



Graduate Student Handbook

Leadership Studies

**Educational Psychology and Leadership Studies
University of Victoria**

June 2026



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Welcome to Leadership Studies!

Leadership Studies is a unique graduate program designed to provide critical and creative learning opportunities for formal and informal leaders in post-secondary and secondary education, community organizations and agencies, government, band councils, and health care sectors from around the world. Our graduates work as adult and community educators and practitioners, teachers and administrators, literacy and social workers, higher educational administrators and educators, workplace trainers and union workers, arts and culture professionals, employees in non-governmental, voluntary, women's, inter-governmental and governmental organizations and agencies, military and justice system workers, and anti-oppressive educators.

The Leadership Studies Graduate program offers broad conceptual and theoretical opportunities for learning with an emphasis on the inter-relationship between educational processes and the practice of leadership.

This handbook outlines the Master's degree programs in Leadership Studies. We have included guidelines and department policies for your timely degree completion and additional information and resources you may need during your studies with us.

All students should bookmark and reference the University of Victoria [Graduate Calendar](#) ("Calendar"). The Calendar contains information on general university policies, admissions, registration, academic regulations, student services, degrees and programs, course listings, requirements for degree completion and graduation, tuition and other fees, co-operative education options, and awards for graduate study.

This Handbook is supplemental to the contents of the Calendar with a detailed description of the programs in Leadership Studies and the respective requirements and expectations. It is your responsibility to be familiar with the rules, regulations, and expectations relating to your program.

As a new graduate student preparing for your studies with us, please visit the [New graduate students](#) page for the list of things you'll want to be aware of.

Please let us know if you have questions about your program, not answered in this handbook.

We acknowledge and respect the Lək'wəŋən (Songhees and Xwsepsəm/Esquimalt) Peoples on whose territory the university stands, and the Lək'wəŋən and W̱SÁNEĆ Peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

Our Programs

We offer two Master's Degree programs:

Master of Education degree (MEd) - a project-based program

Master of Arts degree (MA) - a thesis-based research program

These programs are intended for students with diverse backgrounds who have earned undergraduate degrees. These programs aim to broaden understandings of contemporary theories and practices of leadership, education, learning, and issues that affect educational institutions, communities, and society. Candidates often choose their specific degree, MEd or MA, before entering the program.

The Leadership Studies program offers a variety of graduate courses every semester. The information about specific courses may be found in the University of Victoria [Graduate Calendar](#).

What is the Difference between an MEd and an MA degree?

There are several differences between the project-based MEd and the thesis-based MA.

Project-based MEd:

- Does not involve human subjects. (*See Appendix A for examples of the projects*).
- Can be completed in 5 full-time terms.
- Followed by a written exam.
- Students applying to the MEd are under the supervision of the Leadership Studies Graduate Advisor.

Thesis-based MA:

- If your MA research involves human subjects, you will be required to remit an ethics application through the Research Administration Information System ([RAIS](#)).
- Will normally take a minimum of 2-3 years to complete, depending on the complexity of the research.
- Students applying to the MA program must contact the department in advance of applying to secure a supervisor before applying to the program.

Master of Education Program (MEd)

The MEd program is normally 5 semesters, and consists of 15 units of study and includes:

- Coursework - 10.5 units (normally 7 courses, 1.5 units each), including the required *ED-D 561B Project Designs and Methods in Leadership*;
- Research project (ED-D 598 – 3.0 units); and
- Comprehensive exam (ED-D 597 - 1.5 units).

Upon completion of coursework and the project, students will write a comprehensive exam (ED-D 597). Students will be asked to select a question from a list and respond to it, drawing on academic literature on leadership and their own experience in the program.

Master of Arts Program (MA)

The Master of Arts program consists of 15.0 units of study, and includes:

- Coursework - 9 units (normally 6 courses, 1.5 units each); and
- Thesis (ED-D 599 – 6.0 units) and an oral examination.

ED-D 599 Thesis is a specialized research project on a topic chosen in consultation with the student's supervisory committee. The thesis should be an original piece of research that would be suitable for publication in a professional journal or presentation at a professional meeting.

The thesis will demonstrate a student's mastery of a substantive body of scholarly or practice literature, as well as using appropriate and academically defensible methodologies to analyze research questions, test hypotheses, or contribute new theoretical knowledge.

