

DEPARTMENT of BIOCHEMISTRY
GRADUATE PROGRAM
GUIDELINES



UNIVERSITY of TORONTO

ACADEMIC YEAR 2011-2012

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The Graduate Program of the Department of Biochemistry

The policies governing the graduate program in the Department of Biochemistry follow the regulations outlined in the School of Graduate Studies (SGS) Calendar (see the General Regulations and the Degree Regulations: <http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/calendar.htm>). A number of memoranda amplifying or explaining these policies have been issued by the Departmental Chair, or the Graduate Committee, and these items have been collected here, as a guide to both students and their supervisors. Included are the present departmental policies pertaining to tuition fees, stipends/awards, course requirements, examinations, etc. This set of guidelines cannot cover all possibilities. It is the responsibility of the student to consult fully with his/her supervisor and the Graduate Coordinator and to have a complete understanding of the implications of all decisions that are made pertaining to the graduate program. It is also the responsibility of the student to be informed of all SGS policies and deadlines.

Members of the Graduate Committee (2011-2012)

Dr. Reinhart Reithmeier, Chair of the Department

Dr. Liliana Attisano, Graduate Coordinator

Dr. Boris Steipe

Dr. Trevor Moraes

Dr. David Bazett-Jones

Dr. Hue-Sun Chan

Dr. Grant Brown

Dr. Emil Pai

Dr. William Trimble

Dr. Angus McQuibban

Biochemistry Graduate Student Union (BGSU): yourbgsu@gmail.com

Graduate Program Administrator: Ms. Carrie Harber (carrie.harber@utoronto.ca)

Money Matters

1. Harmonized Student Stipend and Tuition

The Harmonized Student Stipend is structured as a living allowance plus tuition and incidental fees. This makes students' stipends independent of tuition fee increases. In general, the stipend is paid from the supervisor's research grant, an award to the student (a source either internal or external to the University, such as a University of Toronto Fellowship or CIHR, NSERC or OGS award, respectively), or a combination of both. With the exception of the merit bonus - associated with winning a competitive award (described below in section 4) - and various needs-based awards/bursaries, the stipend amount cannot be supplemented. This holds for all students, regardless of their geographical location (i.e. the University campus or the hospital research institutes). This policy is in accordance with that implemented by the Faculty of Medicine aimed at the harmonization of student stipends for all graduate students in the Faculty.

Category I Students

- i. M.Sc. candidates
- ii. Direct-entry Ph.D. candidates prior to completion of a Qualifying Exam

Category I students will receive \$17,000 living allowance plus tuition (\$6,885) and incidental fees (\$1,156.36) = \$25,041.36.*

International category I students will receive \$17,000 living allowance plus tuition (\$16,082) and incidental fees (\$1,156.36) and the University Health Insurance Plan (UHIP) (\$684) = \$34,922.36.*

Category II Students

- i. Ph.D. candidates who have entered the program via a Transfer Exam
- ii. Ph.D. candidates who have completed an M.Sc. degree
- iii. Direct-entry Ph.D. candidates who have completed a Qualifying Exam

Category II students will receive \$18,000 living allowance plus tuition (\$6,885) and incidental fees (\$1,156.36) = \$26,041.36.*

International category II students will receive \$18,000 living allowance plus tuition (\$16,082) and incidental fees (\$1,156.36) and the University Health Insurance Plan (UHIP) (\$684) = \$35,922.36.*

* Tuition, incidental fees and UHIP amounts are for the 2011-2012 academic year.

Faculty Members with International Students

The department requires that all supervisors cover the additional cost of an international student. The additional cost is \$9,881 (tuition fee differential + UHIP).*

* Tuition and UHIP amounts are for the 2011-2012 academic year.

2. Duration of Stipend Support

Students will typically receive full continuous stipend support from the date of entry into the program through to the day that the final corrected thesis is submitted to the School of Graduate Studies. Examples of exceptions to this rule include students who are on a leave of absence or students who are in violation of the terms and conditions of registration in the department and/or the School of Graduate Studies. An M.Sc. student is normally expected to complete and defend his/her thesis within two to three years, while a Ph.D. student is expected to complete and defend his/her thesis within four to six years. Funding is guaranteed for a minimum of two years for M.Sc. students and five years for Ph.D. students. Stipend support may also be withdrawn from students who do not complete the final thesis submission to the School of Graduate Studies within the recommended time frame for completion (i.e. four months for M.Sc. students and eight months for Ph.D. students from the time they are given permission to write their theses). See the Time Frame section under the M.Sc. and Ph.D. Thesis and Oral Defense sections.

3. Awards

Below is a list of awards that students should apply for if eligible. Students should discuss other possible awards they may be eligible for with their supervisors.

Award	Applicants	Agency/Institute and Comments	Deadline	Merit Bonus*
CIHR	M.Sc. and Ph.D.	Canadian Institutes of Health Research http://www.cihr.ca/ Applications sent directly to CIHR. CIHR training grants are not eligible for a merit bonus.*	Mid-October	yes
NSERC (PGS/CGS)	M.Sc. and Ph.D.	Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/ Applications must go through the departmental office.	Mid-October; internal deadline to be communicated in mid-September	yes
CCSRI	Ph.D. only	Canadian Cancer Society Research Institute http://www.cancer.ca/Research.aspx Applications sent directly to CCSRI.	February 1 st	yes
CCFF	M.Sc. and Ph.D.	Canadian Cystic Fibrosis Foundation http://www.cysticfibrosis.ca/en/index.php Applications sent directly to CCFF.	October 1 st	yes
HSFC	M.Sc. and Ph.D.	Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada http://www.hsf.ca/research/en/home Applications sent directly to HSFC.	November 1 st	yes
OGS	M.Sc. and Ph.D.	Ontario Graduate Scholarships http://www.osap.gov.on.ca/eng/not_secure/OGS.htm Applications must go through the departmental office.	Mid-October; internal deadline to be communicated in mid-September	yes
OGSST	See comments	Ontario Graduate Scholarships in Science and Technology http://www.grad.uottawa.ca/Default.aspx?tabid=1694 Students will be informed about the eligibility requirements and deadlines as they become available.	Mid-April to mid-May	yes
OSOTF	See comments	Ontario Student Opportunity Trust Fund http://www.facmed.utoronto.ca/programs/graduate/awards/Internal/OSOTF.htm Students will be informed about the eligibility requirements and deadlines as they become available.	Mid-April to mid-May	no
Restracomp	M.Sc. and Ph.D.	Research Training Competition http://www.sickkids.ca/Research/StudentandFellowResources/RTC/Training-Programs/Graduate-Studentship/index.html The student's supervisor must be appointed to the SickKids Research Institute as Senior Scientist, Scientist, Senior Associate Scientist, or Associate Scientist.	May	no
U of T Fellowship	M.Sc. and Ph.D.	University of Toronto Fellowship All eligible students will be considered for this award. Students will be nominated by the department (no application is necessary).	N/A	no
Connaught Scholarship	M.Sc. and Ph.D.	International students will be nominated by the department (no application is necessary).	N/A	no
Mary Beatty Fellowship	M.Sc. and Ph.D.	Students will be nominated by the department (no application is necessary).	N/A	no

* for information on merit bonuses, see section 4 below

4. Merit Bonuses

A. A student who takes up a competitive, external award of \$15,000 or more will first have the amount of the award supplemented to equal the living allowance and will then receive a merit bonus of \$3,000 from his/her supervisor. For awards that are not listed in the table above in section 3, awardees should consult with the Graduate Coordinator to determine whether their award qualifies for a merit bonus. If the competitive award is greater than the living allowance, see point B below.

B. In some instances a student may receive a competitive award that is greater than the living allowance. In this case, the merit bonus of \$3,000 is added to the value of the award, not to the value of the living allowance.

C. Students who receive an award of greater value than the total harmonized stipend plus \$3,000 (e.g., Doctoral or Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarships) will be ineligible for a further merit bonus.

D. A Ph.D. student that has held such eligible competitive funding for the FULL DURATION of their eligibility (i.e., for four consecutive years) will be eligible for the merit bonus for one year beyond the duration of the award.

5. Departmental Policy Regarding Holding a U of T Fellowship in Conjunction with Other Awards

If a U of T Fellowship awardee receives another scholarship worth more than the U of T award, then he/she must accept this other scholarship, inform the department, and decline, or return, the U of T Fellowship. The student is responsible for returning any U of T Fellowship money retroactive to the commencement date of the other award.

6. Departmental Policy Regarding Holding Two Awards at Once

If a student who has already taken up one award is subsequently awarded a second scholarship the following rules apply:

A. The rules of the awarding agencies regarding holding a second award must be followed.

B. A student who takes up a second award must inform his/her supervisor, business officer, and the department via the Graduate Program Administrator (carrie.harber@utoronto.ca). The amount of the second award will be subtracted from the supplement that is provided to the student from his/her supervisor.

C. If the sum of the two awards is greater than the living allowance, the awardee must consult with the Graduate Coordinator who can advise the student to ensure all of the above guidelines are met.

