



**University
of Victoria**

Economics

**DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS
GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK
2025 – 2026**

Approved by the Department of Economics on November 4th, 2025. This booklet contains guidelines set by the Department of Economics which are intended to assist supervisors and students in the successful administration of the graduate program.

If you have any concerns with the policies outlined in this document, please raise them with the Graduate Advisor.

Note: Hyperlinks contained in this document will be checked annually for accuracy. If you notice a link that is no longer functioning, please email iearl@uvic.ca.

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INTRODUCTION

MA program

Our Master’s program provides a rigorous foundation in economic theory and econometrics, supplemented by electives with an applied focus. It prepares students for professional research and analysis careers in both public and private sectors or for doctoral studies and academic careers in economics. We offer two Master’s degree options: thesis-based and extended essay-based.

PhD program

Our research-based PhD program provides students with training in modern research methods and provides a consistent emphasis on the application of these tools to areas of policy importance. Graduates of the program are prepared to compete effectively for research positions in the public and private sectors and, in some cases, to pursue academic careers.

Contact Information

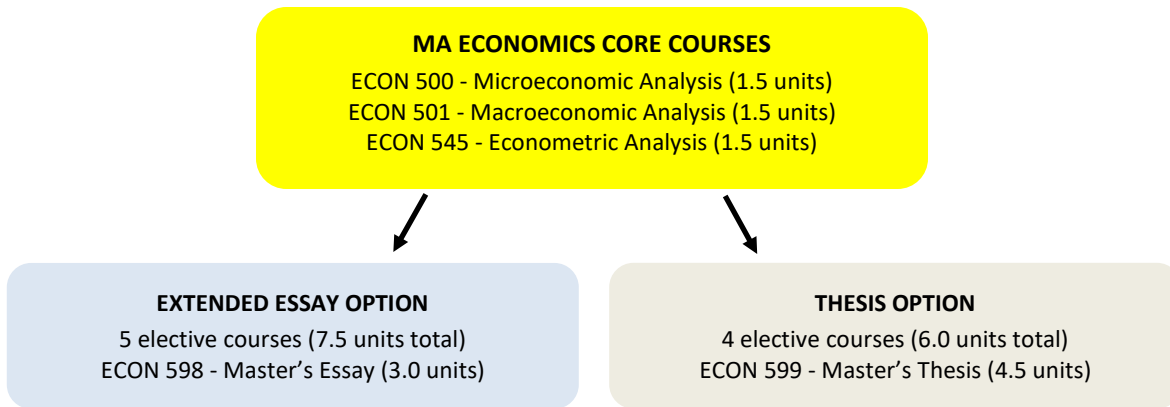
Primary resource personnel in the Economics Department:

	NAME	OFFICE	EMAIL	RESOURCE FOR:
<i>Department Chair</i>	Dr. Vasco Gabriel	BEC 360	econchair@uvic.ca	Additional support; Appeals
<i>Graduate Advisor</i>	Dr. Martin Farnham	BEC 354	egrad@uvic.ca	Academic inquiries (grades, permission, program change, etc.)
<i>Graduate Program Assistant</i>	Isaac Earl	BEC 360	iearl@uvic.ca	General inquiries (registration, deadlines, etc.)
<i>Administrative Officer</i>	Charlene Toews	BEC 360	econao@uvic.ca	TA matters
<i>Co-op Advisor</i>	Natasha Jamal	Cornett Building B138	sscoopcord@uvic.ca	Co-op program information

CURRICULUM

MA Program

The thesis and essay options consist of a total of 15 units of coursework and research as follows:



The three core courses are an essential component of the MA program. Students must take these classes in the first term that they are offered. Some students may find the pace of these classes overwhelming; to support these students, instructors will post material to prepare over the summer and students are expected to review this material before the start of the class. Instructors are also expected to provide clear learning objectives, and highly weighted examinations should have at least one sample question with an answer key. By the middle of the term, instructors should notify any student who is failing (grade below B) and notify the Graduate Advisor. It is the responsibility of the student to meet with the instructor or the Graduate Advisor to identify the source of the challenge and set up a new learning plan.

