

University of Victoria - Greek and Roman Studies/Humanities Graduate Handbook 2026-2027

Responsibilities in the supervisory relationship

Faculty and students are bound by policies set by the University, Faculty of Graduate Studies, and this Department/School. Faculty of Graduate Studies policies are given in the Graduate Calendar and in policy documents found on the Faculty of Graduate Studies website: <https://www.uvic.ca/graduatestudies/>. In particular, students and faculty members should read the [Graduate Supervision Policy](#), which outlines the rights and responsibilities in the supervisory relationship.

If there are any problems or concerns, graduate students are encouraged to contact Associate Dean of Graduate Studies, Professor Jennifer White (gsadean4@uvic.ca). Dr. White is the contact person for all students in Greek and Roman Studies.

Contact Information

The identities, contact information and roles of the primary resource personnel in the academic unit:

	Name	Office	Telephone	e-mail
Chair/Director	Brendan Burke	B413	250-217-7238	bburke@uvic.ca
Graduate Advisor	Alejandro Sinner	B423	250-721-8514	agsinner@uvic.ca
Graduate Secretary	Tracy Sobotkiewicz	B409	250-721-8514	grsadmin@uvic.ca
Student Representative	tba	B425	na	

Course Requirements

Masters students

Completion of GRS 500: Normally this seminar focuses on various aspects of the academic profession, with particular attention to research funding, the dissemination of scholarly work, and best research methods. It should also address professional academic life and practices of our discipline.

The seminar requirements are attendance at class sessions and also mandatory attendance at all Friday departmental seminars by guest speakers (fall and spring semester). Students are encouraged to present their own work which is forming the basis of their SSHRC CGS (or other grant) applications or their abstract submission to the CAC conference or another conference, in consultation with the Graduate Advisor and Chair.

Completion of three of GRS 501, 502, 503, 504, 505 or 506: A minimum grade of B+ in each course is required to advance to the thesis. Students may substitute up to 3.0 units in graduate courses in another department with the written permission of both their primary supervisor and the Graduate Adviser. Permission will be granted when the courses are appropriate to the chosen program of research or facilitate technical training not offered by the Department of Greek and Roman Studies. Students will not typically enroll in more than three major fields of study. Permission will be granted only when the courses are required for the successful completion of the MA project.

Completion of modern language requirement: Before graduation, students must demonstrate a reading knowledge of French, German or Italian. The level of proficiency will be equivalent to a B or better in the following courses offered by the respective language departments: GMST 108; FRAN 100, 120, 170 or 180; and ITAL 149. Students may also fulfil the language requirement by passing the department's written translation examination. Examinations will normally be of two hours duration and may be written with the aid of a dictionary.

Completion of GRS 599: Upon completion of the coursework requirements, students will enroll in GRS 599: Masters thesis preparation. Students should establish clear timelines for completion of individual chapters and a complete draft. Students cannot apply for an oral examination until their committee has read a complete draft and agreed that it is ready. MA students must submit their application for an oral defence 20 working days in advance of their proposed defense date. More information on oral defense procedures can be found here: [Oral exams - Faculty of Graduate Studies - UVic](#).

Residency Requirement

There is no formal residency requirement, but students are required to attend the qualifying courses (GRS 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505 and 506) in person in addition to being strongly encouraged to participate in the life of the Department. It may not be possible to complete TA assignments at a distance. Any arrangements to live elsewhere after the qualifying courses are completed and to work as a TA at a distance must be approved by the instructors, the Graduate Adviser, and the Chair.

Supervisor

Determining your supervisor

Supervisors in Greek and Roman Studies are determined by mutual agreement between faculty member and graduate student. If there are any concerns or issues, these can be brought up with the Chair and/or Graduate Advisor.

Supervisory Committee

Nominating your supervisory committee

In Greek and Roman Studies, a faculty member serves as supervisor, chosen by mutual agreement between prospective supervisor and student. Occasionally there are two faculty members as co-supervisors. At least one other Department faculty member and one faculty member outside the Department will be nominated and contacted by the supervisor, in consultation with the student, to serve on the supervisory committee for the thesis.

Expected Meeting Frequency

With your Supervisor

Supervisors will normally meet, either by direct meeting, by virtual meeting, or through detailed correspondence, with thesis and dissertation students to discuss the student's research at intervals which are not to exceed 40 business days – i.e., supervisors and students should normally meet at least twice per term – unless a delay is required by field work, remote study, supervisor or student vacation, sick leave, etc.

