UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

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Graduate Handbook

Department of Human Ecology

Revised July 2026

GENERAL INFORMATION

A Short History

In 1918 the Department of Household Economics was established under the Faculty of Arts and Science at the then 10-year-old University of Alberta. Classes were held in the basement of the Arts building and after three years, graduates were awarded a Bachelor of Science in Household Economics. The program was intended to provide professional training for women in the Faculty of Arts and Science. The first classes began in the fall of 1918 with seven students enrolled in the Household Economics program and fourteen students from the Faculty of Arts and Science taking Household Economics courses as options.

In 1928, the Department of Household Economics became the School of Household Economics within the Faculty of Arts and Science. There were two programs: a BSc (HEc) which was a four-year degree program from junior matriculation and a BHEc program which required three years from senior matriculation. The major focus of the program was foods and nutrition.

The School was first reorganized in 1963 when the Faculty of Arts and Science divided into two separate faculties. Household Economics elected to join the Faculty of Science. In 1975, the School of Household Economics became the Faculty of Home Economics by action of the General Faculties Council. In 1981, the Faculty departmentalized into three major areas of specialization: Foods and Nutrition, Clothing and Textiles, and Family Studies.

Since 1975 there have been several other name changes and mergers; most notably, early in the 1990s, the Faculty of Home Economics and the Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry merged to become the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics. As part of this merger, the Departments of Clothing and Textiles and Family Studies merged to become the Department of Human Ecology. More recently, in 2007, to recognize the broad range of activities undertaken within the Faculty, it was renamed the Faculty of Agricultural, Life, and Environmental Sciences.

The predecessors to today's Department of Human Ecology at the University of Alberta were characterized by a focus on traditional household-based activities such as cooking and sewing. Today, as a contemporary academic field, human ecology features rigorous critical analysis and the application of knowledge to areas that concern the near social environment of family and community relationships, and the near material environment of textiles and clothing, and other forms of material culture (such as products, buildings, etc.). Faculty members and graduate students draw on the natural and social sciences and humanities to conduct multidisciplinary research in the areas of Children, Youth & Families; Material Culture Studies; and Textile & Apparel Science.

Location

The Human Ecology Building (HEB) is located on the corner of 89 Avenue and 116 Street on the North Campus. A campus map is available.

Professors

For information on the Department's professors and their research groups, use the research tab on the Human Ecology homepage to find their individual biographical pages based on three main areas: Children, Youth & Families; Material Culture Studies, and Textile & Apparel Science.

Graduate Program Committee and the Graduate Program Coordinator

Primary responsibility for administration of all graduate programs in the Department of Human Ecology rests with the Graduate Coordinator and the Graduate Program Committee. The Graduate Program Committee comprises the Graduate Coordinator, appointed by the Department Chair; at least two additional academic staff members who are actively supervising graduate students, appointed by the

Department Chair; the Graduate Program Administrator; and two graduate students appointed by the Graduate Coordinator in consultation with the Department Chair and the student body. Terms of appointment for student members are one year, renewable for up to two additional years.

Members of the Graduate Program Committee review applications of prospective graduate students, review applications for awards, review applications for Teaching Assistantships, review course programming, and prepare relevant policies and documents pertaining to the Department's graduate program.

The Terms of Reference for the Graduate Program Committee are available for anyone who would like more information.

Graduate Program Administrator

Your Graduate Program Administrator provides support to you and your supervisor for the length of your graduate degree. The Administrator provides necessary advice on all issues pertaining to the successful completion of your program and coordinates your final exam. The Administrator monitors your progress and student record in conjunction with the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (GPS). They will liaise with the instructors, supervisors, and departments to ensure University rules and regulations pertaining to academic programs are followed. Graduate Program Administrators can be reached by emailing grad.ales@ualberta.ca.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Graduate Student Offices

There are several graduate student offices located in the HEB. The Department does its best to provide a desk to all students. However, priority is given to full-time students who work and study in the Department. Drop-in desks are also available for part-time students who only occasionally require a desk. Keys for grad student offices are available from the main office (email rhradmin@ualberta.ca). A $10 key deposit (cash) per key is required and refunded when the key is returned. The grad student office key gives access to all grad student offices so you can use any department-provided computer.

E-mail and Computer Identification Information

To use your U of A e-mail account, you need a Campus Computing Identification (CCID) and a password. The University's Information Services and Technology (IST) office will automatically send this information to you after your application has been successfully submitted, usually within two business days.

Computing Assistance

For support visit the U of A Service Portal.

Graduate Student Office Computers

Computer stations are available in each of rooms 208, 320, 347, and 354 in the HEB. These computers are to be shared by all graduate students. All machines have Microsoft Office, and select computers also have SPSS, Nvivo, and mPLus software. Additional computers in the graduate student offices are provided by faculty members for their own students. If you encounter problems with the computers, contact ist@ualberta.ca.

Campus Computer Labs

Computers are also available on a first-come, first-serve basis in the computer labs on campus when they are not booked for classes. Use your One Card to access printers and photocopiers in the labs. Computing labs available on campus can be found here. Note that these labs may be booked for classes and access may be limited.

University Wireless System
The Human Ecology Building is equipped with the University Wireless System (UWS) throughout and students are welcome to use their own computers if they wish.

Computing Tips
- For Department e-mail correspondence, use only U of A e-mail accounts (not personal Yahoo, Gmail, Shaw, or other accounts). Addresses for U of A e-mail accounts are printed near the top of your timetable notice. You can access your e-mail and all other applications from any UAlberta website.
- The Department regularly sends information through email that may help you succeed in your program, including scholarship and award applications, job postings, fees and bursaries, new course offerings, department seminars, and social events. It is essential that you monitor your email to ensure that you don't miss important messages and to respond in a timely manner.
- Always create back-up copies of your work, especially when using shared computers. Clean out old documents as often as you can and delete your folders when you leave. Please log out and shut down the computer if no one else is around and at the end of the day.

U of A CAMPUS INFORMATION

The ONEcard
The ONEcard is the University's multipurpose identification card for students. The ONEcard office is located in 9104 HUB Mall. The card allows you to:
- Borrow books from the library;
- Access certain gym facilities;
- Access the University Health Centre;
- Use the Graduate Students' Association (GSA) photocopier and room booking services; and
- Use print facilities and campus photocopiers found in the libraries and around campus.

Further information about the ONEcard is available online.

Universal Transit Pass (U-Pass)
The U-Pass Arc card provides unlimited access to regular Edmonton, St. Albert, and Strathcona County transit services. Information about the program can be found on the Arc Card Distribution website. All students are eligible to participate in the U-Pass program as long as they are registered in one for-credit course. Eligibility and exemptions are outlined on the website.

Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (GPS)
GPS is responsible for the general administration of graduate programs from the admission to convocation. All graduate student records and the thesis deposit are located there.

GPS processes the final admission of graduate students; sets minimum entrance requirements and minimum academic standing requirements, and ensures that these standards are met. All changes affecting graduate program policies are brought to GPS Council, which comprises representatives from units across the university. Visit the GPS website regularly during your graduate studies to ensure you are aware of graduate program policies, regulations, and important deadlines. The GPS Graduate Program Manual is an excellent information source for graduate students.

GPS Location: 2-29 Triffo Hall, Hours of Operation: 8:30 – 4:00 (all year).

Graduate Students' Association (GSA)
Located in Triffo Hall, the GSA is a student-run, not-for-profit organization and the official representative body for all Master's and PhD students at the University of Alberta. The GSA represents over 7,300

graduate students to the University's Board of Governors and other decision-making bodies. The GSA website provides a range of useful information and services offered including the health and dental plan, the collective agreement, and emergency bursaries.

Health and Dental Coverage
Full-time graduate students are automatically enrolled in the Graduate Students' Association Health and Dental Plan. The Change-of-Coverage period allows students with their own health and dental insurance to opt-out. Dependents and part-time students can opt-in during this period.

Human Ecology Graduate Student Association (HEGSA)
HEGSA represents graduate students in the department. The group organizes academic and social events of interest throughout the year such as the potluck welcome lunch and "Writing and Whinging" meet-ups. HEGSA elections are held in October, and any interested Human Ecology graduate student may run for a position on the executive. If you have any questions or would like to talk with the current executive members, email hecolgsa@ualberta.ca.

Human Resources Information
Social Insurance Number (SIN) and Study Permit
Every student that receives employment income or a scholarship must have a Social Insurance Number as it is used for income tax reporting. You can apply for a SIN through the Government of Canada. Please provide a copy of your SIN and study permit paperwork (if you are international) to the Faculty of ALES HR unit (aleshr@ualberta.ca).

Pay Periods/Direct Deposit
Students receiving a teaching or research assistantship (GTA or GRA) or a research assistant fellowship (GRAF) will be automatically included in the payroll deduction program. The payroll system automatically deducts outstanding tuition and fees from your paycheque as stipulated in the Graduate Student Assistantship Collective Agreement.

You will receive payment for your assistantships on the following schedule:
- Days worked, 1st to 15th = pay day on the 25th of the same month;
- Days worked, 16th to 31st = pay day on the 10th of the following month;
- After that, your regular paydays will be the 10th and the 25th.

Ensure you are set-up for direct deposit by adding your bank account information in Bear Tracks. The system will allow you to deposit into Canadian bank accounts only. Once you have set-up your banking information, your pay will be automatically deposited into your account. Please note that if you have not been paid for a six-month period you will need to resubmit your banking information. The Staff Service Centre can help you with direct deposit setup and other common issues.

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES AND OTHER RESOURCES

Graduate Teaching and Learning Program
The Graduate Teaching and Learning (GTL) Program is open to all graduate students and postdoctoral fellows. The multi-tier program, a collaboration of GPS, departments and faculties, and the Office of the Vice-Provost (Academic Programs), delivers opportunities for training in university instruction. All graduate students who have Department teaching assistantships are strongly encouraged to complete Level 1 of this program. If you are not sure which of the sessions would be most applicable for you, please consult with the faculty member for whom you are a teaching assistant. GPS has not restricted the number of sessions a student can attend.

Centre for Teaching and Learning

Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) offers a wide range of programs and services to support teaching and learning. With the exception of the August Teaching Orientation, all CTL sessions and symposia are open to graduate students. The CTL Resource Library has a number of books, journals, and videos on teaching and learning topics that can be borrowed by graduate students.

Technology Training Centre

Visit the Technology Training Centre (TTC) web page to see the courses that are offered for computer-related skills. Several courses are free for grad students. Many low cost courses are offered for students in the evenings.