7. Student's Responsibilities

A. Students who do not have multi-year awards are expected to apply each year for all scholarships for which they are eligible. Students who have multi-year awards should ensure that, as appropriate, they complete any necessary requirements/paperwork to allow continuation of their awards.

B. On taking up an award of any kind, it is the student's responsibility to ensure that he/she abides by the rules and regulations of the awarding agency.

C. Every student must inform his/her supervisor, business officer, and the department via the Graduate Program Administrator (carrie.harber@utoronto.ca) of all awards and stipends that he/she is receiving. Include the following information: type of award; start date; end date; whether the award is renewable; amount of award. The student should mail, or deliver, a copy of the award notice to the Graduate Program Administrator.

D. Students must read the fine print: most awards can be held only for the first two years of an M.Sc. program and for the first five years of a Ph.D. program.

E. If at any time an error leads to an incorrect payment being made to the student, he/she must report this to his/her supervisor and as appropriate to the business officer/SGS/awarding agency so that the appropriate correction can be made.

8. Teaching Assistant (TA) Compensation

There are a limited number of Teaching Assistant (TA) positions, which allow students to gain teaching experience while supplementing their stipend income. Money earned from TA positions is income that can be added to their stipend. Students may work a maximum of 10 hours per week out of a 40 hour school week. This limit is to ensure that graduate students devote sufficient time to their thesis work. Approximately 35 % of graduate students hold some type of TA position. These positions range from marking and invigilating exams, to running tutorial sessions and laboratory courses. The department will notify students via email and bulletin board postings as TA positions become available.

9. Financial Assistance: Completion Grants and Emergency Funding

All graduate students who encounter an unanticipated serious financial emergency can make an appointment with the SGS Financial Counsellor (416-946-0808) whether or not they believe they are eligible for emergency grant assistance.

Students may also view the information on SGS Emergency Loans which may be appropriate depending on their situation: <http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/informationfor/students/money/support/assistance.htm>.

Fees Payment, Registration, Course Enrolment and Student Cards

Fees Payment and Registration: Students are considered registered as soon as they have paid tuition and incidental fees or have an approved request to Register Without Payment (see the following section for details).

All students are responsible for paying their own tuition fees. Students are informed of fees payable by way of the Student Web Services (SWS) in the Repository of Student Information (ROSI) at <https://www.rosi.utoronto.ca/main.html>. All students are expected to view their account on the SWS to monitor all account activity (see <http://www.fees.utoronto.ca/> for fees information).

Tuition fees can be paid at most Canadian financial institutions. Since it can take several days to process such transactions, it is advisable to obtain a receipt as it will not be possible to enrol in courses or receive stipend/award payments without showing proof of fees payment.

Student wishing to make a fees payment from **outside of Canada** may choose one of the following three fee payment options:

- Travelex Bank-to-Bank Transfer
- Bank draft or money order in Canadian funds, payable to the “University of Toronto”; payment may be sent by mail or courier to University of Toronto, Student Accounts, 215 Huron Street, 3rd floor, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M5S 1A2.
- Transfer funds from the student’s bank to the University of Toronto bank account at the Royal Bank of Canada, 648 Spadina Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M5S 2H7; Transit & Account #05802 0000018, FI #003. The Swift/Sort Code is ROYCCAT2. The Bank Wire Information sheet should be printed and taken to the student’s bank. Students should note: With this method there will be some additional charges. The student’s home bank will charge to initiate the wire transfer. The wire transfer may be sent through an intermediate bank which will also levy a charge. As well, the Royal Bank has a \$10.00 fee that will be deducted from the amount of the payment. Students should add \$10 to their payment to cover this deduction.

For more detailed information on these three methods of payment, please visit: <http://www.fees.utoronto.ca>.

Register Without Payment: On a yearly basis students may temporarily **defer the payment** of their tuition fees. In order to defer fees students must complete a Register Without Payment Form and submit a copy of their fees invoice to the Graduate Program Administrator. Register Without Payment Forms can be downloaded from the SGS website (Forms for Students link in the Students section). Fees invoices can be printed from the students’ ROSI accounts. Tuition fees will not be deferred unless the form is submitted. Graduate students must register yearly by either paying or deferring their tuition fees.

Enrolment in Courses: Students enrol in courses online using ROSI (<https://www.rosi.utoronto.ca/main.html>). For first time users, the password is the student's date of birth (DDMMYY). Note that each year ROSI will automatically enrol students in the thesis course, RST 9999Y, and one of the seminar courses, BCH2020 (M.Sc.) or BCH2022 (Ph.D.), as appropriate. Students must enrol themselves in any other courses that they may wish to take.

It should be noted that students' enrolment in courses will not be approved until tuition fees have been paid or deferred. Once fees payment has been received and processed by the University (e.g. from a banking institution) a zero balance will appear on ROSI. If fees have been paid but not yet processed, the assistance of the Graduate Program Administrator will be required to enrol in courses.

Student Cards and Email Accounts: All new students will need to obtain a photo-ID card (TCard), as it serves as both student card and library card. Cards may be obtained at Robarts Library, Rm 2054. Two pieces of identification will be required: a photo-ID and a document indicating your student number (e.g. Offer of Admission Letter for new students or Fees Invoice for continuing students). For further information on getting a TCard and creating a University of Toronto email account see: <http://www.utoronto.ca/TCard/>.

Degree Options for Students Registered in the M.Sc. Program

As an M.Sc. candidate in the Department of Biochemistry, a student has the following options:

Completion of a Masters Degree: On entry into the M.Sc. program it may be the student's intention to proceed only as far as the M.Sc. degree or he/she may make this decision during the first two years in the program. It is also possible that the student may intend to proceed into the Ph.D. program but that his/her supervisory committee will ask the student to complete his/her M.Sc. degree before seeking admission to the Ph.D. program.

In both cases the student will go through an M.Sc. defense in which the examining committee will not only evaluate his/her thesis and defense, but will also make a recommendation regarding his/her suitability for the Ph.D. program.

To pursue a Ph.D. degree after the student's successful M.Sc. defense, he/she must apply to the program through the School of Graduate Studies in the normal fashion.

Transferring into the Ph.D. Program Without Completing the M.Sc. Program: If the student wishes to transfer into the Ph.D. program without completing an M.Sc. degree he/she must have the approval of his/her supervisory committee to schedule a **Transfer Exam** and he/she must have completed one half-credit in Selected Topics in Biochemistry or BCH2024H (Focused Topics in Biochemistry) (or equivalent, subject to approval by the Graduate Coordinator) and presented one half-hour student seminar in BCH2020L.

Transfer Exams and Qualifying Exams (see next section) are essentially identical in format and style and are meant to examine a student's qualifications and potential to complete the Ph.D. degree.

The student must have his/her Transfer Exam within 18-21 months of first registration in the M.Sc. program. If the student's start date was September 1, he/she must have the Transfer Exam prior to June 15 of the second year in the M.Sc. program. If the student started the program January 1, then the Transfer Exam must be prior to October 15 of the second year.

Requirement for a Qualifying Exam for Students Registered in the Ph.D. Program

There are several routes for entry into the Ph.D. program. The student must have a Qualifying Exam if he/she entered the Ph.D. program via one of the following routes:

- i. Entry after completing an M.Sc. in Biochemistry at the University of Toronto;
- ii. Entry after completing an M.Sc. in a related discipline at the University of Toronto;
- iii. Entry after completing an M.Sc. in Biochemistry or in a related discipline at another university;
or
- iv. Direct entry: the student was accepted directly into the Ph.D. program from an Honours B.Sc. program based on an outstanding academic record and research potential.

If the student entered the Ph.D. program via a Transfer Exam (see previous section) he/she is not required to take a Qualifying Exam.

The student must schedule the Qualifying Exam within 18-21 months after registering in the Ph.D. program. Prior to the Qualifying Exam the student must have completed one half-credit in Selected Topics in Biochemistry or BCH2024H (Focused Topics in Biochemistry) (or equivalent, subject to approval by the Graduate Coordinator) and he/she must have presented one half-hour student seminar in BCH2022L.

Once the student has registered in the Ph.D. program, a change in registration back to the M.Sc. program is only permitted under exceptional circumstances and must be approved by the Associate Dean of the School of Graduate Studies.

Supervisory Committee

Composition of the Committee: The student's supervisory committee is composed of his/her supervisor and two other faculty members, one of whom must be a member of the Department of Biochemistry. It is preferable, but not required, that one member of the supervisory committee is from a geographical node of the department that is distinct from that of the student. If the student's project involves a collaboration within the University of Toronto, at least one member of his/her committee must be at "arms length" from the project. Students will find it helpful if at least one member of their supervisory committee is a "senior" faculty member who knows departmental and School of Graduate Studies policies.

Approval of the Committee: The composition of the committee is **subject to approval by the Graduate Coordinator**, so the student must inform her/him of the suggested composition of the committee **before scheduling the first committee meeting**. Any change to the composition of the committee must have the approval of the supervisor and the Graduate Coordinator.

