days, religious holidays, hours of work, etc. Especially important is the Hours of Work form, which will be filled out by your instructor, in consultation with yourself, at the beginning of term to specify how many hours you will be spending on various tasks.

Health and Dental Benefits

CUPE 3906 provides dental coverage for Unit 1 members who have a TAship or RAship in lieu of a TAship worth 130 hours or more. Any questions about the CUPE dental plan should be directed to benefits@cupe3906.org. Click [here](#) for information related to your Dental Plan.

UHIP

It is essential that all international students have proper medical insurance coverage while in Canada. Please read this section carefully. Full details are available from the [International Students' Services \(ISS\) webpage](#). The University Health Insurance Plan (UHIP) is a comprehensive plan that is for international students only. The plan provides doctors' services, hospital ward accommodation, all maternity claims (even if pregnancy began before you arrived in Ontario), and coverage for medical care outside of Ontario or Canada. The plan is compulsory, and students will not be permitted to register unless they purchase UHIP. Students may purchase additional coverage under UHIP if they intend to stay in Canada after completion of their studies or would like to travel outside of Canada (Please note that UHIP does not cover the cost of prescription drugs and dental work, you are covered by the GSA and CUPE insurance plans for this). For more information about applying for UHIP, fees, and obtaining your UHIP card, click [here](#).

Getting Paid

Tuition Fees will be charged by term on September 1, January 1, and May 1, and will have to be paid before the end of that month. Mandatory Supplementary Fees are charged in full on September 1. Interest on tuition will begin to accrue on the second to last business day of those months unless a payment arrangement has been made with Student Accounts in the Registrar's Office.

Scholarship funds: For all scholarships, including graduate scholarships awarded with your offer, you will receive a lump sum payment by e-transfer each term in the middle of the first month of the term (mid-September, mid-January, mid-May). This is T4A income, which means that if you are enrolled full-time, these funds are not taxable.

Employment Income: TA ship money is paid on a bi-weekly schedule in the terms in which you are completing your work. You will have a record of this payment in MOSAIC. Once you have successfully logged into MOSAIC you will be able to view your pay statement online.

To receive your TA/RA/RA-in-lieu pay you must complete the direct deposit form and the TD1 and TD1ON tax forms that will be emailed to you. Once complete, please email them to cweima@mcmaster.ca as a pdf file. They will be submitted to HR on your behalf. *Note that on page 2 of the contact & deposit form, it requests banking information. Manually entered information will not be accepted and must be provided in the following format: 1) Void cheque, or 2) Direct deposit form completed by banking institution. A scan of the forms with the void cheque/form is sufficient. Please do not send the files as a jpg; a pdf is required.

Job Hazard Analysis and Health and Safety

It is **mandatory** for **all** employees at McMaster to take part in the Job Hazard Analysis and Health and Safety Training. This training must be completed on [MOSAIC](#) within, or before, the first two weeks of September. You will receive training in the following sections:

1. Training done through McMaster's EOHSS:
 - The Health & Safety Orientation
 - Ergonomics
 - Slips, trips and falls
 - Asbestos Awareness

- Fire Safety
- Office WHIMS

2. Job Hazard Analysis Form:

- Computer work
- Encountering violent situations in the workplace
- Operating machinery
- Reviewing reports
- Walking on campus and off-site locations
- Working alone

3. Violence and Harassment Prevention

4. Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities (AODA) Training

Additional Employment (Research Assistantships)

Research assistantships may be available in addition to teaching assistantships, depending on faculty needs and funding. Please see the Academic Department Manager should you wish to apply for additional work.

FACILITIES

Media Arts Labs

The McArthur Media Arts Wing (formerly: McArthur Multimedia Wing) is located on the 2nd floor of Togo Salmon Hall in room 202B (end of hall, top of the stairs). 'The Wing' offers 49 well-appointed workstations featuring a wide range of industry-standard web, audio, and video editing software suites.

Access to The Wing is by key card only. Key cards can be obtained by visiting the Administrative Assistant at the Humanities Media and Computing Service Centre in TSH 209. You will need to show your student ID card and indicate that you are a graduate student in Communication and New Media. A non-refundable charge applies for each key card. Wing Access: 24/7 (September to April)

Humanities Media and Computing (HMC) Services

Cameras and lighting equipment are available to be signed out from Humanities Media and Computing (HMC), located on the 2nd floor of Togo Salmon Hall. HMC is also able to provide standardized Wordpress installations. For more information about services offered please visit <https://hmc.humanities.mcmaster.ca/>.

Lyons New Media Centre

The Lyons New Media Centre is a media space for the innovative creation and use of new and traditional media in teaching, learning and research at McMaster. Work spaces include:

- video and audio editing workstations (all equipped with Adobe Creative Cloud)
- 2 edit suites
- consultation room
- video-gaming room
- a classroom
- a green screen
- a Help Desk to provide assistance to students, faculty and staff

The Centre features a large video wall to showcase the media creation process, to highlight faculty and student research and to display faculty and student media projects. The video wall may also be used for special media rich presentations.