Professional Development Program

All graduate students must complete the GPS Professional Development Program, which includes the creation of an Individual Development Plan (IDP) and a minimum of eight hours of professional development activities. The requirements of this program are explained in more detail on page 17 on this document. Additional information about the program can be found on the GPS website.

Although students who began their programs prior to September 2016 are not required to complete the PD Program, they are nevertheless encouraged to take advantage of activities and resources on campus to develop professional skills and qualities sought by employers. From cultivating a teaching portfolio and integrating ethics into your research, to preparing for careers outside academia, there are sessions and workshops year-round to help you now and in the future. Make yourself competitive in the global market by starting your professional development activities the day you arrive on campus.

University Health Centre

The University Health Centre is located on the second floor of the Student Union Building (SUB). It operates on a same-day appointment basis. There is a pharmacy on the main floor of SUB.

Fitness and recreation

The University of Alberta offers a wide variety of fitness and recreation programs. Visit the Campus & Community Recreation website for details. All students pay a fee per term to use the fitness centre and discounted rates apply for recreational classes. You will need to have your ONEcard to gain entry to the facilities.

Music, Art, Theatre

Visit the Department of Music website for concert listings; the Department of Art & Design website for fine arts exhibitions at the Fine Arts Building Gallery (FAB Gallery), and the Theatre Listings page for live theatre productions at the Timms Centre for the Arts.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Students, supervisors, the Graduate Coordinator, the Graduate Program Committee, the Department, and GPS all have responsibilities related to graduate students' programs. It is important that all parties understand their own and others' responsibilities for the graduate school experience to be as positive as possible. Each party's responsibilities are described in the following sections and on the GPS Roles and Responsibilities page.

Students

Graduate students are ultimately responsible for their own programs. They are expected to read the Calendar and any other relevant documents to become familiar with all regulations and deadlines relating to their programs.

Students are responsible for ensuring that their registration is accurate and does not lapse; submitting appropriate forms to the Department in a timely manner for signature and processing; and, paying all fees required by the deadline dates set out in the Calendar.

In addition, graduate students should:

- make themselves aware of the contents of the graduate portions of the Calendar and take responsibility for meeting the requirements set out there, as well as requirements set out in the program contract/progress review forms provided by the Department;
- regularly inform the supervisor and supervisory committee members about progress;
- maintain open communication with their supervisor and Graduate Coordinator concerning any problems;
- meet with their supervisor (supervisory committee for PhD) and complete a progress report each year to be submitted to GPS (thesis students) and Graduate Coordinator (course-based students).
- make research results accessible (beyond their appearance in a thesis) to an appropriate audience through conference presentations and publications;
- together with the supervisor, ensure that program contract, committee appointment (PhD only), and progress review forms are filed as required; and
- be aware of deadlines for applications for financial support such as scholarships, research assistantships (RAs), teaching assistantships (TAs), research projects, and seek advice and assistance from their supervisor in making the necessary applications.

Supervisors

Assignment of Supervisors

Supervisors are assigned to students upon admission by the Graduate Program Committee on the basis of:

- supervisory capacity of individual faculty members;
- shared research interests of student and faculty member; and
- shared interest in working together, as indicated by faculty members during the application review process and by students in their application materials.

Role of the Supervisor

The supervisor is directly responsible for the supervision of the student's program. In this capacity, the supervisor assists the student in planning a program, taking into consideration the program requirements, degree regulations, and general regulations of the Department and GPS, and remains informed about the student’s research activities and progress. The supervisor is also charged with ensuring that students conduct their research in a manner that is effective, safe, productive, and ethical.

The supervisor prepares a program of study for the student, arranges for and attends all supervisory committee meetings and the candidate's examinations, ensures that these are scheduled and held in accordance with GPS and Department regulations, and reviews the proposal and thesis (both in draft and final form).

In addition, the supervisor, with the support of the Department:

- provides an environment for the student that is conducive to scholarly work and in which the student can grow intellectually;
- provides appropriate guidance to the student on the nature and expectations of research and is

accessible to give advice and constructive criticism;

- informs the student of the normal expectations held by the supervisor and the Department at the beginning of the student's program;
- works with the student to establish a realistic timetable for completing various phases of the program;
- considers a graduate student as a junior colleague in research;
- ensures that there are sufficient material and supervisory resources for each graduate student under supervision;
- works with the student to establish the supervisory committee as soon as possible after the start of the program and ensure that it maintains contact and formally meets at least once a year with the student;
- ensures that the student is aware of their requirements and assists them in meeting these, as needed; and
- sets up committee meetings and examinations after consultation and with full knowledge of the student.

The Student-Supervisor Relationship

Supervisors play a key role in students' experience of graduate education. They advise on the selection of courses and collaborate with students on their capping exercise, practicum, or thesis/dissertation research. Establishing and maintaining a good relationship is essential to a successful and enjoyable experience.

Approaches to Research

The student/supervisor relationship is as unique as the individuals involved. While all students are expected to do independent research, some supervisors prefer their graduate students to work on projects that fit into the supervisor's overall research program, with the graduate student becoming part of a research team. If funding is essential to do work in a given area, this can be especially important. Other supervisors are agreeable to students conducting research that is unconnected to the supervisor's research. It is essential that you determine what approach your supervisor prefers so that you have a better understanding of how you and your research will fit with your supervisor's style and expectations.

Challenges

As in other relationships in life, relationships between students and supervisors that began with promise can sometimes become unworkable. The process of assigning supervisors is based, in part, on a student's stated research interests at the time of application. It is impossible to guarantee from this information that a "good fit" has been made - only time and experience will tell. During the course of a graduate program, a student's expanding interests may lead them away from original research interests. Additionally, a student may find that their particular style of research or time management clashes with that of the supervisor.

Most issues can be resolved with a little goodwill, common sense, and a commitment to respect from all parties involved. Keep a professional perspective on the process. Resolution of any concerns should first be attempted by direct communication with the supervisor. If that fails, the next step would be to consult with the Graduate Coordinator. If your supervisor is the Graduate Coordinator, consult with a faculty member of the Graduate Program Committee.

Changing Supervisors

Under certain circumstances, students may wish to change supervisors. Such circumstances can include: lack of compatibility with the supervisory style; changing needs of a student; significant personality differences; or changed research interests. Students are free to seek alternate arrangements for supervision without fear of censure. The student should first discuss any such change with the current supervisor and obtain agreement of the alternate supervisor and the Graduate Coordinator. Keep in mind that it is only possible to change supervisors if another supervisor is available in your research area. Begin by speaking with your current supervisor and the Graduate Coordinator. A workable solution often can be achieved without actually changing supervisors.

Supervisors on Leave

It is the responsibility of a supervisor to make adequate provision for supervision of their graduate students during their leave. Therefore, staff members who intend to take leave during a period (exceeding two months) in which they have graduate students under their supervision shall submit to the Department Chair or Graduate Coordinator and to the graduate student(s) involved a written statement describing the arrangements which have been made to provide satisfactory supervision during the period of leave. The supervisor shall nominate a member of the Department who will be empowered to act on behalf of the supervisor in matters pertaining to the graduate student(s).

Role of Department in Supervision

The Department oversees the supervision of all graduate students enrolled in its programs and serves as the chief liaison with GPS. The Department is responsible for ensuring that the student receives proper supervision and that the regulations and requirements of GPS and the Department are met.

The Department is responsible for recommending and keeping GPS informed of any development in or changes to the student's program, including the appointment of the supervisor and supervisory committee members (where applicable), change of student status, course and program changes, scheduling of examination dates, and so on. The Graduate Coordinator is the official representative of the Department to its graduate students and to GPS.

REGISTRATION AND PROGRAM MAINTENANCE

Program Registration

You can register for courses after you receive your official admission letter. To do this, you need to:

1. Meet with your supervisor to plan your timetable using your program contract form;
2. Add classes using Bear Tracks, and
3. Confirm your attendance by paying your fees.

Bear Tracks

Students register using Bear Tracks, a web-based service for applicants, students and employees. Log in to the website with your CCID and password. The User Guide will help you navigate the portal and take you step-by-step through searching for classes, building your schedule, and adding classes to your timetable. Bear Tracks is where you can find:

- Your admission conditions;
- Your academic record, including your unofficial transcript;
- Your personal and contact information;
- Your timetable and enrollment dates for registration;
- The application to graduate when your program is complete;
- Your per-term fee assessments and student financial information;
- The employee section for TA and RA salary and awards payments; and
- The direct deposit set-up to automatically deposit your paycheques and scholarships into your bank account.

Paying Fees

Information about how to pay your fees can be found on the Admissions and Programs website. If fees are not paid by the term fee payment deadline, a late penalty will be applied to the outstanding balance at the end of each month.

Program Contract and Progress Reports

When you first meet with your supervisor, one of your tasks will be to complete a program contract. The contract will set out the requirements for your program of study and research and enables you, your supervisor, and the Department to ensure that you are meeting the requirements of your program. The contract also protects you and the Department against any unilateral rule changes (i.e., unilateral changes to course subject requirements, number of courses to be taken, etc.).

Although this document is called a contract, its terms are not written in stone; that is, the student and supervisor can discuss the conditions of the contract and make changes, if both parties agree. Details regarding the purposes of the form, and instructions for completing it, are described below.

Using the Program Contract

Before the student's first term of study, the supervisor and student meet in order to complete the program contract form. The contract is available to the supervisor in the HE Shared Google Drive. The top portion of the form should be completed according to terms laid out in the student's letter of admission. The student and supervisor will then agree on a course of study and indicate the following on the form:

- any courses to be completed as qualifying work (if applicable);
- the core course requirements and optional and research methods/statistics courses that are to be
- completed as part of the student's graduate program;
- the year and term in which it is expected that the student will take each of these courses (indicated in "date planned" column);
- any courses for which the supervisor is recommending advance credit be granted, or exemptions from required courses, e.g., if a student took a HECOL undergraduate/graduate level slash course as an undergraduate (provide a brief explanation in the "comments/notes" column and provide any substantiating documentation - e.g., transcript);
- projected dates for completing other milestones in the program (e.g., ethics training, IDP completion).

If transfer credit for courses(s) is recommended the Graduate Program Administrator will make the necessary request to GPS. Once a decision is made the program contract can be updated by the supervisor and the student. Note: Courses must have been taken within the last six years, must be at the graduate-level, and can't also have been counted towards another degree to qualify for transfer credit.

It is the joint responsibility of the student and supervisor to ensure that the program contract is completed and filed in a timely fashion. Forms must be signed by the student and supervisor and submitted to both the Graduate Coordinator and Graduate Program Administrator. Copies are retained in the student's file.

