

**MA in Gender & Social Justice Studies
Department of Women's and Gender Studies
UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA**



Graduate Manual
2021-2022

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Do not underestimate the usefulness (and final authority!) of the [FGSR Graduate Manual](#) and the [University Calendar](#).

PLEASE SEEK CLARIFICATION CONCERNING ANY POINTS OF CONFUSION OR DISCREPANCY FROM THE GRADUATE CHAIR lise.gotell@ualberta.ca

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* Please note that the University of Alberta is undergoing a significant reorganization. These roles may therefore change over the course of your program. The Grad Chair will make every effort to keep students informed about contacts.

Program Progression and Timelines

All admitted students in the 2021-2022 are enrolled in the course-based degree.*

Students enrolled in the course-based degree may complete the MA as a full time or a part-time student and can move between the two statuses.

Deadlines

Students are expected to complete degree requirements in a timely manner. However, if you think that you are not going to be able to meet the deadlines set out in the charts below, it is very important for you to discuss the situation with the Graduate Chair and your supervisor. If you do not complete your coursework, thesis, and/or capstone project in a timely manner, you may be required to register in additional semesters and your convocation date will be affected. See FGSR chart of [deadlines](#).

Part-time Study

In order to accommodate the completion of coursework by part-time students, all efforts will be made to offer GSJ courses in the evenings, in late afternoons, and during Spring and Summer terms. GSJ 900 (required for students doing their capping project) is offered during any term of the year. Full time students should complete GSJ 501 and GSJ 502 in F2021; part-time students are urged to enroll in these courses early in their programs.

Time limit for completion of programs.

This manual sets forth optimal timelines for completion of course-based MA degrees in Gender and Social Justice Studies. Beyond those optimal timelines, FGSR provides clear regulations regarding time limits for the completion of MA programs. If you think that you will have trouble fulfilling the requirements of the degree, please discuss the matter with your supervisor or the Graduate Chair. For information about Leaves of Absence from your graduate program, see the [FGSR webpage](#).

Digital Humanities Option

The course stream in the MA program offers a specialization in Digital Humanities (DH). In order to earn the specialization, course-based MA students will take *9 credits of DH courses, and their final portfolio project (which must entail a DH component) will be supervised by one WGS and one DH faculty member. This option requires a separate application to the DH program: <https://www.ualberta.ca/interdisciplinary-studies/digital-humanities>.

* Please note: The GSJ Program also offers a two-year thesis route. For more information, please consult the [University of Alberta Calendar](#).

MA Degree Optimal Timeline: Full time study, course-based (13 months)

Year	Term	Activities
Year one	Fall	<p>For full time students, coursework complete GSJ 501 & 502.</p> <p>Academic Integrity and Ethics Training (below pp. 8-9) should be completed (8 hours).</p> <p>If your capping project research involves human subjects, you must apply for ethics approval. As this process can take some time, it is important to initiate the process as soon as possible online through http://www.reo.ualberta.ca/.</p> <p>The Field Research Office can be helpful in this process (Field Research Pre-Planning Vice-President Finance and Administration).</p>
	Winter	<p>March 1st: Confirm capping project supervisor by sending an email to Graduate Chair and Graduate Administrator.</p>
	Spring and summer	<p>Register in GSJ 900 for either Spring or Summer term.</p> <p>It might be necessary for students to register for additional credits (GSJ 903 or GSJ 906) to be eligible for full time (12 hour) Graduate Assistantships.</p> <p>May 1st: Submit annual report to Graduate Administrator.</p> <p>August 31: Capping project should be submitted to your supervisor and to a second examiner chosen by the supervisor.</p> <p>September 25: Revisions to Capping paper, Synthesizing Document, completed Individual Development Plan, and Professional Development Completion form should be submitted to your supervisor.</p> <p>September 30: Submit the “Report of Completion of Course-based Master’s Degree” form. Should you miss this deadline, and convocate the following June, you will have to register (and pay for 3 credits of tuition and fees) in Fall or Winter</p>
Year two	Fall	<p>Convocation in November.</p>

General Student Information

Course selection

There are two mandatory courses in the MA in GSJ program: GSJ 501 and GSJ 502.

- GSJ 501 Social Justice Workshop entails a weekly seminar emphasizing social justice theory and practice, and includes 20 hours of placement with a community non-profit organization that culminates in a praxis reflection assignment.
- GSJ 502 Gender Research Workshop is a seminar course that will expose students to the wide array of theoretical and methodological approaches to feminist and social justice research currently practiced by faculty members across the University of Alberta.

These two courses, combined with attendance at WGS/GSJ Speakers (see below), integrate students into cultures of interdisciplinary feminist research across campus.