The Lewis & Ruth Sherman Centre for Digital Scholarship

The Sherman Centre is a research centre located in Mills Memorial Library at McMaster University. The Centre provides consulting and technical support to faculty and graduate students with all levels of technological experience and on any stage or aspect of a digital scholarship or pedagogical project to help determine the digital tools, techniques and methods that best suit the project whether big or small. Some of the specific resources offered by the Sherman Centre include:

Digital Humanities Training - The Centre's 'Do More with Digital Scholarship' workshop series is aimed at introducing McMaster students, faculty, and staff to the multifaceted domain of digital scholarship and digital humanities tools and methods.

Research Dissemination - The Centre provides a platform for students to publicize their work and expose it to a wider audience for feedback and input. We achieve this via multiple means: a regular Sherman Colloquium that invites graduate students to present their work in progress; our digital media wall where visualizations and other depictions can be displayed in an artistic and engaging setting; and by offering publishing platforms such as our institutional repository, a journal publication system, and the Sherman website.

Scholarly Repository - The Centre is home to [MacSphere](#), McMaster's institutional repository (IR). MacSphere is the place where McMaster researchers can archive their intellectual property and make it available to a global community. Often this takes the form of published journal articles—conveniently meeting the new Tri-Council mandate regarding open access—but there are myriad other forms of scholarship in our repository: slide decks, video, white papers, etc. MacSphere is harvested by Google Scholar and other academic search engines, ensuring global reach.

Dedicated Workspace - The Centre has private cubicle space reserved for a limited number of graduate researchers, who benefit greatly from the proximity of a peer group working in similar fashion.

High Performance Workstations - Three state-of-the-art workstations, highly powerful computers with a wide range of complex software for digital scholarship installed.

Three 3D printers - an Ultimaker 2, a Makerbot 5th gen, and a Lulzbot TAZ 4 are available to researchers interested in engaging more deeply in modelling and fabrication.

For more information on the Sherman Centre see: scds.ca

Libraries

[Mills Memorial Library](#) is the Social Sciences and Humanities library that you will use most frequently. You may also find that you will need resources from the Innis Business library and the Health Sciences library. Graduate students may borrow materials for a period of one month. If another user has recalled a book you have checked out, you will receive an email notification requesting you to return the book. You have until 14 days from the original loan date or 5 days from the date of recall, whichever is longer, in which to return the book, after which a fine of up to \$5 a day or partial day is levied. If you do not return an overdue item the library will suspend your borrowing privileges, charge a book replacement fee, and a non-refundable administrative charge per item.

The Study Room in Mills Library

The Study Room in Mills Library (L405) is a small area designed for writing and research – complete with large tables and office chairs, a standing work area, comfortable seating, and, of course, internet access. Please click [here](#) for more information on how to access the room.

[LibAccess](#) permits access to the library's licensed e-resources (including e-journals), which can be viewed from home or on campus. You can login using your MAC ID and password. Material not held in the collections of McMaster University Libraries, needed for study or research by faculty, staff or students, may be requested through [Interlibrary Loan Services \(RACER\)](#). ILL is free for books.

As a McMaster Graduate student, you can also get a “Reciprocal Borrower” card at university libraries across Canada. Please inquire at Mills Library for details.

Additionally, the [Hamilton Public Library](#) system is a great resource for fiction, popular non-fiction, CDs, DVDs, magazines, etc. There is a branch in Westdale on King Street West, and the Central Branch on York Street in Jackson Square. Library cards are free to all McMaster students, even if you don't live in Hamilton.

University Technology Services (UTS)

Your MAC ID (the username and password you used to register for classes) enables you to access UTS services including:

- E-mail account on the MacMail Server
- MacSecure - public area wireless access
- MacVote - McMaster's online voting system
- MOSAIC - allows you to view and change your personal information, view grades, use registration system, etc.

Visit [UTS Student Catalogue](#) for a full listing of UTS provided services for students.

CAMPUS ORGANIZATIONS

[Student Accessibility Services \(SAS\)](#)

McMaster University Student Centre, Room B107

Student Accessibility Services offers various supports for students with disabilities. SAS works with full-time and part-time students, as well as prospective students. SAS assists with academic and disability-related needs. If you will require accommodations, please contact SAS before September.

[MacPherson Institute for Leadership, Innovation & Excellence in Teaching](#)

Mills Library L504

McMaster Institute for Innovation & Excellence in Teaching & Learning is a resource for everyone who teaches at McMaster University. Their services include workshops, seminars, symposia, peer consulting, learning technology and resources for teaching.