Completing progress reports

Two different processes exist for progress reports depending on the program the student is in. GPS has mandatory progress report forms for doctoral and thesis-based Master's students, which are not necessary for course-based Master's students. Following the progress reporting process the supervisor should inform the Graduate Program Administrator and/or the Graduate Coordinator of any action required by them as a result of the meeting (e.g., request for change in student status as a result of completing qualifying or probationary requirements, request for a leave of absence, requirements to withdraw due to unsatisfactory performance, etc.).

Doctoral and thesis-based Master's
Students in thesis-based programs will report at least once annually using the standardized progress report form. This standardized progress reporting procedure is to ensure that student and supervisors, and committee members, if applicable, meet at least once a year to assess if the student is progressing satisfactorily in their programs. The process will be initiated by GPS who will contact students via email with a link to access the report form.Information about the process of progress reporting can be accessed here.

The GPS standardized progress report is not intended to replace other regular meetings between students and their supervisors. In the Department of Human Ecology, we recommend that thesis-based students also complete the Departmental progress report form which includes updating the program contract during these annual meetings. The Department progress form allows the student, supervisor and Graduate Program Administrator to retain copies of progress pertaining to the student's program, enabling the Department to keep track of changes and milestones within the student's program.

Course-based Master's
Course-based Master's students will meet with their supervisors to monitor progress in their programs after the first two academic semesters. This is to ensure that the students are progressing satisfactorily in their programs and will have time to ensure that GPS and the Department requirements will be met (e.g., IDP completion, PD hours). The Department progress report form can be accessed by the supervisor in the HE Shared Drive. During the progress review the program contract will also be updated. The supervisor should use the comment section on the progress report form to comment on the student progress (e.g., what progress has been made to date and whether this is judged satisfactory, reasons for lack of progress, milestones achieved, goals for the coming months, etc.).

Maintenance of Registration

Course-based Programs

Students in course-based degree programs must register in coursework or in MREG 800 (Maintain Registration) for at least one term in each September to August period to keep their program active. When a course-based student does not register in any course(s) for a term, they will not have access to student services such as U-Pass, library access, Health Services, and recreational facilities. The University does not consider you an active student if you are not registered in classes. Keep this in mind while you are planning your program with your supervisor. When you register again, you will be considered an active student and services will be reinstated.

Thesis-based programs

In order to keep their program active, students registered in thesis-based Master's and Doctoral programs must register all year round in coursework and/or thesis research. To register full-time in a thesis program in Fall/Winter, students must register in a combination of course work and/or thesis research comprising a minimum of 9 credits each term. GPS automatically enrolls all thesis-based students in THES 906 for Spring and Summer terms only. Students can request to change to part-time status if they are employed full-time or have exceptional health/family circumstances preventing them from being full-time in their program.

Thesis sections are scheduled according to units of course weight equivalency and can be used in combination with course registrations in order to achieve the correct units of course weight to maintain registration status (i.e., full time or part time). For example, if a student registers in two 3-credit courses, the addition of THES 903 would bring the registration status to full-time or 9 credits. THES 903 has a 3-credit weight, THES 906 is 6 credits and THES 909 is 9 credits.

International Students: Take note of the conditions of your study permit. If you fail to maintain full-time registration you may jeopardize your standing with Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

Change of Registration

Students can add or drop classes during the registration period, normally the first two weeks of class in Fall and Winter terms. After the add/drop deadline all registration changes require the approval of the Department and GPS. Requests to change registration are reviewed by GPS when a memo with compelling circumstances from the student and the Graduate Coordinator or Department Chair is submitted. GPS may or may not approve the request.

ENSURE YOUR REGISTRATION IS CORRECT BEFORE THE ADD/DROP DEADLINE! Students who fail to keep their program active by registering will be considered to have withdrawn from their program and will be required to reapply.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Overview of Degree Requirements

	Program Requirements	Other Requirements		
Program *refers to number of credits	**HECOL CORE**	**Research Methods and/or Statistics**	**Additional Coursework** ***refers to number of credits**	
Course-based Master's Degrees				
MSc in Family Ecology and Practice (*26)	HECOL 610, 611, 682, 691, 692 OR HECOL 604, 615, 682, 691, 692 (if interested in studying Aging)		*9	HECOL 900 (*6): *Directed Research Project* or HECOL 613 (*6): *Practicum* Presentation of project or practicum 8 hours of Professional Development
MSc in Textiles and Clothing (*26)	HECOL 570, 571, 691, 692		*12	HECOL 900 (*6): *Directed Research Project* or HECOL 613 (*6): *Practicum* Presentation of project or practicum 8 hours of Professional Development
MA in Material Culture (*26)	HECOL 661, 662, 691, 692		*12	HECOL 900 (*6): *Directed Research Project* or HECOL 613 (*6): *Practicum* Presentation of project or practicum 8 hours of Professional Development
Thesis-based Master's Degrees				
MSc in Family Ecology and Practice (*20)	HECOL 610, 611, 691, 692 OR HECOL 604, 615, 691, 692 (if interested in studying Aging)	*6	*6	2 professional research presentations Thesis 8 hours of Professional Development
MSc in Textiles and Clothing (*20)	HECOL 570, 571, 691, 692	*6	*6	2 professional research presentations Thesis 8 hours of Professional Development
MA in Material Culture (*20)	HECOL 661, 662, 691, 692	*6	*6	2 professional research presentations Thesis 8 hours of Professional Development
PhD in Human Ecology				
*20 credits	HECOL 601, 693, 694	*6	*9	Written comprehensive exam Oral candidacy exam 2 professional research presentations Dissertation 8 hours of Professional Development

Research Methods and Statistics Courses for All Grad Students

Courses to gain competencies in research methods and statistics will depend on a student's area of study, especially whether they are oriented towards the physical sciences, social sciences, or humanities. Those in the social sciences should have basic competencies in qualitative and/or quantitative methodology and statistics. Those in the physical sciences should have basic competencies in laboratory methods (particularly for textile science) and statistics. Below is a list of research methods and statistics courses offered at the U of A. See the Calendar or Bear Tracks for more details. Prior to selecting courses, it would be a good idea to request copies of the syllabus to review with your supervisor. This will help you select courses that align as closely as possible with your background preparation, substantive research interests, and research methods/statistics that you'll be using in your thesis/dissertation research.

Most departments restrict registration to students outside of their own programs. To register in a closed course please contact the department offering the course to request registration.

ANTHRO 511	Ethnographic Field Methods I
ANTHRO 524	Visual Anthropology
COMM 597	Introduction to Qualitative Inquiry (Faculty of Extension)
EDPS 509	Research Design and Data Analysis
EDPS 535	Indigenous Research Methodologies
EDPY 500	Introduction to Data Analysis in Educational Research
EDPY 501	Introduction to Methods in Educational Research EDPY 502 Single-case Research Design
EDPY 503	Qualitative Methods of Education Research
EDPY 505	Quantitative Methods I
EDPY 605	Quantitative Methods II
EDSE 606	Theory and Practice in Action Research
EDSE 611	Phenomenological Research
EDSE 612	Arts Based Research
EDSE 613	Participatory Research
EDSE 621	Phenomenological Writing
HECOL 522	Introduction to Structural Equation Modeling
HECOL 565	Material Culture, Methods and Identities
HIST 601	Philosophy of History and Methodology
HIST 604	Application of the Social Sciences to History
INT D 500	Introduction to Community-based Research & Evaluation
INT D 540	Principles of Qualitative Inquiry
LIS 505	Introduction to Research in Library and Information Studies
MARK 710	Research Methodology in Marketing
NURS 504	Statistics in Nursing Research
NURS 512	Quantitative Research
NURS 513	Qualitative Research
NURS 682	Statistics for Causal Analysis in Health Research
NURS 687	Advanced Principles and Practice of Qualitative Inquiry
PSYCO 522	Developmental Methods: Design and Data
PSYCO 531	Design and Analysis in Psychological Research I
PSYCO 532	Design and Analysis in Psychological Research II
REN R 580	Biometrical Techniques in Agri-food, Environmental and Forest Sciences
RSOC 515	Quantitative Social Research Methods
RSOC 516	Collaborative and Participatory Research Methods
SPH 502	Conducting Research in Health Promotion
SPH 503	Introduction to Health Promotion Research
SPH 509	Biostatistics I
SPH 531	Statistical Methods in Health Research
SPH 623	Qualitative and Community-Based Approaches in Health Research
SOC 509	Quantitative Data Analysis
SOC 515	Quantitative Methods in Social Research
SOC 518	Qualitative Methods in Social Research
SOC 519	Comparative and Historical Methods in Sociological Research
SOC 616	Structural Equation Modeling with LISREL
STAT 532	Survival Analysis
STAT 561	Sample Survey Methodology
STAT 575	Multivariate Analysis
STAT 578	Regression Analysis

Program Planning and Evaluation Courses

Students in the course-based MSc programs in Family Ecology & Practice are required to take HECOL 682, *Program Planning and Evaluation*. If students are not able to take HECOL 682 due to a scheduling conflict, they can take another graduate-level program planning and/or evaluation course to meet this requirement. Additionally, for Human Ecology graduate students whose career goals include program evaluation, it is recommended that they take a graduate-level course that focuses specifically on the topic, in addition to HECOL 682. Other graduate level program planning and evaluation courses offered at U of A are outlined below.

EDPS 577 Foundations of Adult and Higher Education EDPS 585 Needs Assessment and Program Evaluation EDPY 615 Program Evaluation
NURS 506 Program Planning
SPH 504 Health Promotion Planning and Evaluation
SPH 517 Strategies in Health Promotion Practice
SPH 631 Health Program Evaluation

Required Master's Level Competencies for PhD Students

At the time of admission PhD students are expected to possess basic competencies in:

1. Research methods and/or statistics (*6)
2. Professional Seminars: HECOL 691, 692

If students do not have these competencies when they are admitted to the doctoral program they will be required to complete them as part of their program of study.

Additional Course Requirements

Students and supervisors will work together to find courses that meet program requirements and ensure that students acquire requisite knowledge and skills to successfully complete their thesis/dissertation, directed research project, or practicum. The first place to look for relevant courses is among those offered by the Department of Human Ecology. These may be supplemented, according to individual needs, by courses from other departments. Additional courses are suggested by your supervisor when completing your contract form.

Independent Study Courses (HECOL 501, 550, 654, 671, 672, 673)

To register in an independent study course, students and supervisors must complete the HECOL Independent Studies or Selected Topics Google Form which is located on the Graduate Student Services website. Forms are reviewed and signed by the Graduate Program Coordinator and submitted to the Graduate Program Administrator (grad.ales@ualberta.ca) for registration.
***Note*: Independent Study course forms must be submitted prior to the add/drop deadline.