How to Choose Committee Members: It might be quite clear to the student whom he/she would like to invite to serve on his/her committee. In this case, the student may just get approval from his/her supervisor and then ask these faculty members if they are willing to serve. If the student is not sure whom he/she would like to invite to serve on the committee, he/she may solicit suggestions from his/her supervisor and other students in the lab or cognate labs. The student should make a list and discuss these potential committee members with his/her supervisor to decide on the two most appropriate faculty members to ask to serve. If a faculty member whom the student would like to have on his/her committee is actively engaged in the student's research through collaboration with his/her supervisor, this individual should be listed as a co-supervisor and an additional committee member selected (for a total of four committee members).

Duties of the Supervisory Committee

Monitoring the Student's Progress: The student's supervisory committee serves the very important function of monitoring his/her progress to ensure the timely completion of the program. This is achieved by regularly scheduled committee meetings at which the student updates the committee members on his/her research accomplishments and proposed future directions. The committee members will do their best to anticipate possible problems and to advise the student on any difficulties that he/she may encounter. Additionally, the committee evaluates the student's overall development as a scientist and brings any weaknesses to his/her attention. The supervisory committee members also participate in defining the end-point for the student's thesis research.

Approval to Take a Transfer Exam: If the student is in the M.Sc. program and wishes to enter the Ph.D. program via the successful completion of a Transfer Exam, he/she requires the permission of the supervisory committee to schedule such an exam. The decision to complete an M.Sc. degree or to schedule a Transfer Exam is made in consultation with the committee at the **second committee meeting**. This meeting occurs 14-16 months after the start of the program and the Transfer Exam occurs at the 18-21 month mark.

If the student has been admitted directly to the Ph.D. program he/she will be required to successfully complete the Qualifying Exam before continuing in the program. Permission to take the Qualifying Exam must be obtained from the committee at the **second committee meeting** (at 14-16 months). The Qualifying Exam is to occur within 21 months of entry into the program.

Approving the Student's Thesis: Once the student has completed all of his/her experimental work and the other M.Sc. or Ph.D. degree requirements, the supervisory committee has the very important responsibility of approving the student's thesis. The supervisor will read the complete draft of the thesis and discuss the necessary changes/corrections with the student. Once the supervisor has approved the thesis by signing a Thesis Approval Form (see M.Sc. and Ph.D. Thesis and Oral Defense sections), the student gives a copy to each member of the supervisory committee. It is their responsibility at this stage to critically review this draft and to indicate if any additional changes are required prior to their approval of its acceptability for defense.

Committee Meetings

Prior to scheduling the first committee meeting, **the student must obtain approval** of his/her supervisory committee members from the Graduate Coordinator.

Scheduling a Committee Meeting: It is the student's responsibility to arrange his/her committee meetings. First, the student must find a day and time that is suitable for his/her supervisor and committee members. The student must then sign up for a seminar room. Committee meetings can be held in the Department of Biochemistry's seminar rooms (MSB Rm. 5231 or Rm. 5337) or if the student is not located in the MSB, he/she may choose to use a meeting room in his/her own facility. The sign-up book to reserve the Department of Biochemistry's seminar rooms (MSB Rm. 5231 or Rm. 5337) is in the Biochemistry office. The student may reserve one of the department's projectors for the meeting or use his/her own. If the student would like to reserve a departmental projector, he/she must let Vicki, the Departmental Administrative Assistant, know by email (victoria.ilgacs@utoronto.ca) or by speaking to her in person in the Biochemistry office. Finally, the student must send a confirmatory email to his/her supervisor and committee members, with a copy to the Graduate Program Administrator (carrie.harber@utoronto.ca), indicating the date, time, and location of the committee meeting. The Graduate Program Administrator will print out a Supervisory Committee Meeting Report Form for you to pick up prior to the meeting.

Progress Report: At least two days prior to a committee meeting, the student must provide each committee member with a three to five page progress report. The student must put the date, time, and location of the meeting on the front page. The report should include:

- a brief introduction,
- a summary of the project's status at the time of the last committee meeting,
- an overview of the student's completed work and work-in-progress,
- and a description of the experiments that the student plans to do in the future.

What Happens at a Committee Meeting?:

The student must pick up a Report Form from the Graduate Program Administrator to bring to the meeting. At the beginning of the committee meeting the student will be asked to give a PowerPoint presentation approximately 20 minutes in length. The presentation should include the following:

- the rationale of the project,
- a summary of the project's status at the time of the last committee meeting,
- a description of the experimental approaches being used,
- an overview of progress, ongoing work, and future directions.

The committee will then discuss the project in greater detail with the student. At the conclusion of the meeting, the student will be asked to absent himself/herself while the committee fills out a Report Form. The student will then rejoin the committee and be given a brief oral summary of the comments in the Report. The Report includes pages for individual comments from the committee members and a written response from the student.

After everyone has signed the Report, it is the student's responsibility to make a copy for himself/herself and the committee members and to give the original copy to the Graduate Program Administrator. It is also the student's responsibility to bring copies of this report to give to the committee members at the next committee meeting.

If the progress of a student is repeatedly "unsatisfactory", the Chair of the department will be informed, and the student may be asked to withdraw from the program.

First Committee Meeting: The student must have his/her first committee meeting within **six to eight months** of first registering. Introducing the research topic to the committee at this time will serve as a good opportunity to review the ideas behind the research, the immediate goals of the project, and the approaches being used. At this time the student does not need to define his/her longer term goals. The student can look forward to getting useful ideas on the design and interpretation of his/her experiments from the committee members.

Second Committee Meeting: The student must have the second committee meeting **14 to 16 months** into the program. If the student is in the M.Sc. program and wishes to reclassify into the Ph.D. program without completing an M.Sc. degree, he/she should receive permission at this meeting to prepare a proposal for a Transfer Exam. If the student decides to remain in the M.Sc. program, then the committee will advise him/her on the experimental work that remains to be done to complete the M.Sc. degree. If the student has entered the Ph.D. program directly, he/she will discuss the preparation of his/her proposal for the Qualifying Exam.

Subsequent Committee Meetings:

- Students completing the Master's degree must meet at least once **every six months** after the second committee meeting until the degree is completed.
- Students that have successfully completed a Transfer or Qualifying Exam must meet at least once **every 10 months**.
- Beyond the 48-month mark, Ph.D. students must have a committee meeting **every six months** to help ensure that the degree is completed in a timely fashion. The committee meeting held at the 48-month mark must clearly address the issue of what remains to be done to complete the Ph.D. degree. The Committee Meeting Report must spell out the expectations and time lines for completion explicitly.

More frequent meetings are often held if the student is having experimental difficulties, if the student's progress has been limited, or if there are concerns over the feasibility of the project.

Final Committee Meeting and Permission to Write: For both M.Sc. and Ph.D. students, the committee gives the student permission to write up the thesis at the final committee meeting. Permission to write must be explicitly written on the final Committee Meeting Report Form. This indicates that the supervisor, committee members and student all agree that the experimental work required for the thesis has been completed. When a Permission to Write Form becomes available, this will be used to indicate the permission to write date instead of the Committee Meeting Report Form. Students will be notified when this form becomes available. A student cannot submit a thesis to the committee for review or examination in the absence of written permission to write, via the final Committee Meeting Report Form or submission of a Permission to Write Form.

In some cases, *minor* experimental work may remain to be completed at the time of the last committee meeting. In that case, permission to write should not be given at the final committee meeting. Only after all of the work has been completed should permission to write be given via the final Committee Meeting Report Form indicating the current date, or a Permission to Write Form (an additional committee meeting is not required).

Since there are time limits on how long a student can receive a stipend while writing the thesis, it is important that this date accurately reflects the completion of the experimental work. M.Sc. students are given four months and Ph.D. students eight months from the time they are given permission to write their theses to the day of their defense (see the time frames within the M.Sc. and Ph.D. Thesis and Oral Defense sections).

Committee Meeting Scheduling Summary:

- 1) First committee meeting at **six to eight months** after the start of the program
- 2) Second committee meeting at **14-16 months** after the start of the program
- 3) For M.Sc. students, subsequent committee meetings at least every six months
- 4) For Ph.D. students (after completion of a Transfer/Qualifying Exam) subsequent committee meetings every 10 months prior to the 48-month mark and every six months thereafter

For the Student's Records:

Start date of graduate studies	_____
Date suggested for next committee meeting	_____
Date of 1st committee meeting	_____
Date of 2nd committee meeting	_____
Date of Transfer/Qualifying Exam (if relevant)	_____
Date of 3rd committee meeting	_____
Date of 4th committee meeting	_____
Date of 5th committee meeting	_____
Date of 6th committee meeting	_____
Date of 7th committee meeting	_____
Date of 8th committee meeting	_____

Cautionary Advice

A Personal Folder: As soon as the student begins his/her graduate studies he/she should start a folder – all information pertaining to his/her studies should go into this folder. The student must be certain that if any exception to the department's rules is made for him/her that a written record pertaining to this is filed away (e.g. email from the Graduate Coordinator). Students must keep track of the courses that he/she has taken, the seminars that he/she has given, and the committee meetings that he/she has had.