Definition of a Thesis

A thesis is a systematic study of a significant problem, issue, or phenomenon. The thesis demonstrates the ability to analyze existing research, collate or collect data, and apply it in the context of an existing problem, issue, or opportunity. The result is a synthesis of theoretical and empirical information and/or recommendations for further action. The thesis identifies a problem or issue, states the research question, identifies major assumptions, explains the significance of the undertaking, grounds the research in relevant literature, sets forth the methods of gathering information, analyzes the data, and offers a conclusion or recommendations based on the data and theoretical framing. Standards, such as validity and reliability (quantitative studies) and authenticity, responsibility, and reciprocity (qualitative studies), must be consistent with the selected research tradition and evident in tool development and data collection. The finished thesis demonstrates evidence of critical and independent thinking, subject expertise, appropriate organization and format, and thorough documentation.

Supervision

M.Ed. degree students are assigned a supervisor as part of their program admission. An instructor teaching ED-D 598 Project is the student's project supervisor.

All M.A. students are required to secure supervision before being admitted to their respective programs. Students are encouraged to explore the research interests of our faculty and contact faculty whose research areas are congruent with their interests. Leadership Studies Faculty information can be found on our website.

The supervisor works with the student and provides feedback as well as assistance with planning. The supervisor also consults with the student to plan the supervisory committee and to nominate committee members.

Information on frequency of meetings with a supervisor, expected timeline to completion, student-supervisor relationship, and supervision policies can be found on [Supervision & advising - Graduate Studies - UVic](#).

Supervisory Committee

MA students will consult with their supervisor to determine appropriate supervisory committee membership. The supervisor ultimately approaches the faculty member about committee membership. Normally, MA students have two members from Leadership Studies as well as an external member from outside of the department.

Expected Turnaround Time of Annotated Thesis or Paper

The expected maximum length of time required for supervisors and members of the supervisory committee to return comments on a paper, thesis, or dissertation to a student will normally not exceed 20 business days from the time of receipt, unless a delay is required by field work, remote study, supervisor or student vacation, sick leave, etc.

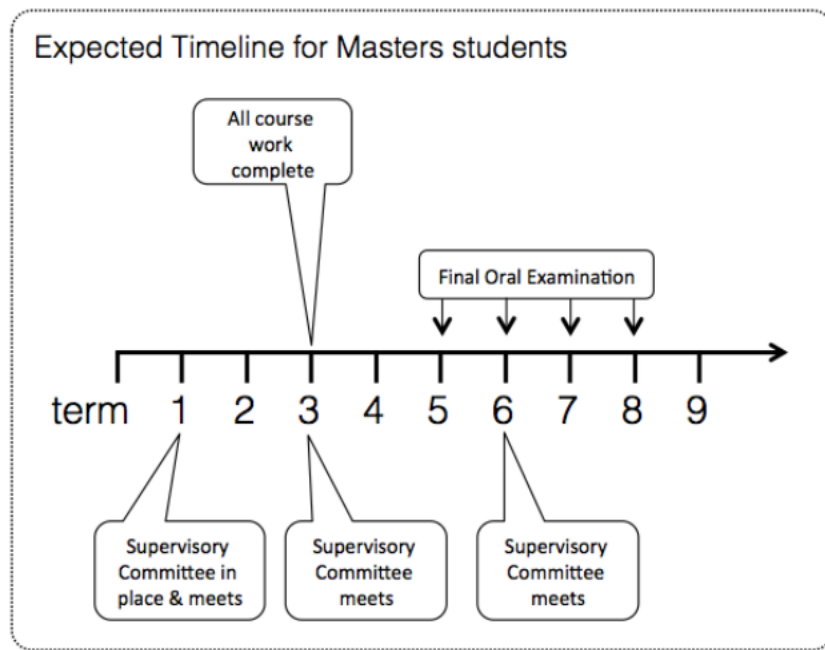
While it is expected that supervisors should respond promptly, students are encouraged to consult with both supervisors and committee members about reasonable timelines because personal schedules can have an impact.

Required Thesis Format

All papers must be APA formatted. You can find a [downloadable thesis template](#) on [Forms & policies - Faculty of Graduate Studies - UVic](#)

Expected Timelines for Thesis Completion

The following diagram shows the expected timeline for thesis completion.



After you've successfully defended your thesis or dissertation and you've made all required corrections, your supervisor will confirm that your work is ready for submission to [UVicSpace](#). See more at [Final submission - Students - University of Victoria](#).