Additional Program Requirements

In addition to courses, there are a number of program requirements that students complete as part of their graduate programs. Students in all graduate programs must complete an ethics requirement and at least one presentation. As of Fall 2016, all graduate students at U of A must also complete a professional development requirement. Course-based Master's students complete a directed research project or practicum placement and thesis-based Master's students conduct research and write a thesis. Doctoral students complete a written comprehensive exam and oral candidacy exam, and they conduct original research and write a dissertation.

Graduate Ethics Training

Ethics and academic citizenship training is mandatory for all U of A graduate students. Students are required to complete the ethics components to convocate. The Ethics and Academic Citizenship Requirement involves two zero-credit courses offered by GPS:

- INT D 710: Ethics and Academic Citizenship (for both Master's and Doctoral students); and
- INT D 720: Advanced Ethics and Academic Citizenship (for doctoral students only).

These courses focus on a number of ethical issues in the academic environment including academic integrity; research and workplace ethics; Indigenizing and decolonizing the academy; equity, diversity, and inclusivity; health and academic productivity, and ethical principles in university teaching. There are no instructional fees associated with these courses.

Ethics Review

An Ethics Review is required when research involves living human participants (course-based directed research project, Master's thesis, doctoral dissertation). This is done online through the Research Ethics Office Human Ethics Research Online (HERO) program. Details about the ethics review application and review process are provided in the ethics seminars in HECOL 692.

Professional Presentations

All researchers are ethically obligated to share the results of their research with practitioners, policy makers, the general public, and especially their colleagues.

Course-based Master's Students

Course-based Master's degree students are required to make at least one professional presentation related to their directed research project or practicum placement in the Department or to relevant agency staff (where the practicum and/or directed research project was completed).

Thesis-based Master's & PhD Students

Thesis-based Master's and PhD students are required to make at least two professional research presentations as either a sole or first author (at least one of which must be oral and at least one of which includes results of their research) prior to submitting their thesis or dissertation.

The presentation requirement provides a practical opportunity for students to learn about research dissemination and to ensure that students live up to their obligation to circulate their research findings. In addition, critical feedback from colleagues is essential to producing high quality research. Therefore, the presentation requirement also provides opportunities for students to get critical feedback from colleagues about their work outside of a classroom setting. The presentation requirements represent the minimum activity that should occur. Students are strongly encouraged to present at least once before a professional/academic audience and at least once outside the Department.

Professional presentations may include:

- presentations (papers, workshops, posters, symposia, exhibitions) at professional conferences (e.g., Alberta Home Economics Association, National Council on Family Relations (NCFR), International Textile and Apparel Association); and
- presentations at colloquia or seminars on campus (e.g., Department of Human Ecology Lunchtime Research Seminars).

Not eligible for fulfilling the presentation requirements are:

- presentations done for course credit; and
- guest lectures in classes.

Procedures for Scheduling Lunchtime Research Seminars

1. Students and supervisors work together to determine appropriate content and scheduling of presentations; that is, students need to book a time only after consulting with their supervisor.
2. Lunch-time research seminars are usually scheduled for the first and third Tuesday of the month from

12:30 pm to 1:30 pm. A schedule will be sent to all graduate students and faculty at the beginning of each academic term. Research seminars outside of these scheduled times must be organized by the supervisor and student.

3. Students will be asked to write a sentence or two, maximum, to describe the nature of their presentation to alert audience members about whether the focus will be on formative evaluation or the delivery of research findings. However, the requirement for dissemination of research results must be met by all students.

Professional Development Requirement

All graduate students at the U of A are required to complete the GPS Professional Development Requirement, which includes the creation of an Individual Development Plan (IDP) and eight hours of professional development activities. Although graduate students are responsible for taking the lead on meeting the PD requirement, graduate supervisors also have a role to play. Students should discuss the IDP with their supervisor and share their plans for professional development activities. *Note that the IDP must be finalized and reviewed by your supervisor within the first 12 months for Master's students and within the first 18 months for doctoral students.*

The IDP assists students in identifying goals and topics for their PD activities. It is up to departments to decide what activities count as PD and GPS has provided some guidelines to determine this. *Students will receive no more than four hours of credit from any single category of PD options listed in GPS PD documents.* Not all students will have the same PD goals and attend the same workshops. Professional development is tailored to the student's needs and future plans; therefore, PD activities should align with each student's career paths, goals, and their self-assessment of professional skills. Graduate students can attend specific lectures in HECOL 408 that can count toward their PD hours. Permission from the course instructor is required before attending. Information about the PD options can be found here. Some of our HECOL 690 seminar topics may be relevant for some students and may be used towards PD hours. If supervisors and students have questions about whether a specific session or experience is appropriate to meet the PD requirement they should connect with the Graduate Coordinator.

Students need to provide evidence that they have participated in PD activities. If students use a HECOL 690 seminar, the Department will have a record of their attendance. For other sessions, students should use the declaration of attendance form, which is available on the GPS professional development website. Students need to keep track of the sessions they attend using the record of activity form, which is also available on the GPS website. Once all PD hours have been achieved students will need to complete the IDP and PD Completion form, have it signed by their supervisor, and then submit it to grad.ales@ualberta.ca.

Course-based Master's students who will be doing a practicum are advised to take the professional practice course HECOL 508, which is the graduate version of HECOL 408. All PD requirements (i.e., IDP and 8-hours of PD) will be met by taking this professional practice course and no further PD requirements are needed. Students who take HECOL 508 will still need to complete the IDP and PD Completion form. Please note that this course is ONLY offered to course-based Master's students doing a practicum.

Additional information about the Professional Development Requirement can be found on the GPS website.

Course-based Master's Directed Research Project or Practicum

Course-based Master's students can choose to complete a directed research project or practicum placement, both of which represent 6 course credits. The directed research project (HECOL 900) and practicum (HECOL 613) should be completed in the last term of study so that students have an opportunity to build on, integrate, and apply theoretical and empirical knowledge generated through course work.

Directed Research Project (HECOL 900)

- To register in HECOL 900, students and supervisors must complete the HECOL Independent Studies or Selected Topics Form available on the current students webpage. Once the form is reviewed and signed by the Graduate Coordinator it must be submitted grad.ales@ualberta.ca. The Graduate Program Administrator will register the student in HECOL 900.
- There are a variety of projects that students can complete for HECOL 900. They can conduct a small-scale study that provides answers to one or more specific research questions. Alternatively, they can do an applied project that is based on practice or policy problems, perhaps for a specific client, agency, or government ministry. Examples include: needs assessments, program development or evaluation, mounting a museum exhibit, a design project, or a critical analysis of policies and/or programs.
- The directed research project requires a written report or some other finished product to be retained by the Department, as well as a presentation in the Department or to relevant agency staff.
- The directed research project and report must demonstrate the student's ability to integrate theory, research, and, if it is an applied project, aspects of practice and/or policy.
- The scope of a directed research project and report is less than that of a Master's-level thesis.

Graduate Practicum (HECOL 613)

Course-based Master's students can choose to do a 6 credit practicum. Master's students in thesis-based programs and doctoral students can also complete a practicum (3 or 6 credits) as part of their additional course requirements. All graduate practicums must include the requirements outlined below. A syllabus will be developed by the academic supervisor so that the student, academic supervisor, and field supervisor have consistent information about the requirements for and expectations of the practicum. The professional practice course (HECOL 508) should be taken the semester immediately preceding the practicum.

To register in HECOL 613, students and supervisors must complete the HECOL Independent Studies or Selected Topics Form available on the current students website, and attach the syllabus. Once the form is reviewed and signed by the Graduate Coordinator it must be submitted to grad.ales@ualberta.ca so that the graduate administrator can register the student in HECOL 613.

Details about field placements in an agency/organization, government ministry, business etc.:

- *3 practicum = 120 hours
- *6 practicum = 240 hours
- The decision about the field placement site will be mutually agreed upon by the student and supervisor.
- To avoid potential conflicts of interest, the field placement site *cannot* be the student's current or recent place of employment.
- Although the student might make some preliminary inquiries with a practicum site and/or field supervisor, it is the responsibility of the supervisor to make the formal arrangements.
- Prior to beginning the practicum, a Student Affiliation Agreement form must be signed by the student, the supervisor, and the field supervisor.

Within the practicum hours, students will conduct an independent project, the focus of which is determined by the student and the field supervisor. The project can be a small or large part of the total practicum hours, depending upon its nature, but it must be a project for which the student takes major responsibility.

The student will complete a written report and oral presentation about the independent project and/or practicum experience. Although the specific requirements of the report and presentation are agreed upon by the supervisor and the student, they should both integrate scholarly literature. The presentation can be done in the Department or at the practicum agency, whichever is most appropriate.

Additional Information on PhD Program Requirements

Acceptance into the PhD Program without a Thesis-based Master's Degree

The doctoral program in Human Ecology is a research degree. Thus, the Department of Human Ecology requires that students entering the doctoral program in Human Ecology have a thesis-based Master's degree in a relevant discipline with a minimum GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale over the last 60 credits. Applicants who have not completed original, empirical, academic research (thesis or equivalent) will not be considered for direct admission into the doctoral program. Instead, if they meet all other admission criteria, they may be considered for admission into a Master's program. Once they complete an original, empirical, and academic piece of research (the equivalent of a Master's thesis but without being defended at an oral exam), which is submitted for presentation at a national or international conference or submitted to an academic journal for publication, they may be considered for a change of status into the doctoral program.

Acceptance into the PhD Program without a Prior Master's Degree

In general, a Master's degree is regarded as a requirement for admission to a doctoral program (especially a research-based Master's that resulted in a written thesis). Occasionally, exceptional applicants holding a baccalaureate degree may be considered for admission to the PhD program without first completing a research- based Master's degree. Such applicants will normally be subject to the following requirements:

- They must present the equivalent of a four-year baccalaureate degree in a related field from a recognized institution, with a minimum grade point average of 3.7 on a 4.0 scale, or its equivalent, in the last 60 credits.
- They must present evidence of the ability to conduct original academic research (such as a completed honours thesis or its equivalent).
- They must present three letters of recommendation from academic referees who speak to the applicant's research and scholarly capabilities.
- There must be an appropriate supervisor available.