Elective courses are normally chosen from the graduate course offerings of the department. In exceptional cases, the Graduate Advisor may grant permission for a student to substitute up to 3 units of courses numbered at the 400 level in Economics, as well as graduate courses in other departments.

2025-26 Course Offerings

The following courses will be offered in the 2025-26 academic year:

SEPTEMBER 2025	JANUARY 2026	MAY 2026
ECON 500 Microeconomic Analysis	ECON 501 Macroeconomic Analysis	
ECON 516 Cost-Benefit Analysis	ECON 524 Health Economics	
ECON 529 Economics of Finance	ECON 548 Applied Econometrics Modelling	
ECON 545 Econometric Analysis	ECON 549 Computational Methods in Economics and Econometrics	
ECON 547 Time-Series Econometrics	ECON 551 Information and Incentives	
ECON 550 Game Theory in Economics		

PhD Program

The PhD program is tailored to each individual student based on the degree they are entering the program with and the courses they have already taken. Students who have already completed an MA are required to complete at least 30 units in the PhD. Students who have not completed an MA are required to complete at least 45 units in the PhD but can transfer credits from their MA coursework.

Coursework	Complete 3 – 6 units from: Field Courses (1.5 units each) as determined by the Students' Supervisory Committee
Research	Complete all of: ECON 693 Candidacy (3.0 units) ECON 699 Dissertation (21.0 – 33.0 units)

Students who enter the PhD with an MA degree may receive a waiver for a maximum of 6.0 units of required course work, depending on the nature of the courses they completed as part of their MA program.

Students who enter with gaps in their econometric theory or economic theory preparation--as indicated by missing coursework or grades of below A- in these courses--may be required by the graduate advisor to take ECON 545 and/or one of ECON 500 and ECON 501 as part of their program. A student who is required to take any of these courses must pass the course(s) with a grade of at least A- within 12 months of entering the program in order to proceed to their Candidacy exam. Students who fail to achieve this grade requirement on their second attempt will be asked to withdraw from the PhD program.

At the time of application, PhD students are matched with one supervisor or two joint supervisors. They consult with their supervisor(s) to determine the appropriate courses required to satisfy the coursework component of the degree. This includes any course exemptions, transfer credits and field courses. This plan, which is subject to approval by the Graduate Advisor after possible consultation with the graduate committee, is recorded in the PhD Approval Worksheet.

The Candidacy Examination is based on overall performance in the program and an oral examination of 1) the students' understanding of broad methodological issues in economics as well as 2) their progress towards a dissertation research program. A student's supervisory committee, in consultation with the Graduate Advisor, determines the requirements of the oral examination for Candidacy.

Students are required to register continuously for [ECON 693](#) until the Candidacy Examination requirements have been completed and a decision on candidacy has been submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies. The Department requires that students must pass the candidacy examination within fifteen months of registration as a provisional doctoral student and at least six months before the final dissertation defence and oral examination.

In exceptional circumstances, a student's supervisory committee, with the approval of the Department's Graduate Committee, may set alternative Candidacy requirements.