Course Registration

Registration is available online through "My page" at <https://www.uvic.ca/tools/>, under the STUDENTS tab.

For registration instructions, please visit: [Course Registration - University of Victoria](#).

Concurrent registration (registration in each term) is required. If you are not concurrently registered, you become Withdrawn Without Permission (WWP). Once you are in WWP status, you must reapply and pay a reinstatement fee. There is no guarantee of re-admission into your program.

Please note: Electives offered through other departments are also valid possibilities. Keep up to date with current and upcoming graduate course offerings via the [UVic Calendar](#). Electives offered through other departments require the supervisor's signature on an [Graduate Registration Form](#) and a signature from the other department. If you have questions about the process, contact our Programs Assistant.

Completion Postponement Fee Adjustment

If you defended your project, thesis or dissertation *within the first 15 calendar days* of a term, you may be eligible for the Completion Postponement Fee Adjustment (CPFA). With the CPFA, you'll pay a fee of \$255 instead of a full tuition fee payment. Note: a full term of [ancillary fees \(see Other Fees\)](#) will be charged in addition to the CPFA.

To be eligible, you must:

- be registered in the term in which the defense takes place
- have paid your minimum program fee instalments before that term
- ensure that Graduate Admissions and Records Office receive your Final Documents by the final business day of the month.

You won't be eligible to graduate in the same term as your defense if you complete under CPFA:

- If you complete under CPFA in September or January, you'll graduate in the spring.
- If you complete under CPFA in May, you'll graduate in the fall.

Continuity of Registration

Registration instructions will be sent to all students who are authorized to register.

All students admitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies must either

- register for credit in every term from the time of admission until the requirements of the degree have been met, OR
- register for Leave of Absence, including personal, parental or compassionate/medical leave of absence, OR
- formally withdraw in accordance with the regulations below.

Otherwise, they will be considered to have abandoned their program, in which case they will be terminated from their program and withdrawn from the university. The notation "Withdrawn Without Permission" will be entered on the transcript.

Use the [Graduate Academic Concession Form](#) if you want to request a Leave of Absence with Permission (Medical, Parental, Compassionate); a Personal Leave (retroactive); to Withdraw Under Extenuating Circumstances (for courses); or a Course Drop after the Academic Drop Deadline.

Co-op Program

While it is not a requirement of your graduate program, students can apply to the Co-op Program. You will have to discuss your plan with your supervisor to establish your individual plan for completing program coursework. Please see Co-op program options and application process at [Education - Co-operative Education - University of Victoria](#).

For questions and help with application, please contact

Natalie Haddow, co-op coordinator - epheco@uvic.ca, 250-472-4690; or

Tammy Doyle co-op assistant - ephecoop@uvic.ca, 250-721-8390

Graduation and Convocation

All graduate students must apply for graduation upon completion of their program. The application process and form, and deadlines can be found on [Graduating from UVic](#).

After you apply to graduate, you'll receive an email invitation to attend a convocation ceremony and have your parchment presented to you on stage; invitations are sent in late March for spring convocation, in late September for fall convocation.

You must register in order to attend a convocation ceremony. More information and convocation dates are here - [Convocation - University of Victoria](#).

Formal Annual Review of Student Progress

Annual review of student progress needs to be completed by the student, supervisor, and committee by the end of May of each year. The supervisor initiates the process by requesting the student complete Section I of the form (to be provided) and returning the form to the supervisor, who then, in consultation with the committee members (if determined), completes the form and submits it to the graduate secretary, and forwards a completed copy to the student.

Graduate Awards & Fellowships

The Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS) provides awards to graduate students of high academic standing. The distribution, value, and duration of these awards and fellowships are determined by each academic unit.

Students may be eligible to receive the following awards and fellowships:

UVic Graduate Fellowships

- Up to a maximum of \$20,000 per academic year
- Distribution, value and duration of these awards and fellowships are determined by EPLS; final approval is made by the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

Eligibility:

- Available to Master's and PhD students, new and existing
- Students must be admitted into either a master's or doctoral degree program
- Based solely on a student's GPA. Minimum 6.00/9.00 or second class standing
- Must be in continuous registration throughout the graduate year, unless they are on an approved leave, to receive funding.

Payment: see under PAYMENT below.

Application:

- No action required from a student. Annually, normally in mid-June, EPLS make a nomination and submit it to FGS for approval. Nominated students will receive an email from EPLS Office notifying of their nomination and award amount, followed by a formal confirmation from FGS.