Deadlines: Each September the student should put all pertinent deadlines from the SGS Calendar into his/her personal calendar. The student should mark down when he/she should have his/her next committee meeting or Transfer/Qualifying Exam.

Address: The student must let the Graduate Program Administrator know of any changes to his/her street or email address. The Graduate Program Administrator will send students important information by email.

Keep Current Address Up-To-Date on ROSI: The student must make sure that he/she updates his/her mailing address on ROSI if the student moves, and that he/she extends the mailing address expiry date as required. The default expiry date for the mailing address on ROSI is long after the student will have completed his/her degree. If this default date is left on ROSI, ROSI will continue to send information to the student at this address after he/she graduates. So a reasonable expiry date should be given for the current mailing address and updated as necessary. ROSI will **not** default to the student's permanent address if the mailing address has expired. So any ROSI mail for the student, including cheques, will not be sent out if the mailing address has expired. Updating an address on ROSI does not automatically update it in the departmental records, therefore it must be updated on both ROSI and with the Graduate Program Administrator.

Course Requirements

Course Requirements to Fulfill Admission Criteria:

If the student has been told at the time of being offered admission that he/she must take one or more courses to strengthen his/her undergraduate background in Biochemistry, he/she has to complete the specified course(s) in the first year of the program. These courses are to fulfill the student's admission conditions and do not count towards the courses that must be completed to fulfill the degree requirements.

Course Requirements for the M.Sc. Degree and for Transfer into the Ph.D. Program:

The course requirements for an M.Sc. degree and for a Transfer Exam are the same. These are:

i) One Half-Credit in Selected Topics in Biochemistry or BCH2024H

The student must take one half-credit in Selected Topics in Biochemistry or BCH2024H (Focused Topics in Biochemistry). The upcoming topics are announced one to two years in advance. Occasionally another graduate half-course that is not cross-listed as an undergraduate course may be substituted for this course provided that permission has been obtained from the Graduate Coordinator prior to registration in the course. With the permission of his/her supervisor, the student may take additional courses (see box below). Performance in all courses taken will appear on the student's transcript.

Course Credits Following Transfer from M.Sc. to Ph.D.

If the student transfers into the Ph.D. program, all appropriate courses taken while registered in the M.Sc. program will be credited towards the Ph.D. degree course requirements. If the student completes an M.Sc. degree and then registers in the Ph.D. program, the Selected Topics in Biochemistry course that was taken to fulfill the requirements for the M.Sc. degree cannot be credited towards the Ph.D. course requirements. However, if the student took an additional course(s) he/she may request that this course be credited towards the Ph.D. course requirements.

ii) Continuous Enrolment in BCH2020L

This is the Wednesday afternoon (4:00 pm) student seminar series. **Attendance at, and participation in, this course is mandatory.** Attendance is monitored by a sign-up sheet. The student is expected to attend every seminar with the exception of the occasional absence due to a conflict or other commitment. The student will, however, be penalized if he/she has a poor attendance record. The penalty will be an essay assignment(s) on seminar topics that were missed. A student in the M.Sc. program, or a student scheduling a Transfer Exam, must give at least one 20 minute seminar before the end of his/her second year in the program. No formal grade is assigned to BCH2020L as it is a credit/non-credit course. However, the student will receive feedback on his/her seminar from faculty immediately following the presentations of the day. The student will also receive a summary of evaluation forms completed by the faculty. The student remains registered in this course until he/she completes the M.Sc. degree or transfers into the Ph.D. program, at which time he/she is assigned credit for the course.

Seminar Format: Seminars are given as PowerPoint presentations that should include sufficient background information on the goals of the project and the experimental approaches used for the diverse expertise of the members of the audience. The student is strongly encouraged to rehearse his/her seminar presentation and to think about how he/she might answer questions that may be posed. The student is advised to keep PowerPoint animations to a minimum as the audience generally finds these distracting rather than instructive. The student must be aware of colour choices, such as avoiding red on a black background! The student must keep to the 30 minute time limit (including questions).

Seminar Sign-up: Sign-up for a seminar slot is done mid-summer through the Graduate Program Administrator. Students will receive an email with instructions on how to sign up. When the student signs up for a seminar he/she must inform his/her supervisor and committee members of the scheduled date as they are expected to be present at the seminar. Two weeks before the presentation date, the student should remind them that the seminar is coming up. At the same time, the title of the seminar must be given to Vicki, the Departmental Administrative Assistant (victoria.ilgacs@utoronto.ca), and to Rob (rob.reedijk@utoronto.ca) for inclusion on Cette Semaine, the departmental seminar listings site.

Student Seminar Date Reminders and Changes

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the seminar date that he/she signed up for, or was assigned, is convenient for his/her supervisor and supervisory committee members. Two weeks before the seminar date, the student must remind them that the seminar is coming up. Students cannot cancel scheduled seminars without prior approval by the Graduate Coordinator. A change in date is acceptable by swapping with another scheduled speaker, but must be arranged by the student; the Graduate Coordinator and the Graduate Program Administrator must then be notified.

Course Requirements for the Ph.D. Program:

i) Completion of **THREE** half-courses

ONE of these courses must be a half-course from either the Selected Topics in Biochemistry series or the BCH2024H series (Focused Topics in Biochemistry). The upcoming topics are announced one to two years in advance.

If the student entered the Ph.D. program either directly on completion of a B.Sc. degree (direct entry) or after completion of an M.Sc. degree, then he/she must complete one half-credit in either Selected Topics in Biochemistry or BCH2024H prior to his/her Qualifying Exam.

If the student transferred into the Ph.D. program, all appropriate courses taken while registered in the M.Sc. program will be credited towards the Ph.D. degree course requirements. If the student completed an M.Sc. degree and then registered in the Ph.D. program, the Selected Topics in Biochemistry course and other courses taken to fulfill the requirements for the M.Sc. degree cannot be credited towards the Ph.D. course requirements. However, if the student took an additional course(s) he/she may request that this course be credited towards the Ph.D. course requirements (see box above regarding course credits following transfer).

The **TWO additional half-courses** can be chosen from the following list:

- Selected Topics in Biochemistry (all three of the required half-courses can be from this series)
- BCH2024H (Focused Topics in Biochemistry; all three of the required half-courses can be from this series)
- JBB2025H (Protein Crystallography)
- JBB2026H (Protein Structure, Folding, and Design)
- JBL1507H (Biochemistry of Inherited Disease)
- CHM1456H (NMR Spectroscopy II: Advanced Theory and Application)
- CHM1478H (Quantum Mechanics for Physical Chemists; core course)
- CHM1479H (Thermodynamics; core course)
- MBP1011H (Foundations of Bioinformatics)
- MMG1012H (Topics in Molecular and Medical Genetics I)
- a graduate level course offered by a cognate department (e.g., CHM, IMM, MBP, MMG) that is not listed above, providing that approval from the Graduate Coordinator is obtained prior to registration
- one (but not both) of JTB2010H (Proteomics and Functional Genomics) and JTB2020H (Applied Bioinformatics)

- one (**but not more than one**) course from the BCH/JBB/JBI/JBZ/JNR 1400 series of courses (these are graduate courses which are also listed in the Faculty of Arts and Science Undergraduate Calendar). Although JNR1444Y is a full-year course, this course will count only as a half-course towards the degree requirements. Note that some CHM 1400 series courses are listed only in the SGS Calendar and some are listed in both the SGS Calendar and in the Faculty of Arts and Science Undergraduate Calendar. CHM1456H, CHM1478H, and CHM1479H are not cross-listed in the Undergraduate Calendar.

ii) Collaborative Programs

If the student is enrolled in a collaborative program then the course requirements of the program will substitute on an equivalent credit basis for the three half-course requirements outlined in (i) above.

iii) Continuous Enrolment in BCH2022L

In addition to the course requirements as described in (i) or (ii) above, the student must obtain credit in the Wednesday afternoon (4:00 pm) student seminar series BCH2022L. This is the same course as BCH2020L (the student seminar course for M.Sc. students) but for Ph.D. candidates, the course is called BCH2022L. **Attendance at, and participation in, this course is mandatory.** The student is expected to attend every seminar with the exception of the occasional absence due to a conflict or other commitment. The student will, however, be penalized if he/she has a poor attendance record. The penalty will be an essay assignment(s) on seminar topics that were missed. The student must present at least three half-hour seminars to obtain credit in this course. The first, second and third seminars, respectively, must be given before the end of year two, three and four-and-a-half of the program. If the student entered the Ph.D. program via transfer from the M.Sc. program, he/she will be given credit for one seminar given in the BCH2020L series and will only be required to give two additional seminars. If the student entered the Ph.D. program after completion of an M.Sc. degree, he/she must present three seminars. The student remains registered in this course until he/she completes the Ph.D. program, at which time he/she is assigned credit for the course. For more information on this seminar course, including seminar format and sign-up, please see the comments given under BCH2020L.