[International Student Services \(ISS\)](#)

Gilmour Hall, Room 104

ISS offers information and services for International Students in a variety of areas, including immigration matters, University Health Insurance Plan (UHIP), work/study abroad, and more.

[The Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 3906 \(CUPE\)](#)

Kenneth Taylor Hall, B111

CUPE represents Teaching Assistants, Research Assistants, Sessional Lecturers, and hourly-rated Music Instructors.

[The Graduate Students' Association \(GSA\)](#)

Wentworth House, Room 109A

Contact the GSA concerning your health benefits, travel and other funding, and graduate student organizations. The GSA represents the members (all graduate students) before the authorities of McMaster University, and promotes communication and participation in all matters of common interest of the members of the Association, both at McMaster and in other educational institutions. The GSA owns and operates the [Phoenix](#) restaurant and bar.

[Ombuds Office](#)

McMaster University Student Centre, Room 210

A confidential service designed to assist students, faculty, and staff in the just, fair and equitable resolution of university related complaints and concerns.

[School of Graduate Studies \(SGS\)](#)

Gilmour Hall, Room 212

Contact the School of Graduate Studies for issues concerning payroll, scholarships, and registration information.

[Equity and Inclusion Office \(EIO\)](#)

McMaster University Student Centre Room 212

Provide services to all students, staff, and faculty members at McMaster community. They are responsible for the University's Sexual Harassment Policy and Anti-Discrimination Policy.

Graduate Student Life/Organizations/Athletics

There are intramural sports activities and various clubs and activities under the [McMaster Students Union](#) (MSU), while the [McMaster Daily News](#) provides information on upcoming events and speakers. [International Student Services](#) and the [Graduate Students Association](#) also publish information about events and activities of interest to students. The School of Graduate Studies website is also an excellent resource for graduate student-specific resources, including space for community research, project funding, and resources to help build academic and professional skills. Please click the 'Graduate Student Life' tab [here](#) for more information.

The David Braley Athletics Centre is one of the largest fitness centres at a Canadian university. The complex includes a double gymnasium, certified indoor, 200-metre track, four international squash courts, and multipurpose studios for karate, yoga, dance, and tai chi. Most of the activities in the Athletic Centre are free to students, except for "The Pulse" fitness room. For detailed information regarding membership fees, please visit their [website](#).

Parking and Transit

"Security and Parking Services strive to provide our University community and visitors with safe and well-maintained parking and transiting infrastructure. We are dedicated to courteous and helpful customer service through information resources, polite and knowledgeable staff, and convenient parking facilities. We encourage voluntary compliance.

We also encourage alternative means of transportation to preserve the environment. We have collaborative initiatives with the office of sustainability, such as go transit, carpool parking, and secure storage and bike locker rentals to meet storage needs for green transit users."

Detailed information on parking lots and rates may be found via the following link: <https://parking.mcmaster.ca/>

Transportation

Taxis: [Blue Line](#) (905-525-2583, 905-525-BLUE), [Hamilton Cab](#) (905-777-7777)

[GO Transit](#)

GO Transit is the regional public transit service for the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area, with routes extending to communities across the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

[Hamilton Street Railway \(HSR\)](#)

The miscellaneous fees in your tuition include your HSR bus pass; this bus pass is valid from September until August. Details about distribution will be provided by SGS.

[Hamilton Bike Share:](#)

Hamilton's Community Bike Share Program is an inexpensive and innovative system of publicly accessible bicycles for pay per use transportation. These bikes are available at over 100 stations across the city, and there is a special rate for McMaster students.

SEPTEMBER CHECKLIST

- ☐ Carefully read through this information and information provided to you by the School of Graduate Studies.
- ☐ Upload your tax forms, deposit information form, and a VOID cheque as a pdf file to [MacDrive](#) as soon as possible so that you will get paid on time.
- ☐ Complete your personal and banking information on MOSAIC.
- ☐ Register for and complete SGS 101 – Ethics Online course; register in MOSAIC to have the course made available to you in Avenue to Learn.
- ☐ Register for and complete SGS 201 – Online Accessibility course; register in MOSAIC to have the course made available to you in Avenue to Learn.
- ☐ Meet with the instructor for whom you will be TAing and complete the “Supervisor and Teaching Assistant Hours of Work” form. Submit to the CSMA office.
- ☐ Sign up for office hours (if required by the instructor/supervisor as part of your job as a teaching assistant) and confirm them with your supervisor.
- ☐ Complete Health & Safety online training as indicated.
- ☐ If you received a conditional offer, provide original documentation to the Graduate Administrative Assistant to clear your condition(s).
- ☐ Send the Graduate Administrative Assistant an email from your new McMaster email account. Include your complete home address, phone number and the name and phone number of someone we can contact in case of emergency.
- ☐ Get to know your neighbours and make yourself at home!