Graduate Entrance Awards (GEA)

- Awarded as either \$5000 or \$10,000
- may be combined with other graduate funding – i.e., UVic Fellowships, IDEF, tri-council funding
- Distribution, value and duration of these awards and fellowships are determined by EPLS; final approval is made by the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

Eligibility:

- Students must be entering a master's or doctoral degree program in the current academic year (September – August)
- Minimum GPA is 7.00/9.00 or first class standing for international students
- Must be registered in a minimum of 3.00 units per term, unless registered with CAL.

Application:

- No action required from a student. Annually, normally in mid-June, EPLS make a nomination and submit it to FGS for approval, alongside with *UVic Graduate Fellowships*.
- Nominated students will receive an email from EPLS Office notifying of their nomination and award amount, followed by a formal confirmation from FGS.

PAYMENT (for UVic Graduate Fellowships and Graduate Entrance Awards)

Schedule 2026-27:

Up to \$8000 - paid in one installment at the start of a term

\$8001- \$12,000 - paid in two equal installments at the start of two consecutive terms

\$12,000+ - paid in three equal installments at the start of each term in the academic year.

Paid via [Direct deposit](#) to a Canadian bank account or a cheque mailed to a student's Canadian address. It is up to the student to ensure their address and, where applicable, Direct Deposit *information are up to date* on their Online Tools.

Research Assistantships (RAs)

Research assistantships are dependent upon grant money held by individual faculty members and are not guaranteed for graduate students.

Teaching Assistantships (TAs)

EPLS rarely has teaching assistantships available. If they are available, they are advertised on the graduate student listserv.

Sessional Teaching

EPLS makes sessional teaching opportunities available to PhD students who are qualified in areas where there is a need. PhD students are encouraged to watch for postings on the EPLS website. These postings are also sent to the graduate student listserv. Postings for sessional positions become available in early March for the summer session and in mid-May for fall or spring sessions.

Scholarships, Awards, and Bursaries

Information on scholarships, awards, and bursaries is emailed to all grad students.

Donor Awards

Applications for Donor Awards are announced in July and adjudicated in September.

British Columbia Graduate Scholarships (BCGS)

Students are nominated for this annual award when it is announced by the BC Government. Normally, each department can nominate one student, based on criteria set by the BC Government. Note that students do not apply for this award.

Tri-Agency Doctoral Funding (SSHRC, NSERC, CIHR)

MA and PhD students are encouraged to apply for these as well as other external awards.

Conditions of Awards

Conditions of awards are specified by the policies of FGS, the Senate, and the Board of Governors upon which student funding is contingent, such as academic standing, academic progress, time in program, etc.

Termination of Awards

Conditions that could result in the termination of an award are specified by the policies of FGS, the Senate, and the Board of Governors. These policies explain the conditions under which withdrawal of financial support would be appropriate.

Notification of Award Competitions

Students are made aware of upcoming award competitions via the graduate listserv.

More information can be found at: [Graduate student funding - UVic](#).

Graduate Student Travel Awards

- Available to master's and PhD students who are registered full-time during the term of travel
- Maximum of one award per fiscal year (April 1-March 31)
- First-time applicants receive priority
- Funds are limited and issued on a first-come, first-served basis, by month, based on the first date of travel
- Should not be included anywhere on the Travel Expense Reimbursement (TER) form.

Conference/Workshop Travel

- Up to \$600 to travel outside BC/home province
- Not available for course or program-required travel
- Requires statement of support and signature of student's Supervisor or Advisor.
- Non-conference travel must be specific and documented.

Distance Program Travel

- Up to \$300 for travel from outside of BC/home province
- For mandatory on-campus courses or off-campus practica
- Program may be contacted to confirm dates of onsite residency or practicum
- Travel within the same city/community is not eligible.

Application:

- Applications accepted up to 4 months ahead of month of travel
- Early applications are encouraged, especially for travel taking place in the busiest months – April-July. Students who are considering applying for multiple opportunities may wish to apply for travel events outside this period
- Applications submitted after the start of travel will not be considered
- You will need to provide proof of event registration, such as original confirmation emails. Presentation acceptance is insufficient. Screenshots often contain incomplete information and may be rejected.

Resource page: [Travel & conference funding - Graduate Studies - UVic](#).

For assistance, with travel grants, application, regulations, and cancellations, please contact Faculty of Graduate Studies at fgsschol@uvic.ca.