Student Seminar Date Reminders and Changes

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the seminar date that he/she signed up for, or was assigned, is convenient for his/her supervisor and supervisory committee members. Two weeks before the seminar date, the student must remind them that the seminar is coming up. Students cannot cancel scheduled seminars without prior approval by the Graduate Coordinator. A change in date is acceptable by swapping with another scheduled speaker, but must be arranged by the student; the Graduate Coordinator and the Graduate Program Administrator must then be notified.

Candidacy

All doctoral students are subject to the requirements for Good Academic Standing, including candidacy. To achieve candidacy, the student must complete all requirements for the degree exclusive of thesis research and courses such as ongoing research seminars that run continuously through the program. The student must also have an approved thesis topic, supervisor and supervisory committee. Upon achieving candidacy, completion is noted on the student's transcript.

Candidacy is achieved as noted on the following chart:

Degree Program	Candidacy Achieved
Ph.D., four-year program	End of third year
Ph.D., five-year program (Direct Entry)	End of fourth year

Students who do not achieve candidacy by these deadlines will be denied further registration in their program and will have their eligibility terminated.

If the student needs an extension, he/she must complete the Extension to Achieve Candidacy Form (<http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/informationfor/students/inform/stuforms.htm>) and submit it to the Biochemistry department for review. The student must present to the Biochemistry department the causes for the delay and evidence that the remaining candidacy requirements will be completed within the period of the extension requested.

Transfer Exam

Permission to Transfer: Students who wish to transfer from the M.Sc. program to the Ph.D. program without completion of an M.Sc. degree must have the approval of their supervisor and supervisory committee members. The decision to schedule a Transfer Exam is made in consultation with the committee at the **second committee meeting**. This meeting occurs **14-16 months** after the start of the program. The student can obtain a Request for a Transfer Exam Form from the Graduate Program Administrator in the graduate office. This form must be filled out and signed by the student and his/her supervisor and then returned to the graduate office before the Graduate Program Administrator can begin scheduling the Transfer Exam.

Note that the student must allow **four weeks** to schedule a Transfer Exam.

Date of the Exam: The Transfer Exam is to be held approximately 18 months (but not later than 21 months) after the date of first registration in the M.Sc. program.

The Transfer Document: The student must distribute a written report not to exceed 15 pages of text (12 point, double-spaced; not including references, figures, and figure legends) to all members of the examining committee at least 10 days in advance of the exam. **Page limits will be strictly enforced.** Proposals that contain more than 15 pages of text will be returned to the student and as a result may lead to a postponement of the exam.

Editorial input from the supervisor is considered to be part of the process and the student may seek the input of others, including supervisory committee members. Students may find it helpful to peruse other transfer proposals before writing their own (they may contact the Graduate Program Administrator for copies).

Required Format

Summary (1 page only): This page must include a summary of the objective, background results, research plan and the significance of the proposed research.

Introduction (~3 pages): The introduction should familiarize the reader with the field and provide a context for both the student's work-to-date and his/her proposed work.

Results-to-Date (~4-5 pages): A description of the research that the student has done, to date, including the rationale and conclusion for each experiment. Note that in some cases the student may have too much data to summarize in which case he/she will only be able to present those experiments that are most relevant to the proposed work.

Proposed Work (~5-6 pages): This section should begin with a statement of the rationale and goals of the proposed research. A description of the experimental approach to be followed should then be given. Specifically, the strengths and weaknesses of each approach, the possible outcomes, as well as alternative approaches should be discussed

NB. References, figures and figure legends are not part of the page count.

The Examining Committee: The examining committee will normally consist of at least six faculty members and have the following composition:

- the supervisor;
- the co-supervisor, if relevant;
- all members of the supervisory committee;
- at least one other Biochemistry faculty member;
- one additional extra-departmental faculty member;
- and a Chair drawn from the members of the Graduate Committee.

A quorum is four examiners.

The Oral Exam: At the beginning of the exam the student will give an oral presentation of 20 minutes length summarizing the work that has been done and describing the experiments that the student proposes to do. This will be followed by questions from the committee members. The questions will usually cover material drawn from all three aspects of the written document (Introduction, Research Completed and Research Proposed); given the purpose of the examination, the committee tends to focus on the Research Proposed. Additionally, candidates will be expected to demonstrate knowledge of the general principles of biochemistry. In judging the performance of the candidate, the exam committee is in general looking for evidence of: i) a solid knowledge base, ii) insight into the aims and significance of the proposed work, iii) creativity in her/his approach to research, and iv) data interpretation skills, that would collectively indicate an aptitude for independent research.

The Vote: At the end of the examination, all members of the examination committee, including the Chair, will vote. A student who is successful in his/her Transfer Exam (no more than one negative vote) will be transferred into the Ph.D. program. Courses already taken (or in progress) during the period of M.Sc. registration will be credited towards the Ph.D. course requirements. Once the transfer procedure is successfully completed, the student obtains **only** the Ph.D. degree from the department at the conclusion of his/her graduate program. All positive reclassification decisions are subject to the approval by the School of Graduate Studies.

A student whose performance on the Transfer Exam is deemed to be unsatisfactory (more than one negative vote) will either be asked to repeat the exam or to write a Master's thesis. In the case of the latter, the supervisor, in consultation with the supervisory committee, will advise the student as to what should be the "end point" of experimental work for the M.Sc. degree (obviously less than that proposed for the Ph.D. degree and in keeping with the traditional expectation levels for M.Sc. degrees in the department; see section on M.Sc. requirements).

Qualifying Exam

The composition of the Qualifying Exam committee and the exam itself is essentially identical to that of the Transfer Exam (see above). At the end of the Qualifying Exam, the examining committee will recommend that the student either continue in the Ph.D. program or withdraw from the program. In the latter case, the department may support a request for transfer into the M.Sc. program. Such a recommendation must be approved by the Associate Dean, Division IV, School of Graduate Studies.

M.Sc. Thesis and Oral Defense

Each M.Sc. candidate completing the degree must present a thesis and pass an oral examination on his/her research and related aspects of biochemistry. The University and the department at present accept the statements that the Master's degree should be considered as certification to two attributes: familiarity with a body of knowledge and acquaintance with the methods of research which will permit at least a beginning of systematic and independent inquiry. The M.Sc. thesis should not be required to contain a finished piece of research, but should be a competent report of the student's mastery of certain relevant techniques and their application to a specific problem.

Time Frame: When nearing completion of experimental work (typically at ~20-24 months), the student must schedule a final committee meeting to obtain approval to write the M.Sc. thesis. Permission to write must be written explicitly on the final Committee Meeting Report, in lieu of a Permission to Write Form which will become available in the future. This signifies that the student, supervisor and committee members agree that the experimental work required for the thesis has been completed (see section on committee meetings).

The department expects that four months is the normal time period between receiving permission to write the thesis and the M.Sc. Oral Examination. This includes three months for writing the thesis, obtaining approval from the supervisor and committee members via the Thesis Approval and Exam Request Forms, and one month for scheduling of the exam.

It is expected that the student will consult with his/her supervisor and, where appropriate, with committee members throughout the planning and writing of the thesis. The student should include in his/her discussions with the supervisor the time frame expected for completion of various stages of the thesis as well as the total time required. It is reasonable for the student to expect to receive comments from his/her supervisor and committee members within two weeks after providing them with the thesis.

Time frames will vary depending on the number of revisions required, the availability of committee members, and the student's writing skills. However, if the M.Sc. Oral Examination and any required corrections/modifications to the thesis (including final submission to the SGS) have not been completed within four months of receiving permission to write, the graduate stipend may be withdrawn. If the student feels that he/she will require additional time to complete the thesis, the student should discuss this with his/her supervisor well before the deadline and apply to the Chair and/or Graduate Coordinator for an extension. The supervisor may agree to continue funding if there is clear evidence of continued progress towards completion of the thesis. In the event of unusual delays (e.g. health problems, family crisis etc.), the student should consult with the Graduate Coordinator.

The student must allow FOUR WEEKS for the exam to be set up from the day the signed Thesis Approval and Exam Request Forms are handed in. Students must keep in mind that the Graduate Program Administrator must confirm the time and date of the examination with everyone on the examination committee. If someone is unavailable, the Graduate Program Administrator will check with the student's alternative choices for members of the examination committee.

Permission to Write: The student must obtain permission to write once his/her supervisory committee has agreed that he/she has completed all necessary experiments needed for writing the thesis. Permission to write must be explicitly written on the final Committee Meeting Report Form (see section on committee meetings above). This indicates that the supervisor, committee members and student all agree that the experimental work required for the thesis has been completed. When a Permission to Write Form becomes available, this will be used to indicate the permission to write date instead of the Committee Meeting Report Form. Students will be notified when this form becomes available.