Upon the recommendation of the Graduate Program Committee that the applicant be admitted, and GPS' approval of that recommendation, the applicant will be admitted to the thesis Master's program as a full-time student for a period of one academic year and will be required to complete the following courses: HECOL 691 and 692, two research methods and/or statistics courses, and complete the two required Master's courses relevant to their intended PhD interests (e.g., HECOL 611 & HECOL 612 in Family Ecology & Practice). They also will be required to provide further evidence of their ability to conduct original PhD-level academic research (e.g., submit an academic paper for publication and/or presentation at a professional conference).

The decision to accelerate the student to the PhD program at the end of the year is not automatic and depends on above-average performance and strong recommendation from the student's supervisory committee and the Department's Graduate Coordinator. At the end of the student's first academic year, the Graduate Program Committee will assess the student's performance and, if satisfied that they have met the above requirements (passed all courses, achieved a minimum GPA of 3.3, and demonstrated research capability), the Graduate Coordinator will normally recommend to GPS that the student be admitted to the PhD program. Such admissions will normally be made only in September. Students who fail to meet these requirements will be permitted to continue in the Master's program as long as they meet the minimum GPS and Department standards for continuing in the Master's program. Such students who successfully complete the Master's program will be eligible to apply to the PhD program through the usual channels.

PhD Comprehensive Examination

The written comprehensive exam is critical for the purpose of assessing the adequacy of a student's knowledge of the theory, content, and research methods that are relevant to their chosen field of study. It is also intended as an opportunity for mentoring; students receive the opportunity to respond to feedback on their writing from their committee. Together with the candidacy exam, the comprehensive exam allows the assessment of the student's preparedness to do original research at an advanced level.

The comprehensive exam allows students to:

- demonstrate in-depth knowledge of their research area
- demonstrate their ability to think critically
- connect theories with a substantive research area
- develop an argument
- demonstrate original thinking
- gain experience responding to scholarly feedback

The comprehensive exam takes place after completion of course work and before the candidacy exam, normally within the first two years of the program if the student had the expected basic competencies on admission. Normally the oral candidacy exam will occur within six months of the written comprehensive exam.

Procedures for Comprehensive Exams

The supervisory committee will set the exam questions which will normally cover four areas:

- Research and theory related to the student's stream of research (ie., Children, Youth & Families; Material Culture Studies; Textile & Apparel Science)
- Research and theory related to the student's substantive area
- Research design and methods
- Human ecology theory

A minimum of six weeks prior to the exam, the student, in consultation with the supervisory committee, will develop a reading list. The reading list will cover the same four areas that will be covered in the comprehensive exam. Its purpose is to define and set reasonable boundaries around the content which will be considered "fair game" for the exam. The student may refer to literature they have read but is not included on the reading list during the exam, but they should not have to do additional library research in order to answer the questions adequately. The final reading list will be submitted to the Graduate Coordinator and the Graduate Program Administrator at the same time, so that they may check that sufficient time is allowed for the student to prepare for the exam, that reading lists cover the required four areas, and that the reading lists are reasonably consistent in breadth and depth.

In setting the exam, the committee will refer to the PhD comprehensive exam question bank maintained by the Department in order to ensure that emphasis and difficulty of exam questions are comparable for all students. The exam question bank includes copies of the questions that have comprised previous examinations. They are intended to serve as examples to committees in setting exams, and as study aids for students, but each exam experience will be tailored to the student's area of study.

Each committee member will submit two to three questions related to one or more of the four exam areas; the supervisor will be responsible for setting the overall exam in consultation with other committee members (this may involve selecting the most appropriate questions, clarifying questions, integrating similar questions from different committee members, etc.). The exam will comprise two to three questions in each of the four areas; the student will answer their choice of one question in each of the four areas. The comprehensive review questions will be submitted to the Graduate Coordinator at least one week prior to the exam so that they may ensure that the exam adheres to the expected format and that the exam is reasonably consistent in breadth and depth. The final version of the questions will be filed with the Graduate Program Administrator.

The exam will be take-home; the student will return the typed answers to the committee within seven days. The seven-day format was chosen after extensive consultation with previous graduate students. It is believed to provide the best opportunity for students to demonstrate their depth and breadth of knowledge while still allowing them to meet other personal (but not employment) obligations. That is, it is not expected that students will work on their exam 24 hours/day, 7 days/week. Students should organize their lives accordingly and should allow for adequate breaks, meals, exercise and sleep.

Please see Appendix A: Tips for Comprehensive Exams for further suggestions at the end of this document.

Guidelines for Evaluating Comprehensive Exams in Human Ecology

Questions will be evaluated independently by each committee member. Their evaluations will be based on the extent to which the student demonstrates:

- an accurate understanding of the relevant theory and research in their chosen field of study (i.e., Children, Youth & Family; Material Culture Studies; Textile & Apparel Science);
- the ability to correctly and adequately reference the relevant literature;
- an ability to synthesize and integrate theories and research findings to arrive at a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the issues in their chosen field of study;
- critical thinking;
- original thinking;
- a broad understanding of the range of methodological approaches that may be used to address relevant questions in their chosen field of study; and
- an understanding of the conditions under which different research methods and techniques should be applied.

In evaluating each answer, each supervisory committee member will assign the student's answer to one of the following 4 categories:

1. Pass with excellence - exceeds expectations.
2. Pass - clearly satisfactory/adequate; meets expectations.
3. Marginal Pass - minimally acceptable; not the quality of response expected, but nonetheless, demonstrates the basic minimal understanding deemed necessary to pursue doctoral research. If more than one answer falls into this category, then students are assigned a conditional pass or a fail for the exam as a whole—see below.
4. Fail - answer to question is not acceptable at the doctoral level (lack of critical thinking and original thought, lack of knowledge of the literature, etc.

Each committee member will, within two weeks of receiving the student's responses (unless otherwise agreed by the committee and student to accommodate vacation or work schedules), provide to the supervisor one of the following recommendations, based on their overall assessment of the student's responses:

1. Pass - answers to the questions are adequate (i.e., pass—excellent, or pass—clearly satisfactory/adequate).
2. Conditional Pass - answers to at least two questions are adequate, while one or two are judged to be marginal (not up to expectations but demonstrate sufficient basic understanding to serve as a foundation for revisions).
3. Fail - answers to more than two questions are judged to be marginal; OR answers to one or more questions are judged to be deficient (do not demonstrate even a basic understanding).

Guidelines for How an Exam as a Whole is Judged as a Pass

Should two or more committee members assign the exam a conditional pass, the committee shall recommend one of the following:

- That the student complete additional course work in the area(s) in which they are judged to be marginal;
  OR

- That the student be permitted to revise their answer(s) to the questions judged to be marginal; the committee shall provide the student with written feedback as to the deficiencies in the answers; the student will again be given one week to complete the revisions.

Should two or more committee members assign the exam a fail, the committee shall recommend one of the following:

- That the student complete additional course work in the area(s) in which they are judged to be deficient AND write a new exam; OR
- That the student be required to withdraw from the program.

The PhD Proposal

Proposal writing can begin any time during the program and should begin sooner rather than later. The proposal is distributed to members of the candidacy exam committee prior to the candidacy exam. Before the proposal is distributed to the full committee, the supervisory committee members provide feedback and approve its distribution to other members. Following the candidacy exam, the supervisory committee gives final approval of the proposal (which might not occur until after revisions are made in response to feedback and discussion during the candidacy exam).

During this phase students may discuss with their supervisors what format their dissertation may take. There are two types of dissertations, a traditional dissertation and a paper-based dissertation. Please see pages 24-26 for a description of the two types of dissertation formats, as well as Department guidelines for paper-based dissertations.

How are the Proposal and PhD Candidacy Exam Related?

As noted in the discussion of the PhD Candidacy Exam below, in the Department of Human Ecology, a student's candidacy exam takes place after he or she has submitted the proposal to the supervisory committee and they have approved it for candidacy, at which time the proposal will be distributed to the full candidacy committee. The final proposal must be approved by the supervisory committee following any revisions arising from the candidacy exam. Successfully completing candidacy indicates that the student has the background knowledge and methodological skill in both the broader discipline and the specific topic area needed to complete the proposed research. As such, to a large extent, the proposal sets the "boundaries" for the candidacy examination by narrowing the scope of the research to a proposed topic area and approach. Thus, the student should be expected to demonstrate knowledge and expertise in the specific area of their research as well as a broader understanding of how their research fits into the larger field. Thus, questions during candidacy will focus on the proposed research but may also assess the student's broader understanding of the field, both substantively and methodologically.

The PhD Candidacy Exam

The candidacy exam is an oral exam. It allows a student to demonstrate that they have an adequate knowledge of the discipline and subject matter that is relevant to the thesis. It also allows the student to demonstrate his or her ability to pursue and complete original research at an advanced level. Since the purpose of the candidacy exam, together with the comprehensive exam, is to assess the student's preparedness to do original research, this Department's policy is that the candidacy takes place after the proposal has been submitted to the student's committee but before beginning the research itself.

In addition to the Conduct of Examinations and Standard Examination Protocols set out by GPS, the Department of Human Ecology requires that students provide copies of their CV and copies of their U of A graduate program transcripts (or lists of all courses taken toward graduate programs at the U of A and the grades obtained) to doctoral candidacy examination committee members at the same time as copies of the research proposal are distributed. At this time, the supervisor should contact those candidacy examination committee members who do not also sit on the supervisory committee, and let them know that copies of the student's answers to the comprehensive exam are available upon request. If requested, the supervisor will provide electronic copies of the student's answers to the comprehensive exam prior to the candidacy exam. The comprehensive exam answers may provide committee members with additional information about areas of student strength or areas that may warrant further exploration during the candidacy exam.

Doctoral Program 3-Year Progress Requirement

As per GPS policy, the candidacy examination of a full-time student must be held within three years of the commencement of a student's program and no less than six months prior to taking the final oral examination. For part-time students, the department will determine the appropriate time period.

In exceptional circumstances a student who has failed to meet the doctoral program three-year progress requirement may be considered for an extension. The Department has the delegated authority to approve the first extension to the doctoral program three-year progress requirement.

Under exceptional circumstances an additional extension may be granted. Authority for the approval of a second and subsequent doctoral program three-year progress requirement extensions rests with the Dean, GPS.

All requests for an extension to the doctoral program three-year progress requirement will only be considered if there are sufficient, and substantial unforeseen circumstances beyond the control of the student and/or supervisor which prevent completion of the program within the time limits. The doctoral program three-year progress requirement extension may be considered for up to one year at a time.

In the case when a student has not met the 3-year deadline for completing all program requirements, other than the thesis, the student in consultation with their supervisor must write to the Graduate Coordinator to provide an explanation as to why the 3-year deadline has not been met. The letter should also include a schedule/timeline and plan for completing the remaining program requirements. The supervisor and Graduate Administrator must be cc'd into the letter. If there are any concerns about the timeline and progress the Graduate Coordinator may set up a meeting with the supervisor and student to discuss progress and the plan moving forward.