Remaining courses for the degree may be selected from among GSJ courses (at least 6* credits) and from graduate level (500+) courses in other departments. Please note that some departments do not permit students to register on-line and you may need to contact the course instructor or graduate coordinator directly in order to complete registration. Be ready to provide an argument for how the course that you are interested in fits into your program of study.

In certain circumstances, and by special arrangement with instructors, students may take an Independent Reading class or a graduate tutorial piggy-backed on an undergraduate lecture course (as GSJ 500). As a matter of policy, the Department of Women's and Gender Studies strongly discourages (although does not outright forbid) Academic Teaching Staff (contract academic staff) from undertaking this additional instructional burden.

Information about additional GSJ courses is available in the [University Calendar](#), Bear Tracks (the U of A's online registration system), and the graduate section of the WGS webpage.

Please direct any questions about course selection to the Graduate Chair.

Graduate Supervision

Although the Graduate Chair is responsible for helping you select classes to fulfill your program requirements, she does not supervise your research *ex officio* (although she can do so as a regular professor). The Graduate Committee matches all full time incoming students to research supervisors at the point of admission. You are encouraged to seek your supervisor's input, with the understanding that the Graduate Chair bears ultimate responsibility for and knowledge of program requirements.

Graduate Committee supervisor-student matches are provisional and can be changed. It is even possible to be supervised by someone outside of the Department of Women's and Gender Studies. Consult the Graduate Chair if you wish to discuss alternative supervisors. Given that March 1st is the date by which the identity of your supervisor must be formally declared, you must

begin to cultivate a relationship with your “recommended” supervisor, and possibly with alternative supervisors, well before that date.

WGS/GSJ Speakers

The speaker series features current feminist research activity by U of A researchers and visitors. Each year’s schedule will be circulated by email and available on the department webpage. Please note that students in the MA program should attend any lectures, and are encouraged to participate actively in discussion afterwards. If a group of GSJ students would like to organize a visiting speaker, please consult the Graduate Chair, Lise Gotell.

Graduate Student Conference

Our first four cohorts organized Graduate Student conferences in Winter term (although the Winter 2020 and 2021 conferences were cancelled due to the pandemic). This is an opportunity to gain skills organizing a conference and in research dissemination. The conferences have included students from other programs at the University of Alberta, as well as students from across Canada. We hope that Winter 2022 will again witness such an event, possible in a virtual or hybrid format. Presentations by students do not necessarily have to relate to their thesis or capping project. If a group of GSJ students is interested in organizing a Graduate Student Conference, please consult with the Graduate Chair, Lise Gotell. The Department is planning a WGS undergraduate conference and it would make sense to coordinate the two conferences.

Email contact and lists

All contact with students across the University is conducted via email. *It is therefore vital that you regularly check your @ualberta.ca email address.* Additionally, you (should) have been invited to join a departmentally administered listserv for graduate students. Please accept this invitation so that you will stay up to date on department matters, including public events and administrative issues.

Annual Report

Students are required to complete an annual report, to be submitted to the Graduate Advisor by May 1 of each year that they are in the program. This report is used for a number of purposes, including award nominations and departmental statistical reporting. The report has been produced as a google form that will be circulated to students by email. Please recognize that this sort of annual reporting of activities is required for all academic positions; your professors fill out extremely detailed accountings of our activities each year. Please take the obligation to report your activities seriously.

Fees

For fee-related enquiries, please contact gradfees@ualberta.ca. Please be aware that graduate students are responsible for paying Spring/Summer tuition during their time in the program. Please consult the Graduate Advisor (Heather Cook) if you have any questions regarding tuition and fees.

Awards & Fellowships

The disbursement of graduate awards and fellowships is a central part of the admissions process. Students entering our program are considered for RA (Research Assistant) and TA (Teaching Assistant) positions, as well as for university-administered awards and fellowships. The graduate committee makes every effort to provide funding to students for one academic year.

Graduate assistantships are employment relationships, governed by a contract negotiated by the [GSA](#). They are also a key component of program and an invaluable opportunity for you to gain teaching and research skills. The department provides a detailed [Time Use Sheet](#) to help students and professors engage in a discussion about the work that will be expected of the student, and an overview of how the hours will be spent. These details should be clarified in a face-to-face meeting at the beginning of the appointment with the professor to whom you have been assigned.

It is the role of the Graduate Chair to notify students of awards and fellowships for which they may be eligible, and to support students in the preparation of award applications. A SSHRC (Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada) grant proposal workshop may also be held early in the Fall term for students who intend to apply for PhD programs.