UVic recommend students adhere to UVic's [Off-Campus Activity Risk Management Policy](#) and prior to travel, follow the steps for travel safety on UVic.

Important Contacts and Helpful Links

The Department of Educational Psychology and Leadership Studies is located in the [MacLaurin Building](#).

Office of the Educational Psychology and Leadership Studies:

Acting Chair	Dr. Darlene Clover	clover@uvic.ca
Assistant to the Chair	Kerstin Burnett	edpsych@uvic.ca
Programs Assistant	Irina Bogachek	eplsprograms@uvic.ca 250-472-5005

Graduate Advisor, Leadership Studies: Dr. Tatiana Gounko
tgounko@uvic.ca

Faculty Members: please visit [EPLS Faculty Members](#)

Helpful Links:

- [Online Tools](#)
- [Academic Calendar](#)
- [Career Services and Co-op](#)
- [Graduation and Convocation](#)
- [Educational Psychology and Leadership Studies Program](#) main website
- [Faculty of Graduate Studies](#) – main resource page for graduate students, including forms and policies
- Appendix B - Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response (below)
- Appendix C - Health and Wellness Resources (below)

Appendix A - Master of Education ED-D 598 Projects

Master of Education Projects (“MEd Projects”) cannot include human subjects. If you wish to use human subjects, you must transfer to the Master of Arts program, find a supervisor, and a committee member.

MEd Projects are typically 50-80 pages in length (including the list of references), although there are other types of projects, such as arts-based projects, book reviews, essay reviews, or papers for publication, that will differ. While some projects are more theoretical, like discourse analysis or theorizing from the literature, most serve a more ‘practical’ purpose for your work or future (or the community).

The list below provides ideas for the many types of projects you can choose from as an ED-D 598 project. While the types of projects are separated, you will see much overlap (e.g., website and visual/discourse analysis, historical studies, and policy analysis). Mix and match, propose ideas to your Instructor-Supervisor.

PROJECT TYPES:

- Course, curriculum, or program design (including discussions of creation, significance, future ideas for development, etc.). Could incorporate a diverse perspective into a program of study/reframe the curriculum through a new lens (i.e., environmental issues, Aboriginal perspectives, gender, gay and lesbian, etc.). It could be to design a series of workshops.
- One Book review for a journal and two essay reviews (Journals are always asking for book reviews). You will contact a journal before the class begins, but some could be during ED-D 561B, and acquire a book for review. By the conclusion of ED-D 598, the review must be submitted for publication. You will also write an ‘essay’ book review. This will be a comparison of the book you did for review, and two other books on the same topic. The essay book reviews will be 20-30 pages in length, including references.
- Program evaluation design or an evaluative research design (a school program on bullying, an adult education or training program in an organization or community – would be based on documents - an analysis of vision, mission statements, activities, and so forth).
- Paper for publication – You have existing data from working as an RA on a project that had ethical approval. You therefore undertook (past tense) a study, and you now wish to write up the findings for publication in a targeted journal. You will develop this paper for publication. It will begin with an introduction, outline the theoretical framework, discuss the literature that informed the study, outline the methodology and methods, and present the findings. It will discuss the findings, their contributions to the field, and a conclusion. You must know the journal to which

you are submitting the paper beforehand and write it for that journal. It must be 'submitted' to the journal on or before the end of November to have 'completed' 598.