PhD Dissertation Research

Execution of the proposed research commences after the successful completion of course work and comprehensive and candidacy exams, after approval of the proposal by the student's supervisory committee, and after approval is received from the Human Ethics Committee (if needed). See additional details about undertaking doctoral research on pages 26 - 27. The research:

- Must embody results of original investigations and analyses.
- Must be of such quality as to merit publication, meeting the standards of reputable scholarly publications.
- Must constitute a substantial contribution to knowledge in the candidate's field of study.
- May be a traditional or paper-based format. Students should consult with their supervisory committee about the relative merits and challenges/limitations of both the traditional and paper-based formats. Paper-based dissertations completed by students in Human Ecology should adhere to the guidelines outlined below.

What is the Difference between the Traditional Dissertation and Paper-based Dissertation Formats?

As noted in the PhD Dissertation Research section, above, the culmination of a student's doctoral program is their completion of high-quality, original research. This can be done with a traditional dissertation or paper-based dissertation. Neither dissertation format is "better" than the other. Indeed, it is possible that essentially the same research could be completed using both formats. The format is, therefore, a decision regarding how the presentation of the research is going to be carried out.

Traditionally, doctoral dissertations are more thorough and provide a more in-depth analysis of the student's area of research. This often includes a broader discussion of the literature, a more in-depth discussion theories and assumptions, a more detailed account of the methods and methodology, more detailed results and/or additional analyses, and a more comprehensive discussion of the research and integration with existing knowledge than would be seen in a traditional, peer reviewed journal article. Because of this, it is not uncommon for dissertations to be longer than 100 or even 200 pages. Given the format of a traditional dissertation, to publish their research following graduation, students go through extensive revision to prepare manuscript-length documents for submission to journals. It is not uncommon for a student to get 2-4 journal manuscripts from their dissertation research.

Rather than a single, integrated document, the paper-based dissertation format seeks to streamline the process for students. In this format, students break down their proposed research into several smaller, more focused, individual yet related, papers. Each paper is prepared as a journal article manuscript with its own literature review, methods, results, and discussion sections. As noted in the Paper-based Dissertation Format section, in addition to each manuscript, a preface, introductory chapter that sets the stage for the dissertation, and a separate discussion chapter are also included. A separate literature review chapter or appendices may also be included.

While coauthors can be included on the papers, coauthors for paper-based dissertation manuscripts are not "typical" coauthors in that they do not collaboratively take on and complete significant tasks (e.g., writing a section of the paper, conducting analyses). Rather, coauthorship on paper-based dissertation manuscripts is largely due to the significant degree of discussion they have with the student during the process and the significant amount of feedback they give on the paper. In other words, because of their involvement, the final product represents more than just the student's ideas and therefore their contribution is acknowledged with coauthorship. As noted in the Paper-based Dissertation Format section, paper-based dissertations must include a preface that outlines the contribution of any coauthors and which clearly explains the precise contribution of the coauthors so that the examining committee can properly evaluate the work completed by the student.

A traditional dissertation proposal clearly outlines the background and significance of the proposed research and the student's plans to complete the research. It should demonstrate that the student has an adequate knowledge of the discipline and subject matter and his or her ability to pursue and complete original research at an advanced level. Similarly, a paper-based dissertation proposal will do this collectively across papers with a well-written introductory chapter (and perhaps literature review chapter) and individually for each paper with a well-articulated discussion of the background and significance the work of each paper and a plan for carrying out the research for each of the more narrowly-focused papers.

It is important that the paper-based dissertation provides a coherent account of the overall research and therefore, bridging statements between the papers at the beginning of each chapter is required. As manuscripts submitted for publication to different peer-review journals may have differences in style and length, the papers presented in the chapters may not always be a verbatim account of the submitted/published manuscript. If this is the case, a clear statement that "a version of this manuscript" has been submitted or published should be made within these bridging statements.

Paper-based Dissertation Format

The basic components of paper-based dissertations are 1) a preface, 2) an introductory chapter, 3) three to four published, submitted (under review), and/or publishable manuscripts, 4) a discussion chapter, and 5) a reference list/bibliography that includes all sources drawn on in the dissertation. It may also be appropriate to include 6) a separate literature review and appendices.

1. *Preface*: Consistent with GPS policy, all paper-based dissertations that include co- authored manuscripts must include a preface at the beginning of the dissertation that indicates the nature and extent of the student and co-authors' contributions to the research and manuscripts included in the dissertation.
2. *Introductory chapter*: Similar to a traditional dissertation, an introductory chapter will set the stage for the dissertation by outlining the purpose, objectives, rationale for, and the significance of the research. It is likely that this chapter will situate the research in relevant scholarly literature. As well, the introduction should clearly outline the focus of each manuscript and how they relate to the general focus of the dissertation.
3. *Manuscripts*: Dissertations will include three or four manuscripts that have been published, are under review, and/or are publishable. There is no limit on the number of published manuscripts. The manuscripts should each address an individual question or objective that relates to the broader focus of the dissertation. The specific focus of each manuscript will be detailed in the dissertation proposal, and approved by the supervisory committee. At least one manuscript will be an empirical study. Others can be reviews, theoretical, and/or methodological papers. Each manuscript must have a title page that indicates the title, authors, and the journal to which the manuscript has been published/is under review/will be submitted. Each manuscript must have a reference list of all sources drawn on.
4. *Discussion chapter:* Paper-based dissertations will conclude with a chapter that draws the dissertation to a close, highlighting key findings and new knowledge, as well as strengths and limitations of the work and implications for research, theory, policy, and/or practice.
5. *Comprehensive reference list/bibliography*: Consistent with GPS policy regarding all dissertations, regardless of format, a comprehensive reference list/bibliography will outline all sources used in the dissertation.
6. *Additional chapters/components*: Although a review of relevant literature will likely be part of the introductory chapter, some paper-based dissertations might include a separate literature review chapter. As well, appendices may be included.

General formatting guidelines: The format of the dissertation must adhere to GPS requirements. A consistent referencing and formatting system is used throughout the dissertation. That is, the referencing style and format of manuscript chapters do not adhere to specific journal requirements (within the dissertation).

Evaluation guidelines for supervisory and examining committees: The supervisory committee has final approval of the research proposal and dissertation content. If a manuscript has been published solely by the student (with no supervisor/supervisory committee input and/or approval) the supervisory committee can require that this manuscript not be included as part of the dissertation. If manuscripts and/or the dissertation as a whole are not consistent with the dissertation proposal, the committee may also require revisions. Examining committees will not be able to require revisions to manuscripts that have already been published. However, final oral exams comprise two components, the written document and the oral defense of the document. Doctoral candidates must understand and be able to defend their work to the satisfaction of the examining committee. Examining committees can require revisions to all components of the dissertation except manuscripts that have been published.

Citation/Referencing Style for Written Reports, Theses, and Dissertations

The Department requires that a commonly-accepted academic citation and referencing style be used in all documents. These include APA, Harvard, MLA, Chicago, Turabian, Vancouver/CSE, IEEE, ACS, etc. The citation/referencing style used will be determined by the student's supervisory committee. In the social sciences, typically APA or Harvard referencing styles are used. In the humanities, typically MLA, Chicago, or Turabian styles are used. In the physical sciences, typically ACS, Vancouver/CSE or IEEE referencing styles are used.

Completing Your Program

Course-based Programs

When a student in a course-based Master's program completes all coursework and other required assignments the Department notifies the Graduate Program Administrator that a program completion form needs to be completed. The Report of Completion of Course-based Master's Degree form is submitted to GPS and the student's name is placed on the list for the next convocation. Students must apply for convocation in Bear Tracks. Additional details can be found on the GPS website.

Final papers for capstone projects (HECOL 900 or HECOL 613) are not submitted to GPS. However, final papers can still be made available for wider readership by placing them on the University of Alberta libraries Educational Research Archive (ERA). With the supervisor's approval students can upload their revised final paper to the Department of Human Ecology, Capstone Final Papers Collection on ERA.

Thesis-based Master's and PhD Programs

Students in thesis-based Master's and PhD programs must register in THES 906/909 throughout their program and in the term in which the thesis and accompanying evidence of program completion is submitted to GPS. This enables GPS to award credit for the thesis at that time. Upon successful completion of the final oral exam and completion of any revisions, a Thesis Approval/Program Completion form is signed by the examining committee and sent to GPS. Students must apply for convocation in Bear Tracks. Additional details can be found on the GPS website.

Theses and dissertations are submitted to GPS in electronic format.

Human Ecology Policy on Academic Standing in Graduate Programs

The standards for acceptable academic standing in graduate programs offered through the Department of Human Ecology exceed those set by GPS. The minimum acceptable grade in any course taken by students registered in the Master's and Doctoral programs in Human Ecology is B-. Grades below B- count as failing grades for graduate students in Human Ecology. Graduate students in Human Ecology who achieve a grade of C+ or lower will be required to re-take the course for which they received a failing grade or take an equivalent/replacement course. Should a student fail a course or obtain a grade of C+ the Department may recommend to GPS that the student be placed on academic probation. Should a student receive a grade of B- multiple times the Department may also recommend that the student be placed on academic probation.

All students pursuing a Master's degree (MSc and MA course-based and thesis-based) in Human Ecology must maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0 throughout the course of the program. Should the cumulative GPA fall below 3.0 the Department may recommend to GPS that the student be placed on academic probation or be required to withdraw.

All students pursuing a doctoral degree in Human Ecology must maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.3 throughout the course of the program. Should the GPA fall below 3.3 the Department may recommend to GPS that the student be placed on academic probation or be required to withdraw.

The Process of Academic Probation

When placed on academic probation, the student will be required to meet with their supervisor and the Graduate Coordinator to determine the conditions of probation. The supervisor will be responsible for writing up the conditions of probation and this document will be signed by the student, supervisor, and Graduate Coordinator and placed in the student's file. The Department will then recommend academic probation to GPS for a specified period

If the student does not meet the conditions of academic probation a recommendation will be made to GPS that the student be required to withdraw from the program. Only in unusual cases with extenuating circumstances will a request for a second probationary period be made.

UNDERTAKING MASTER'S and PHD RESEARCH

Research Objectives

Graduate research accomplished by the student/supervisor team has two objectives. The first is to undertake creative, intellectual activity. This requires that the student and supervisor undertake the dialogue necessary to select and work together on a research problem. The outcome of this aspect of the program depends, in part, on developing a successful collaboration between the student and the supervisor, and sometimes also between the student and committee members. It is, therefore, essential that students get acquainted with their supervisor, and their supervisor's research and supervisory style in order to understand their supervisor's approach.