Format of Thesis: A Master's thesis is generally organized into the following sections: Introduction (in which the pertinent literature is reviewed and the thesis problem, hypothesis, or rationale is stated), Materials and Methods, Results, Discussion, Conclusions or Summary, Future Directions, and Bibliography. Students may find it useful to consult previous theses from their labs or to check past theses collected in the departmental seminar room. The thesis should include sufficient methodological detail to ensure that the work could be readily reproduced. Projects-in-progress and/or negative results may be presented. All figures should be presented as high-quality reproductions and should be accompanied by figure legends. Students should visit the SGS website for guidelines on appropriate formatting of the thesis (<http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/informationfor/students/finup/producingthesis.htm>). The thesis should also include a title page, Abstract, Table of Contents, List of Figures, List of Tables, and List of Abbreviations used. If any one other than the student has contributed data to the thesis he/she should clearly state this on the title page of the relevant Results Chapter(s). The student should indicate the nature of the contribution (e.g. technical assistance under the student's guidance; independent design and interpretation of specific experiments in the Chapter, etc.). The editorial input of the supervisor during the writing of the M.Sc. thesis is considered to be an essential part the student's training. Therefore, except under "exceptional" circumstances and provided that the SGS time limit has not been exceeded, the student is expected to maintain his/her full-time (on campus) status until the thesis is complete.

Thesis Approval Form and Exam Request Form: When the student has completed about three-quarters of the thesis, he/she should pick up the M.Sc. Defense Package, containing the Thesis Approval Form and Exam Request Form, from the Graduate Program Administrator.

The supervisor will read the complete draft of the thesis and discuss the necessary changes/corrections with the student. Once the supervisor has approved the thesis by signing a Thesis Approval Form, the student gives a copy to each member of the supervisory committee.

The supervisory committee members must read and approve the thesis by signing the Thesis Approval Form before an exam can be scheduled.

The student will have a maximum of four months from the permission to write date to defend the thesis; this includes three months to write the thesis and submit the Thesis Approval and Exam Request Forms, and one month to schedule the exam. Although the student and his/her supervisor give suggestions for the composition of the examination committee, the composition is not final until approved by the Graduate Coordinator.

Scheduling the Exam: The examination will be scheduled when:

- all course and seminar requirements have been completed;
- the thesis has been approved to go forward to an oral defense;
- the Graduate Program Administrator has received the permission to write date, Thesis Approval Form and an Exam Request Form signed by both the student and his/her supervisor;
- and the Graduate Program Administrator has received an electronic version of the thesis abstract.

Membership of the Examining Committee: The examining committee will normally consist of at least six faculty members and have the following composition:

- the supervisor;
- the co-supervisor (if relevant);
- all members of the supervisory committee;
- at least one other Biochemistry faculty member;
- one extra-departmental faculty member from a cognate department who has not been involved with the supervision of the thesis or collaborated on the work therein;
- and a Chair drawn from the members of the graduate committee.

Distribution of the Thesis: The student must distribute copies of his/her thesis to members of the examination committee **not less than** 10 days before the oral examination.

The Oral Exam: At the beginning of the exam the student will give an oral presentation of 20 minutes length summarizing the work that has been done. This will be followed by questions from the committee members. In addition to a high level of proficiency on his/her thesis topic, the student will be expected to show reasonable knowledge of the principles of general biochemistry. Generally, most questions deal with the background for the project, the design and interpretation of the experiments, and future directions.

The Vote: At the end of the examination, the student will be asked to leave and all members of the examining committee, including the Chair, will vote. A quorum is four, which must include one member of the examination committee who is not on the student's supervisory committee. The vote takes into consideration the thesis research, the written document, and the defense. A passing vote can include the requirement for minor corrections. The Chair of the examining committee will decide, in consultation with the examining committee, who is responsible for approving these corrections. In recommending that the student be awarded the M.Sc. degree, the committee will also decide on the student's eligibility for entry into the department's Ph.D. program. The Chair of the examining

committee will provide the student with a verbal summary of the post-exam discussion and will provide the Graduate Coordinator with a written summary of the examination proceedings.

If, at the conclusion of the M.Sc. examination, there is more than one negative vote, the M.Sc. degree will not be granted. The student may request one opportunity to present a revised version of the thesis. Such a reevaluation requires that the student defend the revised thesis at a reconvened examination. The membership of a reconvened examining committee will normally be the same as the original one.

Post-exam Requirements: Upon satisfactory completion of the student's examination, the Graduate Coordinator will forward an M.Sc. Degree Recommendation Form to the School of Graduate Studies. Before doing this, the Graduate Coordinator must have received the Chair's Summary Form stating that the committee agreed that the student had passed the defense. Also, if any corrections are required, the Chair of the examining committee or her/his designate must confirm in writing that the corrections have been made satisfactorily.

Before the student submits the final copy of the thesis, he/she must obtain any required copyright permissions. This may require inclusion of a line of text at the beginning of the Results Chapters, if they've been published. The student must also ensure the thesis is formatted according to SGS guidelines.

The student must submit the corrected, formatted thesis in an electronic format to the School of Graduate Studies through T-space, the University's digital library repository, along with payment of the required thesis processing fee. The student must submit a Library Authorization Form to the Master's Office at the School of Graduate Studies. Students should visit the SGS website for detailed information on all topics discussed above pertaining to producing a thesis (<http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/informationfor/students/finup/producingthesis.htm>). The department requests that the student also produce a bound copy of his/her thesis for addition to the departmental library of theses housed in the departmental seminar room.

Master's Tuition Fee Bursary: A limited number of bursaries are available from SGS for Master's students whose minimum period of registration (i.e. program length) will have ended by or before either August or December and who have a small amount of work outstanding for the degree. The value of the bursary is equal to the difference between one session full-time fee and one session part-time fee. This tuition assistance is provided for only one session during the academic year. For further information contact the Graduate Program Administrator or the SGS.

Ph.D. Thesis and Oral Defense

The University and the department accept that a candidate for a Ph.D. degree "shall present a thesis embodying the results of original investigation conducted by the candidate The thesis shall constitute a significant contribution to the knowledge of the field." (from the SGS Degree Regulations page: <http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/calendar/2010-2011/degreg.htm>).

Time Frame: When nearing completion of experimental work, the student must schedule a committee meeting to obtain approval to write his/her Ph.D. thesis. Permission to write, via final Committee Meeting Report Form or signed and dated Permission to Write Form, signifies that the student, supervisor and committee members agree that the experimental work required for the thesis has been completed (see section on committee meetings).

A student will have eight months between receiving permission to write the thesis and the date of the Ph.D. Oral Examination. This includes three to four months to write the thesis, one to two months to revise and obtain approval from the supervisor and committee members via Thesis Approval and Exam Request Forms, and two months for the exam to be scheduled.

It is expected that the student will consult with his/her supervisor and, where appropriate, with committee members throughout the planning and writing of the thesis. The student should include in his/her discussions with his/her supervisor the time frame expected for completion of various stages of the thesis as well as the total time required.

It is reasonable for the student to expect to receive comments from his/her supervisor and committee members within two to three weeks after providing them with the thesis. If agreeable with the supervisor and committee members, it may be more expeditious to seek approval on a chapter-by-chapter basis rather than waiting until the entire thesis is written.

Time frames will vary depending on the number of revisions required, the availability of committee members, and the student's writing skills. However, if the Ph.D. Oral Examination and any required corrections/modifications to the thesis (including final submission to the SGS) have not been completed within eight months of receiving permission to write, the graduate stipend may be withdrawn. If the student feels that he/she will require additional time to complete the thesis (i.e. he/she is approaching the six month deadline between permission to write and submission of the Thesis Approval and Exam Request Forms), the student should discuss this with his/her supervisor well before the deadline and apply to the Chair and/or Graduate Coordinator for an extension. The supervisor may agree to continue funding if there is clear evidence of continued progress towards completion of the thesis. In the event of unusual delays (e.g. health problems, family crisis etc.), the student should consult with the Graduate Coordinator.

The student must allow for a total of nine weeks from the time he/she provides the Graduate Program Administrator with all the required information until the earliest exam date. The Graduate Program Administrator requires three weeks of this time to schedule the exam and send the exam request to SGS. SGS requires a minimum of six weeks from being first notified of the exam request until the examination date.

Permission to Write: The student must obtain permission to write once his/her supervisory committee has agreed that the student has completed all necessary experiments needed for writing the thesis. Permission to write must be explicitly written on the final Committee Meeting Report Form (see section on committee meetings above). This indicates that the supervisor, committee members and student all agree that the experimental work required for the thesis has been completed. When a Permission to Write Form becomes available, this will be used to indicate the permission to write date instead of the Committee Meeting Report Form. Students will be notified when this form becomes available.

Format of Thesis: The department has no rule as to the number of research chapters that constitute a Ph.D. thesis. As a general guideline, however, a thesis includes three research chapters. Generally, at least two of these typically represent published or publishable material. Often one of the chapters presents unpublished material. There are many exceptions to this guideline. The thesis can be organized in either of the following ways:

i) Traditional Style: Introduction (in which the pertinent literature is reviewed and the problem or hypothesis stated), Materials and Methods, Results, Discussion, Conclusions or Summary, Bibliography and Appendices.

ii) Publishable Style: Discrete chapters, each in a format suitable for submission for publication. Papers already published may be used without major modifications but reprints may not be bound into the body of the thesis. General Introduction and Discussion sections should be included, as well as Conclusions or Summary. The Bibliographies of the individual chapters may be combined, as may be the Methods sections, if appropriate. One significant difference from a manuscript prepared for publication is that figures must be included at the appropriate places in the text.