FGSR, the GSA, the Faculty of Arts, and the Department of Women's and Gender Studies offer awards for travel and research, disbursed multiple times each year. As travel on university business is currently prohibited due to the pandemic it is unclear whether these funds will be available in 2020-2021.

For additional information about award opportunities, see the [Scholarships and Awards](#) section of the FGSR webpage.

Ethics training

FGSR requires students in all programs to fulfill an Academic Integrity and Ethics Training Requirement. For students in the MA in GSJ, this requirement is fulfilled by:

- The completion of the on-line GET (Graduate Ethics Training) course. The link to enroll in the course can be found at [Academic Integrity and Ethics Training Requirement | Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research](#) Students must provide a copy of the completion certificate to the Graduate Advisor for her files.
- The completion of GSJ 501 includes a minimum of 3 hours of ethics training with an emphasis on ethical issues related to community-based research and engagement. Discussion of ethical approaches to research and practice also feature in GSJ 502 and throughout course offerings in the Gender and Social Justice Studies program.

Please note that you will not be able to graduate without fulfilling this requirement.

Students are encouraged to discuss matters of ethical concern that arise in the course of their own studies, or when they are serving as instructors, with their supervisor, the Graduate Chair,

or the Department Chair. For the University of Alberta Code of Student Behavior, see [9.5 Code of Student Behaviour | Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research](#).

Professional development

FGSR requires all students to complete 8 hours of professional development training, and to design an Individual Development Plan (IDP).

The requirement compels the student to cultivate skills and attain knowledge beyond what is considered essential to or inherent in their degree program, including the research component of that program. From cultivating a teaching portfolio to preparing for careers outside academia, there are sessions and workshops offered by FGSR year-round to help you work towards creating a professional development footprint. Please explore their website at the earliest opportunity ([Professional Development | Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research](#)). Note, however, that a wide range of activities beyond the FGSR offerings can be utilized to fulfill the requirement. Consult the Graduate Chair if you have questions about whether an activity of potential interest would count.

A	Access the IDP workbook. Students are required to work from the Individual Development Plan (IDP) workbook. Students who are returning to graduate studies after years of professional experience may wish to use the Individual Development Plan for Professionals (IDP Pro) workbook.
B	Be specific. As part of the IDP, graduate students research three careers or goals, and these will be as diverse as the students and their field of study. Supervisors should review any departmental specific requirements for professional development and guide students to complete those activities as part of the eight hour requirement.
C	Complete the IDP. Students receive guidance through a three part IDP workshop series and an IDP Online Workshop (Part 2) . There are also tip sheets , an IDP Review Guide for Students , and an IDP Review Guide for Faculty .
D	Deadlines. To help students take advantage of internships and other professional opportunities available on campus, there are deadlines for completion. The IDP must be finalized and reviewed by a supervisor or career mentor.
E	Eight hours of PD activities. Students will find, participate and log the eight hours of PD activities that interest them, inspired by their IDP and/or advised by their department. The activity must meet the professional development activities guideline and be approved by the department to count towards the eight hours. The PD Opportunities Guide lists some of the available options.
F	Forms. When both the IDP and eight hours of PD activities are finished, students need to complete and submit a supervisor/career mentor signed IDP/PD Completion Form to their department. The IDP is kept by the student.
G	Goal setting. IDPs are used by professionals to help them achieve their life goals. We recommend supervisors or career mentors review it annually with students.

Deadlines for Completion

IDP

- Within 12 months of a program's commencement for master's students
- Within 18 months of a program's commencement for doctoral students

Eight hours of PD activities

- By time of program completion for master's students
- Within 3 years of a program's commencement for doctoral students

Full-time students must meet this requirement within 12 months of their program's commencement. The Department of Women's and Gender Studies has extended the time to complete the IDP to 24 months for part-time master's students. Mature students may petition for exemption from this requirement. *You will not be able to graduate without fulfilling this requirement unless you receive an exemption.*

All students are required to fill out the [IDP and PD Completion form](#).

Guidelines for Capping Project/Portfolio

We encourage graduates to make their work available through the university's institutional repository, ERA (Education and Research Archive). Capping projects must be manually uploaded. To deposit your capping project (without the synthesizing document), login to [ERA](#) using your CCID and password, and deposit your capping project to the [Capping Portfolios collection](#). If you have questions contact erahelp@ualberta.ca.

Portfolio

Students in the course-based route must complete a portfolio. All portfolios will include:

- a 7-10 page (2,800 to 4,000 word) introduction: a synthesizing document, that highlights the student's learning process in the program, and provides a framework for the capping project, and
- a capping project: an academic or policy-based research work totaling 25-30 pages (10,000 to 12,000 words), or the equivalent in creative work.