The second objective is for graduate students to progress through the program and successfully complete it. It is a good idea for the student and supervisor (and sometimes the committee) to "personalize" the general plan/time- line for achievement of the various milestones. To do so, the student and supervisor should be aware of each other's goals for progress, in order to identify potential problems, and to suggest changes that will help ensure the student's success.

As a student, you should discuss with your supervisor expectations about time management, organization, and how often you will need to meet. Also discuss the degree of independence and/or collaboration required, and the frequency with which you require assessment and feedback. Remember: when in doubt, ask! Supervisors will generally be happy to assist in any area that is confusing or about which you are unsure.

Master's Thesis

- Should reveal that a student is able to work in a scholarly manner.
- Shows the candidate is acquainted with the principal works published on the thesis subject.
- As far as possible, it should be an original contribution to the body of knowledge.
- Will be a traditional format (vs. paper based).

Choosing Your Research Topic

Graduate students may feel overwhelmed by the number of choices they face regarding research topics, but it is important to focus your topic as soon as possible in order to maximize the benefits of your course work. Your supervisor is your best resource here. Since your supervisor was assigned to you because of their expertise in the subject matter in which you are interested, they will be able to steer you in the right direction. As you read for courses, or while working as part of your supervisor's research team, make notes, jot down ideas, think about those issues that have recurring interest, and keep track of potential research questions that appeal to you. As you review these you may find that a common thread emerges – identifying this thread will make it easier to settle on a research topic. Time, experience, and on-going discussions with your supervisor will help you to define a manageable research question.

Resources for Ideas

If you are having trouble narrowing your topic, or deciding on an area of research, you should look at theses, dissertations, and applied research projects completed by previous Human Ecology graduate students (or students from other Departments). The work of previous Human Ecology graduate students is available in the reading room located in room 302B or accessed through the library website using Education and Research Archive (ERA) or ProQuest Dissertations and Theses. Your fellow graduate students can also be helpful – ask them about their research. Attend seminars, talk with others, ask questions, and read other students' theses to get as full a view as possible. Research seminars hosted in the Department and throughout the university can also be valuable sources of information. Keeping a journal or list of ideas, topics, and questions that interest you can be a great help.

Bibliography/Reference Management

The best thing you can do for yourself as soon as you start reading the literature is set up a bibliographic database on software such as Mendeley, Zotero or End Note. A program like this allows you to enter all the information needed for references, along with keywords and notes that permit you to search your own records as they begin to accumulate. All of these referencing management software systems can be used with Microsoft Word to enter citations as you write your papers or thesis. Zotero can also be used with Google Docs. At the click of a button, your reference lists will be formatted automatically in the style you choose. You also have the option of setting up your own styles for both citations and reference lists. Information about how to choose the reference management software that might be best for you is available here.

The Department requires that a commonly-accepted academic citation and referencing style be used in all documents. These include APA, Harvard, MLA, Chicago, Turabian, Vancouver/CSE, IEEE, ACS, etc. The student's supervisory committee will determine the citation/referencing style to be used. The U of A provides some basic information about the various citation styles.

Thesis formatting (Thesis-based Master's and PhD dissertation)

Review the Thesis Preparation, Requirements and Deadlines website to satisfy GPS submission and formatting rules for theses and dissertations.

Student Tips

- Authorship and Intellectual Property: Completion of a thesis or dissertation is often a collaborative process between student and supervisor (and sometimes supervisory committee members). Thus, it is often the case that both students and supervisors feel some intellectual ownership of the work. In the dissemination of collaborative research findings, students and supervisors naturally wish to ensure that their contributions to the collaboration are fairly represented. From early in the relationship, be sure to discuss issues of authorship to ensure clear parameters.
- Familiarize yourself with the GPS Guidelines for Authorship.
- Work closely with your supervisor—they have the expertise to help.
- Pay attention to research topic "trends," keeping in mind that any topic chosen will be your focus for the foreseeable future.
- Pick a research topic and/or question as soon as possible so as to maximize the feedback from professors during your courses and assignments.

SUPERVISORY AND EXAMINING COMMITTEES

Supervision and Exams

The University of Alberta Calendar provides comprehensive information regarding Supervision and Supervisory Committees, the roles and structure of examining committees, and the procedures for conducting examinations for thesis students. The requirements for a Master's versus a PhD supervisory committee and examining committee differ in size and roles.

Composition & Role of Thesis-based Master's Committees

The Department of Human Ecology requires that supervisory committees be established for all students in thesis- based Master's programs. The supervisory committee will include a minimum of two faculty members, one of whom is the supervisor and the other who may be from inside or outside the

Department. A third faculty member, who will serve as a University examiner, will be added for the student's final oral examination as per the Calendar. One of the members of the examining committee must be from outside the Department.

The supervisory committee should be established by the end of the first year of the student's program or upon completion of all course work. The names of the supervisory committee members must be sent to the Graduate Program Administrator, who will keep a record in the student's file. The supervisory committee will guide the student's development of the research proposal, approve the research proposal, provide advice to the student during the research process as appropriate, and will usually serve on the final oral examining committee.

Composition & Role of Course-based Master's Committees

Directed Research Project

Course-based Master's students do not have a supervisory committee. Students completing a directed research project as part of their course-based program require a supervisor and a reader to evaluate the written report from the directed research project, which typically comprises an academic report or major paper that integrates scholarly literature.

The role of the reader is to conduct a critical review of the document and provide written feedback on its quality. The main criterion for readers is that they must have expertise in the topic area and normally be a current or former University faculty member (i.e., from the Department of Human Ecology, another department at the U of A, another university, and may include professor emeriti).

One month before the report from the directed research project is to be sent to the external reader, the supervisor should submit the name of a reader to the Graduate Program Administrator for approval by the Graduate Coordinator. The "approval of reader" form is located in the HE Shared Drive and can be accessed by the supervisor. If the recommended reader is not a faculty member or professor emeritus at the U of A, a curriculum vitae for the reader should be provided.

Evaluation of the Directed Research Project

The directed research project is evaluated by the supervisor and one reader. The procedure for the evaluation is as follows:

- The supervisor works with the student throughout the development and writing of the directed research project document. When the supervisor determines that the document is complete and ready for evaluation, it is sent to the reader for review.
- The reader will have three weeks to evaluate the student's document. The role of the reader is to conduct a critical review of the document and provide written feedback on the quality of the document. The reader will submit the "Course-Based Master's Directed Research Project Evaluation" form which is located in the HE Shared Drive.
- Any suggested revisions to the document are sent to the supervisor with a copy to the student.
- The supervisor consults with the student about how revisions will be handled, including which of the suggested revisions must be undertaken.
- The student submits the final document to the supervisor who grades it on a pass/fail basis.
- In cases where there is a discrepancy between the supervisor's and reader's evaluations, final approval of the document will rest with the Graduate Coordinator. In such cases, the Graduate Coordinator may request a third evaluation.

Graduate Practicum

Course-based Master's students do not have a supervisory committee. Students completing a practicum (*6) as part of their course-based program only require a supervisor. However, the field supervisor for the practicum placement is involved in the determination of the work to be completed during the practicum placement, including the independent project. Although the academic supervisor has ultimate responsibility for determining whether the student has satisfactorily met the expectations of the practicum placement, the field supervisor typically provides feedback to the academic supervisor about the student's performance.

Composition & Role of PhD Committees

Doctoral supervisory committees comprise at least three members, and candidacy exam committees and final oral examining committees comprise at least five members (see Calendar). The supervisory committee includes the supervisor and two other members with expertise that aligns with the student's proposed research. The names of the supervisory committee members must be filed with the Graduate Program Administrator and approved by the Graduate Coordinator in advance of the comprehensive examination. The supervisory committee works with the student to develop a reading list for the comprehensive exam, develops questions and evaluates the comprehensive exam, provides the student with guidance around the development of the research proposal, approves the research proposal (both the draft that goes to the candidacy exam committee members and the final draft), provides advice to the student during the research process as appropriate, and usually serves on the candidacy and final oral examining committees.

Additional committee members beyond those who are on the supervisory committee are added for the candidacy and final oral examining committees and are called University Examiner or Specialized Knowledge Examiner. These examiners are not a member of the supervisory committee; not connected with the thesis research in a significant way; not associated with the student, outside of usual contact in courses or other non-thesis activities; and not a close collaborator of the supervisor. They may, however, be from the same department. These committee members may serve as examiners for both the candidacy and the final.

The appointment of an external examiner or reader is approved by the Graduate Coordinator and the Faculty of ALES Associate Dean, Graduate Programs. The approval of the final examining committee and the membership of a doctoral candidacy examination committee is delegated to the Graduate Coordinator.

Supervisory Eligibility Requirements

Each of the following criteria must be satisfied by at least one of the supervisors:

1. a tenured, tenure-track, or retired faculty member, or a Faculty Service Officer, of the University of Alberta;
2. active in the general subject area of the student's research;
3. demonstrate continuing scholarly or creative activity of an original nature; and
4. either hold a degree equivalent to or higher than that for which the student is a candidate, or have a demonstrated record of successfully supervising students for the degree.

Recruiting and Appointing Committee Members

The procedure for approaching potential committee members should be discussed and agreed upon by student and supervisor, but normally the approach would be made by the supervisor. The supervisor should confirm that the potential committee members are willing to serve and request that the Graduate Program Administrator complete the necessary paperwork for the student's file. The choice of committee members (appointment and/or removal) must be jointly agreed to by student and supervisor, and approved by the Graduate Coordinator.

Replacement of Committee Members

As with a supervisor, there may be occasions when a committee member should be replaced. The committee member should first be consulted and reasons for suggesting replacement should be explained. If, even after this consultation, the student and supervisor agree that replacing the committee member is in everyone's best interest, the committee member being replaced should be informed in writing and a copy of the letter filed with the Graduate Program Administrator. The supervisor should then request approval of the new committee member so that a new committee appointment form can be put on file.

Student Tips

- Pay attention to, and take every opportunity to interact with professors from whom you take courses. This is a great way to identify and get to know some possible committee members.
- Get to know as much as you can about your other committee members' research and expertise.