The student must obtain SGS guidelines from the Graduate Program Administrator on appropriate formatting of the thesis, or by visiting the SGS website (<http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/informationfor/students/finup/producingthesis.htm>). The thesis should also include a title page, Abstract, Table of Contents, List of Figures, List of Tables, and List of Abbreviations. Students may find it useful to consult previous theses from their labs or to check past theses collected in the departmental seminar room. The student must not hard-bind the thesis prior to completion of the Senate Oral Examination (coil-binding is acceptable).

A Doctoral thesis is generally organized into the following sections:

Introduction: Although the length of the introduction is somewhat field-specific, in most cases 40-60 double-spaced pages of text should be sufficient. The last section of the General Introduction in either format should provide a clear rationale for the thesis project.

Title Pages and Data Attribution: If any one other than the student has contributed data to the thesis the student should clearly state this on the title page of the relevant Results Chapter(s). The student should indicate the nature of the contribution (e.g. technical assistance under the student's guidance; independent design and interpretation of specific experiments in the Chapter etc.). If the work has been published or submitted, the full citation should also be given on this page. The student must obtain any required copyright permissions, which may be needed for work that has been published. Journals often require specifically-worded citations to be included on the first page of the relevant Results Chapter. The

student will need to submit the copyright permissions to SGS when submitting the final thesis. (<http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/informationfor/students/finup/producingthesis/copyrt.htm>).

Methods: Sufficient details of the methods should be given such that the research could be readily reproduced.

Figures: The quality of halftone figures must allow for unambiguous assessment of the data.

Bibliography: Most examiners prefer that the bibliography include titles.

Appendices: Appendices may be included to cover such topics as additional details pertaining to Methods; speculative ideas; projects-in-progress; and/or negative results, particularly if the second format is chosen.

Editorial Input from the Supervisor: Throughout the preparation of the written document, the student should be in regular consultation with his/her supervisor. It is not unusual for a student to submit individual chapters to his/her supervisor once they have been completed. Indeed, the editorial input of the supervisor during the writing of the Ph.D. thesis is considered to be an essential part of the student's training. Therefore, except under exceptional circumstances and provided that the SGS time limit has not been exceeded, all students will be expected to maintain their full-time (on campus) status in their respective laboratories until their thesis is complete. Completeness means that the thesis has been approved by the supervisory committee and has been submitted to the members of the senate oral committee.

Thesis Approval Form: When the thesis is nearing completion, the student should consult with his/her supervisor and the Graduate Program Administrator about necessary documents and protocols for setting up the Senate Oral Defense (e.g. arrangements for the External Examiner, date of the final oral examination etc.). After writing the thesis, the student must obtain written approval of the thesis from his/her supervisor via the Thesis Approval Form obtained from the Graduate Program Administrator (included in the Ph.D. Defense Package); at this point the student can give his/her thesis to the supervisory committee members to read.

Exam Request Form: Once the supervisory committee members have read and approved the thesis via the Thesis Approval Form, the student can begin completing the Exam Request Form. The student should carefully read the information regarding exam dates and the External Examiner.

The student and his/her supervisor should decide on an appropriate External Examiner and the supervisor should contact this person to confirm that he/she is willing and able to write the appraisal and to come to Toronto for the defense. The student should discuss possible dates for the defense with his/her supervisor, committee members and the External Examiner. Once the Exam Request Form has been completed and signed by the student and supervisor, it must be brought to the Graduate Program Administrator who will seek approval by the Graduate Coordinator. At this time, an electronic copy of the External Examiner's CV should be forwarded to the Graduate Program Administrator (carrie.harber@utoronto.ca).

Note that it is the supervisor's responsibility to host the External Examiner.

The student will have a maximum of six months from the permission to write date to prepare his/her thesis and schedule the defense (i.e. submit the Thesis Approval and Exam Request Forms). Scheduling of the exam will take approximately two months.

Scheduling the Exam: The examination will not be scheduled until:

- i. the student has completed all course and seminar requirements;
- ii. the thesis has been approved to go forward to an oral defense;
- iii. the Graduate Program Administrator has received the permission to write (via final committee meeting report or Permission to Write Form), Thesis Approval Form and an Exam Request Form signed by both the student and supervisor;
- iv. and the Graduate Program Administrator has received an electronic version of the thesis abstract and an up-to-date CV from the External Examiner.

Membership of the Examining Committee: Although the student and his/her supervisor give suggestions for the composition of the examination committee on the Exam Request Form, the composition is not final until approved by the Graduate Coordinator. SGS rules state that the maximum number of voting members is six and that a quorum is four voting members. The examining committee will normally have the following composition:

- the External Examiner (VOTING member);
- the supervisor (NON-VOTING member);
- the co-supervisor, if relevant (NON-VOTING member);
- two members of the supervisory committee (VOTING members);
- if the student has more than two faculty on the supervisory committee the additional members can attend as NON VOTING members of the examination committee;
- one other Biochemistry faculty member (VOTING member);
- one non-Biochemistry faculty member from a cognate department who has not been involved with the supervision of the thesis or collaborated with the work therein (extra-departmental, VOTING member);
- the Chair of the Biochemistry Department or his/her designate chosen from the current membership of the Graduate Committee and who is at arms length from the thesis work (VOTING member);
- a Chair of the exam who is assigned by SGS (NON-VOTING member).

A formal appraisal of the thesis is written by the External Examiner who must be from outside of the University of Toronto and who, except under exceptional circumstances, must agree to attend the final Ph.D. Senate Oral Defense. SGS rules require that the External Examiner's appraisal be available two weeks before the examination is to take place. The appraisal will be distributed to the student and to the

members of the examination committee but not beyond this group. The student is not permitted to discuss the appraisal with members of the examination committee until the examination takes place. If the appraisal has not been received two weeks prior to the exam date, the department will ask the student if he/she is willing to proceed despite the delay in the receipt of the appraisal. If the student agrees, he/she will be asked to sign a waiver. If the student does not wish to proceed, the oral exam will be postponed.

Distribution of the Thesis: It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the External Examiner receives a copy of your thesis at least six weeks prior to your exam date. The student should give a copy of the thesis to all other members of the examining committee at least four weeks prior to the exam date.

The Senate Oral Defense: Before the start of the oral exam the student will give a 45 minute seminar summarizing the results of his/her Ph.D. thesis research. In addition to the members of the examination committee, this seminar is open to the public. All graduate students and members of the faculty are encouraged to attend. At the end of the seminar the student may take questions from the audience but not from members of the examination committee. Once the open seminar has been completed, the Senate Oral Exam will proceed *in camera* with only the examining committee and the Chairperson.

The Vote: Students should consult the SGS Calendar for information on the voting procedure at a Ph.D. defense. In brief, the student passes if there is no more than one negative vote or abstention.

If **minor corrections** in style are a condition of acceptance of the thesis, the supervisor will inform the student of the necessary corrections and the student must complete these corrections within one month of the date of the examination. The supervisor must notify the School of Graduate Studies directly in writing that the required corrections have been made. A copy of this letter must go to the Graduate Program Administrator who will then forward it to the Graduate Coordinator, before the student will be recommended for the Ph.D. degree.

If **minor modifications** are a condition of acceptance of the thesis, the Chair of the examination committee will appoint a subcommittee of the examination committee to supervise the proposed modifications. The student will be given a statement detailing the modifications required, which must be completed within three months of the date of the oral examination. If all members of the subcommittee approve the completed modifications, the student will then have passed his/her Senate Oral Defense. The convener of the subcommittee must certify in writing to the School of Graduate Studies within three months of the original examination, with a copy of the letter going to the Graduate Program Administrator, that the modifications have been satisfactorily completed. Students should consult the SGS Calendar for the rules that apply if the modifications are not acceptable.

If there is more than one negative vote or abstention, or if major changes are required, the examination must be adjourned. In the event of adjournment, the examination committee must provide the student, as soon as possible, with a written statement that indicates the reasons for adjournment and the committee's requirements for a reconvened oral examination.

Post-exam Requirements: Immediately after the exam, the SGS Chair of the examination will take the post-exam paperwork to the SGS Ph.D. office.

Before the student submits the final copy of the thesis, he/she must obtain any required copyright permissions. This may require inclusion of a line of text at the beginning of the Results Chapters, if they've been published. The student must also ensure the thesis is formatted according to SGS guidelines. The student must submit the corrected, formatted thesis in an electronic format to the School of Graduate Studies through T-space, the University's digital library repository, along with payment of the required thesis processing fee. The student must submit a Library Authorization Form to the Doctoral Office at the School of Graduate Studies. Students should visit the SGS website for detailed information on all topics discussed above pertaining to producing a thesis (<http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/informationfor/students/finup/producingthesis.htm>).

The department requests that the student also produce a bound copy of his/her thesis for addition to the departmental library of theses housed in the departmental seminar room.

Tuition Fees for Final Year Doctoral Students: Academic fees for Doctoral students in the final year of their program are pro-rated and based on the 12-month academic year. Doctoral students will be billed for the annual fee but may choose to pay (1) the full fee, (2) the minimum first payment or (3) the expected monthly fee. Incidental fees are charged on a sessional (term) basis.