Work towards the portfolio will be supervised by the capping project supervisor. One additional faculty member must serve as an examiner for the capping project, and it is the duty of the supervisor to select the examiner. There is no oral examination of the capping project.

Supervisors should not send the projects to second readers until they are in the best possible shape. Should the evaluator request revisions, it will be up to the supervisor whether to require those revisions from the student; complicated cases, questions, and disputes should be referred to the Graduate chair and potentially (if necessary) to the Graduate Committee.

Campus Resources to Assist Graduate Students

In addition to the help you can receive directly from our department faculty and staff, there are many resources available on campus. Some services may be limited in 2020-2021 due to the pandemic, but all campus units are continuing to function. This list is not exhaustive.

Academic Success Centre - offers Learning Resources and Writing Resources to enhance students' learning and writing skills, including exam-writing skills. The Centre offers in-person workshops and seminars throughout the term, online workshops, and one-on-one sessions.

Accessibility Resources - promotes and coordinates the efforts of University departments and off-campus agencies in meeting students' needs and provides services, which help to equalize educational opportunities for students. Accessibility Resources serves prospective and current students at the University of Alberta, as well as staff and faculty, whose disabilities involve any number of conditions affecting mobility, vision, hearing, learning, and physical or mental health.

Community Social Work Team – provides a range of financial, legal, and medical resources.

Career Centre - offers a variety of career services to University of Alberta undergraduate and graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, alumni and the University community. They can help students explore career options, connect with employers, write a resume, prepare for a job interview and find work.

Centre for Teaching and Learning - 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.

Centre for Writers – offers free one-on-one writing support to all students, staff and instructors on campus, in any subject or discipline, and at all levels of study.

Chaplains Association - Interfaith Chaplains are available for guidance, care and support to any student or staff member, whether or not they identify with a particular faith. They also offer information and referral regarding religious groups and activities on campus, as well as marriage preparation courses and assistance in memorial services.

Counselling & Clinical Services – aims to provide high quality, accessible and compassionate psychological and psychiatric services to students to improve their personal, social and academic well-being. They also offer a number of drop-in workshops on specific mental health issues.

Financial Support – is available, including emergency loans.

First Peoples' House - offers a variety of programs and services to Indigenous students at the University of Alberta, including advising services, funding for tutoring, and mentoring services.

Graduate Students' Association – represents all graduate students at the University of Alberta. The equivalent organization for undergraduate students is the Students' Union. The GSA exists to help students on an individual and group level. The GSA also offers a Graduate Student Assistance Program (GSAP) which provides all graduate students with 24/7 access to psychological counselling services through a company called Homewood Human Solutions. The GSA also provides emergency bursaries based on need.

Graduate Student Internship Program – provides paid internships for graduate students.

Graduate Teaching and Learning Program (GTL) - provides support to graduate students in the development of teaching skills. Their webpage provides teaching tip sheets and information about workshops, round table discussions, and other activities that support teaching.

International Student Services - is the main campus resource for international students seeking assistance with immigration matters as well as financial, academic, or personal issues.

Institute for Sexual Minority Studies and Services - leads groundbreaking research that affects policy development, intervention, education and community outreach for sexual and gender minorities. It is involved in educational outreach, especially to youth, through the Family Resilience Project, Camp Flyefly, and the Comprehensive Health Education Workers' Project.

The Landing - The Landing offers support for gender and sexual diversity on campus in the form of peer mentoring, education sessions, advocacy, and awareness campaigns. The Landing's office hosts drop in hours, trans meetups, and a resource library.

Office of Safe Disclosure and Human Rights - provides staff and students with a safe, neutral and confidential space to express concerns regarding issues of treatment or ethics. They help identify the issue and make referrals, or help individuals explore the area of concern without formal intervention.

Office of the Student Ombuds - is a confidential service focused on ensuring that university processes related to students operate as fairly as possible. Staff offer information, advice, and support to students as they deal with academic, discipline, interpersonal, and financial issues related to student programs.

Sexual Assault Centre - strives for a campus community free of sexual violence. It provides free of charge services that include drop in, email, and phone support for survivors of sexual assault as well as their partners, family, and friends, and runs educational campaigns.

Student Legal Services of Edmonton - is a student-managed, non-profit society dedicated to helping low-income individuals in Edmonton understand their legal issues and solve their legal problems. The services are offered by law student volunteers, and include advice on criminal and family law matters, as well as academic and discipline appeals.

[University Health Centre](#) - can assist students in need of medical advice in a friendly and confidential manner.

[University Health Centre Pharmacy](#) – provides pharmacy services and is currently offering asymptomatic COVID testing.