The Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) at the University of Alberta offers degrees in more than 300 research areas at the master's and PhD levels across 72 departments and Faculties. FGSR promotes graduate education, establishes and maintains quality standards, leads the strategic graduate planning activities of the university, provides support and services to applicants, students, and programs, and administers graduate scholarships and awards.

UAlberta's approach to graduate programs sets us apart. We not only educate students in an array of disciplines and specializations, but we also ensure they have marketable and relevant professional skills when they graduate. This approach strengthens the reputation of the university and contributes to a stronger and more diversified Alberta economy.

FGSR is working on a number of initiatives from our 2015-2018 strategic plan including: developing a graduate student mental health strategic plan; improving the culture of graduate student supervision and mentorship; innovating new ways to support teaching and learning on campus; and facilitating greater interdisciplinarity and diversity including leading *Inspiring Possibilities* activities to provide pathways for Indigenous students to enter graduate school.

**Structure and Strategy**
The Vice-Provost and Dean leads a decanal team comprised of the Vice Dean (policy, governance, quality assurance), four Associate Deans (awards & scholarships, graduate student mental health, supervisor mentorship and training, teaching and learning) and two Assistant Deans (administration, advancement). The Associate Deans deal with matters of student academic standing, conduct and resolve student issues, and provide leadership on strategic initiatives.

**Student Services**
FGSR's Admissions, Program Services and Awards Advisors serve scores of students and dozens of departments every day. FGSR administers $28 million in scholarships and awards every year sponsored by external agencies (tri-council, Alberta Innovates), endowments (Killam Trust, Andrew Stewart), and internal funds (Travel Awards, Recruitment). Select programs such as the recruitment scholarship are allocated to programs. Award competitions are adjudicated by the Graduate Scholarship Committee (GSC), which is a standing committee of the FGSR Council. A full list of scholarships is available online; the GSC Policies and Procedures can be found in the **GSC Handbook**.

**Professional Development**
In 2015, the Government of Alberta announced grants to four Alberta universities to better prepare graduate students for careers after they graduate. UAlberta was awarded $6.3M over three years to deliver programming in professional skills development, entrepreneurship and mentorship, internships, and curricular change. FGSR is partnering with internal and external groups to deliver this program.

- The Professional Development Requirement is designed to tie students' career aspirations to a plan for personal growth. It includes a career plan document (Individual Development Plan) and completion of eight hours of professional development.
- The multi-tier Graduate Teaching and Learning (GTL) Program develops the teaching skills of graduate students. The GTL program recently added a fourth level, Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, which is the first of its kind in Canada.
- FGSR offers a wide range of professional development opportunities and Faculties and departments also offer their own programs.

**Policy and Governance**
FGSR is governed by the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research Council made up of representatives of each department offering graduate programs, and student representatives. FGSR Council sets out the minimum admission, academic standing, program requirements and conduct of candidacy and doctoral examinations for all degrees. FGSR works with the Faculties and the Office of the Provost in the development and approval of new graduate programs and changes to existing programs, including joint and dual degrees.

***Baseline requirements for all students and programs.*** The minimum admission criteria is a GPA of 3.0 on a 4 point scale in the previous 60 credits or equivalent, and demonstration of English Language Proficiency (calibrated to IELTS 6.5, each band min 5 or equivalent). The minimum academic standing is a C+ (2.3) in each course and a cumulative GPA of 2.7 (B-) to graduate. All students must complete 8 hours training in ethics, the individual professional development plan and 8 hours of professional development activity. Course-based master's programs must include *24 credits of coursework and capping exercise; thesis-based master's programs must include a thesis and thesis defense. PhD programs must include an oral candidacy examination, thesis and final oral examination; doctoral programs may have candidacy and components in lieu of thesis and final oral examination. All PhD requirements except the thesis and final examination must be completed within three years of commencing the program. Programs may set higher admission and academic requirements subject to approval.

***Academic Decisions, Appeals and Grievances.*** Issues of academic standing and conduct that fall under the Code of Student Behaviour for courses are under the jurisdiction of the Faculty delivering the course. All other academic standing issues (e.g., change of category, academic probation, investigation of misconduct) are dealt with by FGSR under the Code of Student Behaviour. The FGSR Academic Appeals Committee hears appeals of FGSR decisions with respect to academic programs. FGSR Associate Deans help resolve conflicts that cannot be resolved at the departmental level.

**Substantive changes to FGSR Policy and/or Service previous 5 years (2012/13-2016/17) include:**

- Decision authority for the appointment of supervisors, examining committees and program changes delegated to the disciplinary Faculties, 2013/14
- Many one-over-one signing authorities for student management removed, 2013/14
- First meeting conversation checklist for supervisors with thesis-based students, 2014/15
- Supervision and exam policy added to the Calendar, 2014/15
- Laddering of post-baccalaureate certificates into course-based Master's programs, 2015/16
- Professional development (PD) requirement for students starting 2016
- Creation of a leave category for professional growth experiences, 2016/17
- New admissions system implemented in 2016/17
- Review of the recruitment scholarship allocation system, completed 2016/17
- Revision of the supervision and examination policy for 2018/19 Calendar