Doctoral candidates who complete all degree requirements (i.e. defend and submit a final thesis with all corrections and modifications approved), by mid-September/mid-January do not pay fees for the fall/winter session. After mid-September, a monthly fee will be charged for each month in which all degree requirements are not completed. For detailed information refer to the Student Accounts website (http://www.fees.utoronto.ca/session/fall/tuition_fees/fee_refund_sch/sgs.htm).

Personal Time Off and Leave of Absence

Personal Time Off: Within the Faculty of Medicine, it is recognized that many graduate students conduct their research almost exclusively within a laboratory setting, where they may or may not have control over their hours and the flow of the research program. Students are not employees and therefore have no rights to employee benefits, including paid vacation entitlement. However, it is recognized that in order for a graduate student to reach their full potential and achieve academic excellence and maintain a healthy work-life balance, they benefit from some personal time off or 'vacation'. In lieu of University and SGS policies regarding graduate student personal time off, the following guidelines for faculty and graduate students provide a framework for reasonable expectations (adapted from the Institute of Medical Science guidelines on time off for students). As a general rule, students might reasonably expect up to three weeks (15 working days) per year in personal time off, plus statutory holidays, under the following conditions:

- time-off provisions should be negotiated, in a clear and transparent manner, between the supervisor and the graduate student
- time off should not compromise the research program and/or the student's graduate studies; students must ensure that laboratory work, experimentation and other time-sensitive activities are either completed, or arrangements made for others to continue ongoing work
- consideration should be given to when the building or lab is closed (i.e. winter holidays) when taking time off
- time-sensitive deadlines (i.e. award applications, abstract submissions) must be taken into consideration
- time off cannot be carried forward from year to year
- time off should be requested as far in advance as possible
- the student and supervisor should be able to maintain contact as appropriate if the student is away for an extended period
- given that students receive remuneration as a stipend, not salary, the stipend continues, unaffected by this personal time off
- attendance at social activities within the academic community (e.g. departmental picnic) or scientific meetings do not fall under the category of personal time off
- sick leaves or absences for health reasons must be documented and do not fall under category of personal time off (see below)

Parental Leave: Students may apply for parental leave by completing the Parental Leave Request Form. The terminal date of the degree program will be extended by the duration of the leave taken. Normally, the start and finish of the leave would coincide with the beginning and end of a session. Either parent may request up to three sessions of leave, which must be completed within twelve months

of the date of birth or custody. Where both parents are graduate students seeking parental leave, the total number of sessions may not exceed four.

While on parental leave, the student does not register or pay fees to the University. Should the student wish to make use of library facilities, while on parental leave he/she is advised to consult the library regarding Research Reader privileges. The student should consult fully with his/her supervisor to make any special arrangements that may be required to accommodate his/her leave.

The student will not be eligible to receive University of Toronto Fellowship support during his/her leave, but may defer his/her Fellowship until the return from leave. In the case of other fellowships, the regulations of the particular granting agency will apply. The student should also check with the granting agency that provides the operating grant to his/her supervisor that supports his/her research regarding the agency's rules for payment of stipends during a parental leave. Below are the current guidelines for trainees paid from CIHR and NSERC operating grants:

CIHR - Research trainees (graduate students) are entitled to fully paid maternity and paternity leave for up to six months. CIHR will extend the eligibility of the trainee by the period of leave, and will augment the grant by the amount of the appropriate CIHR stipend rate during the leave. The grantee should request the augmentation by letter, accompanied by supporting documentation from institutional officials confirming that the period of leave and the trainee had been paid from the grant.

NSERC - On request, eligible graduate students and postdoctoral fellows paid out of NSERC grants may be eligible for paid parental leave. Within six months of a child's birth or adoption in order to be the primary caregiver for the child, the student may request a paid parental leave supplement at the current level of compensation from NSERC funds for up to four months. The student must obtain approval from the University prior to the start of his/her leave. The maximum period of paid leave is four months.

Leave for Serious Health Problems or Personal Circumstances: The student may apply for a one-session to three-session leave on the grounds of serious health or personal problems which temporarily make it impossible for him/her to continue in the program. The student applies for such leave by submitting a Leave Request Form to the Graduate Coordinator for approval.

Once on leave, the student will neither register nor pay fees. The student should not make demands upon the resources of the University, such as the use of library facilities, attend courses or expect advice from his/her supervisor. The student will not be eligible to receive or defer University of Toronto Fellowship support during the leave. In the case of other graduate student awards, the regulations of the particular granting agency apply. If the student requests a leave on the basis of serious financial reasons he/she will be required to apply to the University for a bursary. For information on University of Toronto Graduate Bursaries, see section 9 of the Money Matters section above.

The terminal date of your degree program will be extended by the duration of your leave. Except in exceptional circumstances, it is not expected that a Student will be granted more than one leave under the terms of this policy. Normally the start and finish of the leave would coincide with the start and end of a session.

Dealing with Conflict

The faculty hopes that the graduate student's life will be a happy and rewarding one at all times. During his/her life as a graduate student, however, he/she will face different types of pressures and will be interacting with different groups of peers and professors.

If the student finds that a conflict arises that adversely affects his/her research program or daily life, the faculty wish to do everything possible to help the student resolve the situation. The student may find that talking with the people involved suffices to remedy the situation. We encourage the student to talk over problems with his/her supervisor or supervisory committee members. Although the main role of the supervisory committee is to monitor the student's progression through the graduate program and to help define the goals and expectations for the thesis research, the committee is also in place to help the student with all aspects of his/her life as a graduate student.

The student is also welcome to approach the Graduate Coordinator or Chair of the department to discuss any conflicts that may arise, particularly if the issue is with the student's supervisor. Such discussions will be considered confidential. If appropriate, the student will be directed to a University or SGS office that may be able to provide him/her with appropriate advice to address his/her concerns.

For research policies and guidelines by the University and by the Faculty of Medicine for matters regarding graduate student supervision, research conduct, and addressing allegations of research misconduct, students should visit the Faculty of Medicine website (<http://www.facmed.utoronto.ca/Research/researchpolicies.htm>). For policies and guidelines set forth by the SGS for matters regarding academic appeals, code of student conduct, ethical research conduct, sexual harassment etc., students should visit the SGS website (<http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/governance/policies.htm>).

Useful Websites

School of Graduate Studies

Main site: <http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/>

Follow the “Students” link to find quick links to the SGS Calendar, getting started, housing, fees, financial support, finishing up etc.

Student Information

Student Accounts: <http://www.fees.utoronto.ca>

Student Cards: <http://www.utoronto.ca/tcard/>

Student Record System (ROSI): <http://www.rosi.utoronto.ca/>

Graduate Student Life

Student life programs and services: <http://www.Studentlife.utoronto.ca/index.htm>

The Office of Student Life is dedicated to Student success and development, and provides the support, opportunities and resources Students need to reach their full potential.

Housing

Housing service: <http://link.library.utoronto.ca/StudentHousing/>

Finances

Fees and funding: <http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/informationfor/Students/money.htm>

OSAP: <http://osap.gov.on.ca/>

Communication

Office of English Language and Writing Support (ELWS):

<http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/informationfor/Students/english.htm>

ELWS provides graduate Students with advanced training in academic writing and speaking.

International Students

Centre for International Experience (CIE): <http://cie.utoronto.ca/>

University Health Insurance Plan (UHIP): <http://www.uhip.ca/>;

UHIP provides insurance to pay the cost of the hospital and medical services that Students and their families at the University of Toronto might need to maintain their health while in Canada.

UHIP information at the CIE: <http://www.cie.utoronto.ca/Coming/UHIP/UHIP-Enrolment.htm>

Policies and Guidelines

Faculty of Medicine: <http://www.facmed.utoronto.ca/Research/ethicspolicy.htm>

Research policies and guidelines set forth by the University and by the Faculty of Medicine for matters regarding graduate Student supervision, research conduct, allegations of research misconduct etc.

Principles and Responsibilities Regarding Conduct of Research:

<http://www.facmed.utoronto.ca/Assets/FacMed+Digital+Assets/staff/rp1011.pdf>

Guidelines to Address Allegations of Research Misconduct:

<http://www.facmed.utoronto.ca/Assets/FacMed+Digital+Assets/research/Research+Misconduct.pdf>

Addendum to Address Allegations of Research Misconduct:

<http://www.facmed.utoronto.ca/Assets/FacMed+Digital+Assets/research/res+misc+conduct+addendum.pdf>

SGS: <http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/governance/policies.htm>

Policies and guidelines set forth by the SGS for matters regarding academic appeals, code of Student conduct, ethical research conduct, sexual harassment etc.

Graduate Supervision: <http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/adminsupport/gradadmin/supervision.htm>

Intellectual Property Guidelines:

<http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/Assets/SGS+Digital+Assets/governance/policies/SGS+Intellectual+Property+Guidelines+2007.pdf>

Finishing Up

Office of Convocation: <http://www.convocation.utoronto.ca/>