With your Supervisory Committee

Normally a supervisor will keep the supervisory committee advised of the student's progress on their thesis. Students should contact their supervisor and/or supervisory committee by e-mail at least monthly during their final semester before the oral exam.

PROGRAM OF STUDIES

The program is designed to take two years to complete. The first year consists primarily of directed reading in three fields, and the second is devoted to the preparation of a thesis. Students will also be required to demonstrate reading knowledge in French, German or Italian.

Under normal circumstances the student will complete the above-mentioned courses in the first year. The "fields" are at the heart of the program. Students should meet with the instructors of the fields in which they are registered in the first week of a term when they will be given a reading list and an outline of the course of study. The course will include the preparation of a number of papers or reports, to be set at the discretion of the instructor.

Normally, the instructor will schedule a series of meetings with the students at the first meeting. Individual instructors will establish the methods of evaluation for their courses.

In the second year, the student will write a thesis under the supervision of a member of the department and a committee appointed according to the regulations of the Faculty of Graduate Studies. The MA thesis normally provides the graduate student with the opportunity to study a specific question in literature, history or archaeology which has been under-represented in past scholarship. Recent completed theses can be found [archived on-line](#). Current and recent research by our graduate students is also available in the Reading Room. Qualification for the thesis year is by permission of the department. Permission will be denied to any student who has not achieved a grade of B+ or better on any of the three field examinations.

Expected turnaround time of annotated thesis, dissertation or paper

Supervisors and/or members of the supervisory committee, if appropriate, are normally expected to return comments on a thesis, dissertation or paper to a student no more than twenty business days from time of receipt, unless a delay is required by field work, remote study, supervisor or student vacation, sick leave, etc...

Unit funding policies

Graduate students receive funding from many different sources, including: fellowships, scholarships, teaching assistantships, and research assistantships. Since the Department complies with UVic policies and guidelines for each of these funding sources, graduate students should ensure they are aware of the policies governing their funding.

Graduate students who have questions or concerns about their funding can seek advice and guidance from the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

When admitting students to a graduate program, the Department will take into account the duration and source(s) of funding, and whether/how the funding is renewable in order to meet the minimum funding level required by the student for the anticipated duration of the program. The Department normally guarantees funding for MA students for two years.

Research Assistantships

Faculty members occasionally have access to research funds for graduate student Research Assistants.

Teaching Assistantships

Teaching assistantships are based on areas of specialization and enrollment needs.

Awards, Fellowships, Scholarships & Bursaries

The criteria (e.g., GPA, publication record, research expenses, *etc.*) for the disbursement of graduate budgets, the selection of nominees for donor awards, and the recipients of awards are determined by the Graduate Adviser and Chair in consultation with members of the Department of Greek and Roman Studies.

Conditions of Awards

Conditions 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 are specified by the policies of FGS, the Senate and the Board of Governors for the withdrawal of financial support.

Notification of Award Competitions

Postings will be made throughout the Department and by email about travel awards. Students should consult the Graduate Advisor for further information on travel opportunities and investigate material posted to UVic webpage. Responsibility for missed funding opportunities lies with the student.

Formal review of student progress

Supervisors in Greek and Roman Studies provide an annual review for graduate students, based upon the student's progress in graduate course work, Greek, Latin, and foreign language proficiency, as appropriate, and thesis research. The deadline for the annual review is April 30. The student will be given an opportunity to provide written feedback in response to their assessment and will be encouraged to address any identified deficiencies in skills, knowledge, or expertise and/or less than satisfactory progress, as well as being informed of the potential consequences of sustained unsatisfactory performance.

Terms of reference for review

The main criteria for assessment will be course grades, thesis proposals and any work in progress submitted to the student's thesis supervisor, but any additional information and metrics that the student will be required to collect and submit for any instance of formal review will be consistent with Section 5 of the Graduate Supervision Policy.

Procedure for the annual review

Formal assessment of progress for students in **thesis** and **dissertation** programs shall be carried out on an annual basis. The Graduate Advisor may initiate additional assessments upon the advice of the supervisor or supervisory committee. The assessment of students will culminate in a brief formal report documenting that the following considerations have been met:

- a. The student has been afforded an opportunity to communicate their progress to the committee and to discuss their research with the committee. Committee members with concerns about student progress must raise these concerns at this meeting to allow the student an opportunity to address them directly.
- b. Or, if the student is unable to attend, the committee has taken the opportunity to discuss student progress in the absence of the student.