Opening Final Oral Exams to Observers

Persons other than the student and the examining committee can attend the final oral exam. The HECOL Graduate Program Committee believes that there is value in opening defenses to observers such as other HECOL graduate students and faculty members because it would represent an important learning opportunity for both students and supervisors (especially new faculty members who have as yet participated in few defenses). At a minimum it would give everyone some idea as to what to expect at their own defense. The exam chair is responsible for determining whether observers should be permitted to attend the defense. The Graduate Program Committee encourages exam chairs to give this permission as a default, but the chair should also consult with the supervisor and student in making this determination in each individual case. Only HECOL graduate students and faculty members should be invited to attend, and only members of the examining committee would be permitted to ask questions. However, the presentation at the beginning of the exam may be open to a wider audience only with the approval of the exam chair.

STUDENT FUNDING

As of Fall 2025, minimum guaranteed funding for PhD students at the University of Alberta provides financial support for doctoral students through years one to four of their program with minimum guaranteed funding of $100K CAD over four years and not less than $25K CAD in their first year. Further details are available on the GPS website. Although funding may be available, it is not guaranteed for MSc or MA students in the Department of Human Ecology. Course-based students are usually self-funded and scholarship opportunities are limited.

A variety of sources of financial support are available to all graduate students, many of which are described below. Students have the primary responsibility to seek out and secure financial resources adequate to complete their graduate program in a timely manner. Supervisors and the Department are responsible for helping students identify and pursue appropriate sources of funds. The Department supports students in developing strong applications for university and external awards through the provision of feedback after the supervisor has worked with the student to develop a polished application. Relevant information is circulated via e-mail as opportunities arise.

The Department's goals related to graduate student funding include:

- ensuring that as many students as possible receive funding during a period reasonably required to complete their degree through a variety of sources (department graduate teaching/research assistantships, department and university awards, scholarships and grants, faculty member research grants, and external scholarships);
- equitable allocation of funding, within constraints imposed on specific funding sources; and
- transparent policies and procedures for graduate student funding.

Decisions about allocation of all departmental and university funds for student support are made by members of the Graduate Program Committee with input from the Department Chair.

Graduate Teaching Assistantships (GTA) – Department Policies & Procedures

Decisions about teaching assistantships (TAs) will be made by the Graduate Coordinator with input from the Chair and other members of the Graduate Program Committee. Requests for teaching assistantships are solicited from both academic staff and graduate students. The Department Chair reviews and gives final approval for the assignments which are then forwarded to Human Resources to distribute appointment letters.

All graduate students can apply for assistantships. The Graduate Program Administrator will email the application form to current and incoming graduate students in April or May each year.

If you are appointed to an assistantship, any tuition fees owing after the fee payment deadline are automatically deducted from your pay cheques. Details about the payroll deduction system can be found here.

Decisions about assistantships supported by department funds are guided by the following:

- Students who hold major awards typically are not eligible for a departmental TA. However, faculty members can offer research assistantships from grants to students who have received a major award. Some awards limit the amount that may be received in addition to the major award.
- Departmental support for a student typically does not exceed the equivalent of one semester of 12 hours/week of TA funding. Some students receive more funding than this when their supervisor provides RA funding from a grant.

The Department's priorities for Graduate Assistantships are outlined below.

Teaching Assistantships:

- Provide teaching assistant support to lab courses.
- Provide teaching assistant support to larger undergraduate courses with heavy marking loads.

Appropriate Activities for Graduate Teaching Assistants

Graduate teaching assistantships are expected to be used primarily for graduate-level activities such as lab set-up; teaching, demonstrating, or supervising students during a lab; marking; and proctoring exams.

In contrast, the following kinds of activities should not constitute a significant part of any teaching assistantship and typically will not be approved to be a paid responsibility of a teaching assistantship: cutting fabric swatches; photocopying; attending or sitting in on lectures (without an active role).

Sometimes it is important for students to do extra background reading to help prepare themselves for a particular teaching assistantship and/or attend lectures in which they are not actively participating/teaching. These activities typically are not paid. Similarly, guest lectures in undergraduate courses fall outside of paid TA activities. Faculty members are encouraged to provide opportunities for all interested graduate students to gain some teaching experience by offering guest lectures.

Although the Department tries to meet as many student requests as possible and distribute the funding available for TAs in an equitable manner, we often are not able to fulfill all of the assistantship funding requests that we receive. RA opportunities could become available throughout the year as faculty members receive research grants. It's a good idea to keep your ears and eyes open!

Department and University Scholarships and Awards

Students apply annually to be nominated for a variety of Department and University scholarships and awards that are listed on the GPS website and in GSMS. Every spring, the Graduate Program Administrator sends the application form to current and incoming students. Members of the Graduate Program Committee review the applications and determine the nominations. Supervisors and nominated students are contacted to gather the required nomination materials. Members of the Graduate Program Committee review University scholarship and award nominations and provide feedback to students and their supervisors so that the strongest possible nominations are submitted.

Travel Awards

Support for travel related to your research is available from various sources such as:

- GPS Graduate Travel Awards;
- Alice E Brewer Graduate Travel Award, administered by Human Ecology for PhD students that are Canadian or Permanent Residents; and
- Graduate Students Association Travel Award (GSA).

External Scholarships

Tri-Council Scholarships

The Graduate Program Committee identifies domestic students who will be competitive for scholarships from SSHRC (Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council), NSERC (Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada), and CIHR (Canadian Institutes of Health Research). Students work with their supervisor to develop an application, which undergoes internal adjudication by the Graduate Program Committee before it is submitted. Master's-level scholarships are usually due by December 1 and PhD scholarships are due in October. Check the GPS website for additional details about the applications and deadlines. The Graduate Program Committee will inform students about internal deadlines.

Other Agencies

Refer to agency websites for award descriptions, deadlines, and application processes.

- Alberta Museums Association
- Alberta Innovates
- PolicyWise for Children & Families
- International Development Research Centre (IDRC)
- The W.L. Mackenzie King Memorial Scholarships
- Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW)
- Mitacs

Student Tip

- Ensure that you apply for funding in a professional manner. If you need to get letters of reference/support, make sure that you allow your referees ample time (at least three weeks), and provide them with sufficient information, so they can prepare their documents in an effective manner.

Appendix A: Tips for Comprehensive Exams

by R. Breitkreuz, prepared for HECOL 693: Professional Seminar III

When do I do my comprehensive exam?

The comprehensive exam takes place sometime after the successful completion of coursework required for the PhD program. Normally, a student spends a minimum of six weeks in intensive full-time study in order to prepare for the exam experience.

What is required?

Students are required to write a paper answering one question (from a choice of two) in each of the areas listed above. Students have exactly one week to complete the exam (the time and day of the week you start is up to you and your committee to determine). Papers are typically 12-15 pages each in length (double-spaced, 12 point font). To prepare for the exam, students review readings that are compiled into a reading list. This reading list is typically drafted by the student. It is then shared with the primary supervisor, and then the supervisory committee. The committee then adds and deletes readings in order to ensure that the depth and breadth of knowledge required is covered.

How should I prepare for the comprehensive exam?

The best way to prepare for your exam is to review knowledge you've obtained in coursework and through independent reading in a disciplined and strategic manner. Remember, you have the first opportunity to prepare your reading list, so you have an opportunity to shape the parameters of your exam questions.

Tips for preparing for the exam:

1. Read widely: You are becoming an expert in a particular scholarly area, and your knowledge should reflect a nuanced understanding of that body of literature.

2. Engage in ACTIVE reading: Take notes, make connections between the articles, and constantly consider how this article relates to other work you've read, considering the similarities and differences between this piece of work and other work in the area.

3. Talk to others: Talk to other students, to your supervisor, and to experienced faculty members to get ideas for questions, as well as tips for how to prepare and write the exam.

4. Organize information you read: Because you're reading comprehensively in several different areas it is helpful to organize your readings. To this end, create literature charts that summarize key aspects of the article such as the location of the study, theory utilized, methods used, key findings, poignant points, and how you think it relates to your topic. Also, create reference lists ahead of time so you can quickly import your references into your papers. In addition, physically organize your readings. Have a pile for each subject area, and further organize these piles of articles in ways that make sense for you.

5. Anticipate questions: Based on knowledge you've gleaned from your reading, your coursework, and ideas you've discussed with your supervisory committee, anticipate what you think might be asked. Review other students' questions and responses (available on-line; ask Graduate Program Administrator about how to access the data based). In particular, think about the intersections between the various areas of expertise. For example, how is your content area human ecological? How could particular theories be utilized to develop your content area?

6. Practice questions: After anticipating questions, actually write out answers! You may be able to use pieces of these answers in your exam, and disciplining yourself with this practice will help you to do the exam more easily.

Tips for writing the comprehensive exam:

1. Be strategic: As soon as you get your questions, read them all over carefully and jot down notes to brainstorm possible approaches to the answers. In doing so, it may become immediately apparent to you which question to choose for each category.

2. Create outlines first: For questions you know for certain you're going to answer, create immediate outlines. This will give you some ideas for how to approach the questions and organize your paper before you get bogged down in details. It will also give you confidence later on when you're fatigued, because you've already produced an outline to start with when you return to the questions (you may want to spend a half day on developing your strategy and creating your outlines).

3. Manage your time carefully: You have approximately 1.5 days for each question. Plan your time accordingly. You may need to stop working on one paper before it's finished to start on another. Some students like to start with the most difficult question. I recommend starting with the easiest question, and doing the most difficult question second.

4. Choose your location carefully: if you can, find a place to work where you will not experience interruptions while you write. You will want to be able to focus on your during this week. This will reduce your stress considerably.

5. Take breaks: Choose times daily for one or two breaks. Breaks may include activities like exercising or watching TV, but arrange some short periods of downtime to refresh yourself.

6. Get adequate rest.

Typical problems with comprehensive exams:

1. The question was not answered, or the student answered the wrong question. Sometimes students prepare a beautiful answer to the wrong question. When developing your paper, ensure that you answer the question that was asked.

2. Answers are superficial. In some cases, the answers provided do not reflect an acceptable amount of depth or breadth. In your answer, you want to ensure that you demonstrate that you have a solid and comprehensive command of the literature in this area. You should be able to elaborate on the key understandings, debates, issues, and gaps in the body of literature you are utilizing for this particular question. In addition, you want to ensure that your level of analysis is in-depth, scholarly, and reflective of a high- level of understanding of the subject matter.

3. Answers are disorganized and the key points are unclear. In some cases, students have difficulty in organizing their paper in a clear and intelligible way. You can avoid this problem through having the literature you anticipate using well organized, identifying key points in the literature, creating literature charts and summaries, having your references organized and easily accessible for quick entry into your papers, and writing practice answers that you may be able to cut and paste from for your review. Remember that the answers do not have to be eloquent, but you do want them to be as clear and well-organized as possible.