- Needs assessment design: Want to change something? Need information/ideas in terms of how to change it? Needs assessments aim toward these questions. For your project, you will undertake the 'design' stage, and this would require you to establish the context and the 'need' to know.
- Historical study. This can include an archival search of a particular group or a person; it could explore through documents, the growth and change of an organization; it could focus on the life of a past figure, etc. You would aim to show their contributions to leadership, adult education, social or gender justice, and change, and so forth.
- Content analysis – Content analysis has a quantitative element to it. Your project can be a study of journal articles, but more likely of newspaper articles take up stories (such as incoming Refugees, state of education, et cetera, The Me Too campaign and gender discourses) over a period of months. You will identify a major 'issue/story', find as many as possible past and current articles that pertain to this problem or issue, and do a content analysis.
- Discourse and/or visual analysis. This can be a focus on journal articles, policy documents, vision and mission statements of NGOs (written materials only); it can also include visuals in a museum or gallery (and curatorial statements and labels), magazines such as "Fashion" or "Men's Health" – it could end up as a collage or zine.
- A practicum/volunteer experience (of a minimum number of hours) and an accompanying Learning Journal/Critical Reflection Paper (with references). (Note: You may use your Co-op experience for this, but you **MUST** know what that experience is/will be before undertaking the project, as you cannot develop a project around a work placement you might not receive. In other words, by May 01, you must already be working, or be about to begin the placement within one month, and be able to complete the first assignment of ED-D 598.
- An arts-based project (could be a visual art installation, a theatre piece you write, a book of poetry on a topic, a quilt, zines, a photo novella, a sculpture, fiction writing, etc., with an accompanying overview and reflection paper). Could be a curatorial dreaming exercise – developing an exhibition design; could be a project where you use photography to 'represent' and take up a particular issue (ecological issues, gender).
- Museum Hack – You would visit two or three museums (including art galleries) and carry out a "Hack" (around issues such as exclusion, gender, etc.). You analyze the stories, dioramas, artworks, and so forth for the stories they tell or not; You design a Hack you would/could use with your own students or with adults or youth. The Hack could also be applied to virtual exhibitions if they had enough content.
- Policy analysis. This could be either historical or contemporary; it could involve tracing policy decisions by examining documents or other artifacts using a particular

framework, such as gender discrimination, affirmative action, colonialization, et cetera.

- Policy development and design (would include things such as developing for your place of work an equity/gender policy, a bullying policy, a program change policy, et cetera).
- Website analysis (combines content analysis, language, and often, visual analysis of images).
- You could also choose a social media site and analyze it.
- you could choose editions of a magazine, such as “Fashion” and create found poems from their representations, explore the language and visuals, and how they ‘create’ or mould gender or women (or one on men – masculinities).
- Self-Reflection/Autobiography. This would be a critical exploration of your experiences as a community leader, activist, adult education practitioner, trainer, union worker, et cetera. Autobiographies work best if you have kept written records, such as journals and diaries, but they can also focus on an important experience you had.
- Outline for a Strategic Planning Document or Handbook.
- Blog analysis – some people have been doing blogs for years and have rich content. You would choose a blog (or two) and analyze the ideas within a framework.
- Survey design – you may design a survey. You would need to establish why this was needed, its ethics, where and how it would be administered, and what you would hope to learn from it.
- Design an exhibition. For this project, you would identify the theme of the installation or exhibition, the objects, artworks, and other elements that make it up. It could be a ‘pop-up’ exhibition on the campus (might need permission), it could be the full-scale exhibit or display that will appear in a gallery (Legacy, AGGV, etc.), or in a museum.
- If you have a different idea, consult with your supervisor.

Appendix B - Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response

The University of Victoria recognizes that Sexualized Violence is a significant and systemic social and campus issue that can affect anyone at the university, including students. Examples of Sexualized Violence, taken from the UVic [Policy on Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response](#), include: salacious comments, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, and sexual harassment.

If you or someone you know has experienced Sexualized Violence and there is an immediate health or safety concern, call 9-1-1.

If the **immediate health or safety concern** happened **on campus**, you should also call Campus Security at **250-721-7599**; they are available 24/7 for information and options for support.

UVic provides a variety of different information and support options for those impacted by Sexualized Violence. It is recommended that if you are impacted, **contact the Sexualized Violence Resource Office in Equity and Human Rights (EQHR)**. Their supportive and confidential services are for all students, staff, and faculty members at UVic:

Sedgewick C119, located in the Equity and Human Rights Office
250-721-8021

Important: Anonymous disclosures are possible; anonymous reports are not, because investigations require procedural fairness.

Appendix C - Health and Wellness Resources

Undertaking graduate studies is both an exciting opportunity and one that can bring extra levels of stress. And some terms/times of the year are more stressful than others. Along with studies, other facets of our lives require attention—family, work, housing, transportation, etc. UVic has supports in place for student health and wellness, and you are encouraged to reach out and access these supports. Two are listed here:

Wellness Support for Students

250-721-8563

Location: [Health and Wellness](#)

Website: [Student Wellness - University of Victoria](#)

This team of people offers a variety of services to support students' mental, physical, and spiritual health (same-day or pre-booked appointments): here you can be in touch to make an appointment with a counsellor, nurse, physician, and/or spiritual care provider.

SupportConnect

Toll-free: 1-844-773-1427

Website: [SupportConnect - Student Wellness - University of Victoria](#)

A free, confidential mental health support service for UVic students. You can talk with qualified counsellors, consultants, and life coaches anytime, anywhere.