- c. The annual student report shall include such information and metrics that the unit finds necessary for a full evaluation of student progress.
- d. A determination will be given as to whether the level of academic progress is satisfactory or unsatisfactory. Gradations in performance are permitted, but the committee must be given the opportunity to rank a student as 'unsatisfactory,' if appropriate. Examples of categories of assessment might include:
 - **Excellent** – the student has exceeded all expectations, and the progress made on the thesis/dissertation work is exceptional.
 - **Very Good** – the student has exceeded most expectations and made significant progress on the thesis/dissertation work.
 - **Good** – the student has met most expectations and made some progress on the thesis/dissertation work.
 - **Needs Improvement** – the student has struggled to meet expectations (some but not all expectations met) or progress is below what is reasonably expected.
 - **Unsatisfactory** – indicates, for example, that a student does not pursue goals in a vigorous fashion, does not take direction well, shows disregard for ethics/safety, or repeatedly fails to complete routine procedures.
- e. Expectations, goals and milestones for the upcoming review period, if appropriate.
- f. The anticipated date of the next formal review, if appropriate.
- g. In the case of two or more determinations of 'unsatisfactory' progress on formal assessments not less than 8 weeks apart, a written recommendation will be prepared whether or not to request the Graduate Advisor make application to the Dean of Graduate Studies to withdraw the student for 'failure to meet academic standards,' consistent with the guidelines detailed in subsections 6.15 and 12.3.
- h. Names and electronic acknowledgements of all members of the committee, which shall signify that the recommendations reflect the majority finding(s) of the committee.
- i. Name and electronic acknowledgement of the student, which shall signify that they have read and understood the recommendations of the committee.
- j. In the case of a rating of *unsatisfactory*, the name and electronic acknowledgement of the Graduate Advisor signifying that the record has been received and reviewed.

Accommodations

Students should read the University [Academic Accommodation Policy](#). The Department follows University policy in accommodating students who are registered with the Centre for Accessible Learning. The Department will adhere scrupulously to all CAL-required accommodations; in order to treat all students equitably, the Department will not be able to provide requested accommodations beyond those mandated by CAL.

Graduate Office Use Policy

Graduate offices are shared workspaces. Please be considerate of your officemates and maintain a professional work environment. This means:

1. Visitors and Keys - No outside visitors are permitted in graduate offices. Do not share your keys with anyone.

2. Office Setup - Feel free to equip your office with office supplies, books, and other essentials, but no outside furniture is permitted. If you need office supplies, many items (e.g., pens) are available in the main office supply cabinet. Please ask Tracy for access.

3. Personal Belongings - Please respect your officemates' personal belongings. Do not borrow items without permission.

4. Prohibited Items - Candles, incense, strong perfume, large flowering plants, and distracting posters are not allowed. No heater of any sort is permitted.

5. Food and Waste - Please remove food waste and dirty dishes promptly. You are responsible for emptying trash and recycling bins—custodial staff do not service offices. Trash and recycling containers are in the hallway. This principle also applies to the departmental kitchen. Clean and put away dirty dishes and utensils promptly. Do not leave expired food in the fridge.

6. Noise and Privacy - Please avoid loud, long phone calls or conversations in your office and other shared departmental spaces—the walls are thin. If you need a space to collaborate, consider using a classroom or meeting outside. If you need to have a private conversation, please arrange with your officemates to use the office alone for a short period.

7. Energy Use - Please turn off lights and other electronics when you leave for the day. Please double-check that your office window is shut.

8. Office Security - If you are in the office, it is fine to leave the door open; if you leave, be sure to close the door. Please double-check that your office door is locked at the end of the day. Since this floor is comparatively low-traffic, there is a higher incidence of problems like theft. This principle also applies to other shared departmental spaces, such as the kitchen and Reading Room. If you see doors open after hours, please close them.

9. Personal Security - **You are responsible for the security of your belongings.** If you leave your computer or other valuables in your office, you should consider a lock or other security devices. If something goes missing, notify Campus Security (250-721-7599) and then contact Tracy and the Department Chair. More contact information is here: <https://www.uvic.ca/emergency>.