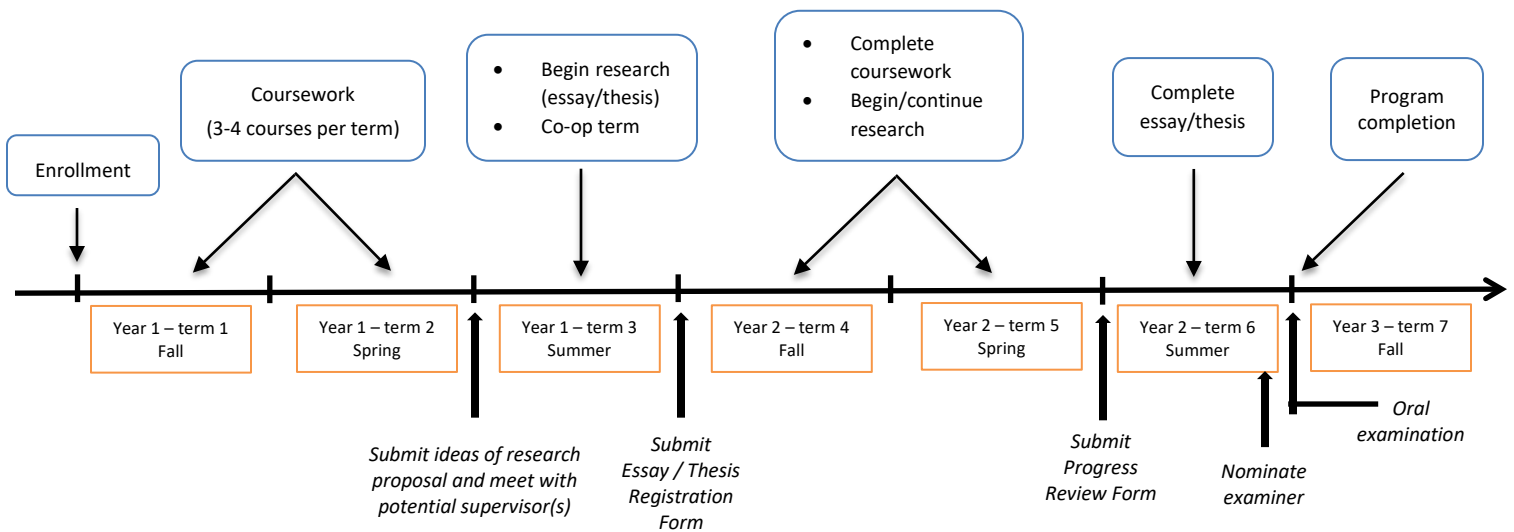
OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMS

MA Completion Timeline

The Department of Economics recommends a **28-month timeline** (7 terms) for completion, although it is possible to complete the program in one year. The Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS) requires that MA students complete their program in 5 years. During the first year, students are encouraged to take 6 to 8 courses, and they must pass (grade B or higher) at least 4 courses.

The MA program can be completed within the department's recommended timeline with or without two co-operative education terms:

EXPECTED TIMELINE FOR MA STUDENTS



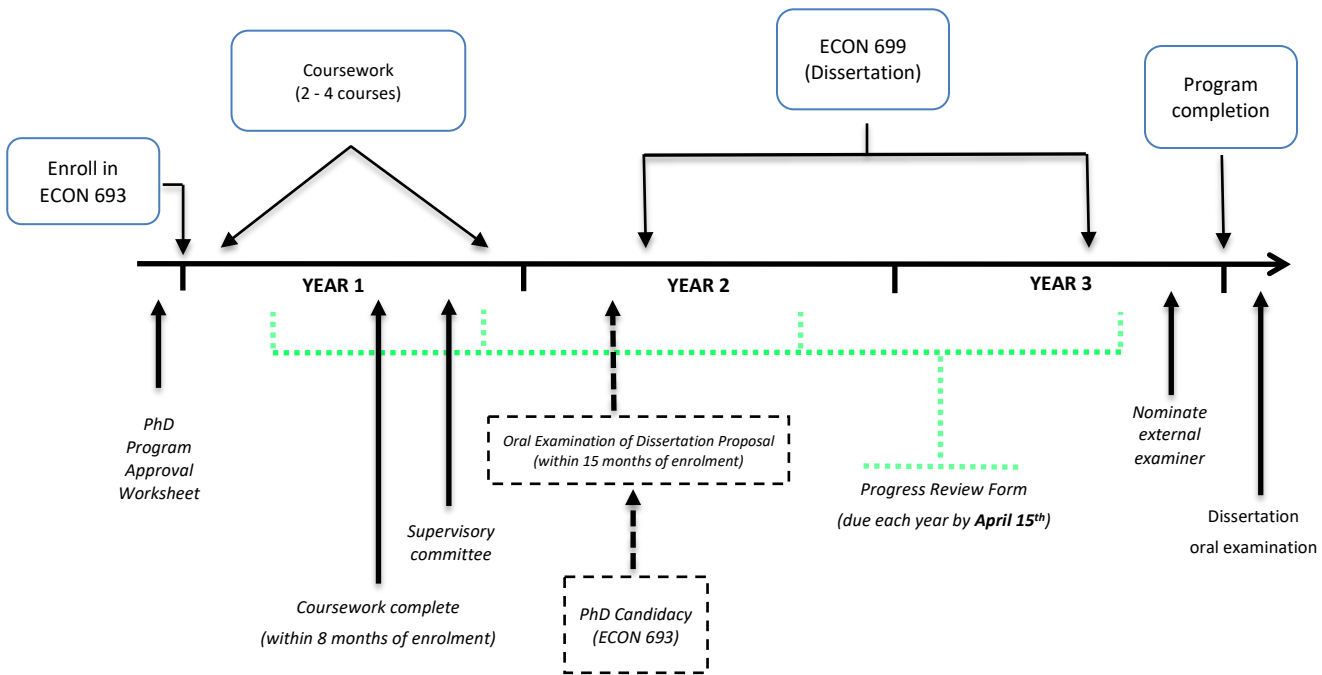
PhD Completion Timeline

The Department of Economics recommends a **3-year timeline for completion, assuming the student has already completed a master's degree in economics**. The FGS requires that PhD students complete their PhD program within 7 years.

- **Coursework:** Students are generally expected to complete their coursework within 8 months of enrolment.
- **Candidacy:** To remain on a three-year schedule to completion, it is recommended that students complete ECON 693 Candidacy within 12 months of registration. ECON 693 Candidacy must be completed within **15 months** of registration and no later than **6 months before** the final oral examination (see section 'PhD Candidacy Examination').
- **Dissertation:** After successful completion of required coursework and ECON 693, students register in the PhD dissertation ECON 699 and remain registered until the completion of their program.

The timeline for the PhD program varies from student to student based, in part, on waivers they may receive for coursework completed as part of their MA program. The PhD program can be completed with or without the co-operative education option:

EXPECTED TIMELINE FOR DOCTORAL STUDENTS



Note: This is an illustrative timeline for a PhD student who has no course exemptions and does not take the co-op option

Registration Requirements

Continuous full-time registration in two or more courses (3 units or more) each term, from the time of admission until degree requirements are met, is required for all students. A student who is registered for a single term is defined as full-time if:

- enrolled in courses totaling a minimum of 3 units, or;
- enrolled in a Candidacy Exam (693), dissertation (699), thesis (599), extended essay (598), Approved Exchange (502), Interdisciplinary Doctoral Program (601, 602) or co-operative education work term (800+).

Alternately, a student may: (a) register for a personal leave; (b) request a parental leave; (c) compassionate, or; (d) medical leave of absence, or; (e) formally withdraw from the program in accordance with FGS regulations. Students who do not do any of the above are considered to have abandoned their program and will be withdrawn from the university with the entry “Withdrawn without Permission” reported on their transcript.

Students are encouraged to use the summer session to complete a co-op work term or to register in ECON 598/599/699 and work on their research. Graduate courses are not typically offered during the summer term. Course work in the summer can be exceptionally granted on a case-by-case basis (e.g. a course uniquely matches the student's research).

Only registered full-time students can expect to be actively supervised by Faculty members. It is expected that students meet their supervisors on campus during regular working hours unless the student is doing field work or exceptional circumstances which should be reported to the supervisor and Graduate Advisor.

CO-OPERATIVE EDUCATION

Participation in the Co-operative Education program is optional for Master's and PhD students. Co-op placement is competitive and requires submission of applications and participation in interviews. Flexibility regarding job location and work setting increases a student's chance of placement. Students interested in applying for the co-op program should contact the [Economics Co-op Coordinator](#).

To earn co-op designation, master's students complete two work terms, each consisting of four months of full-time paid employment, and PhD students complete three terms. Students who complete less than the required co-op work terms are eligible for work experience designation.

To be eligible for a work term, students must maintain a B (5.0) average and receive permission from their supervisor and the Graduate Advisor. MA students are typically required to complete 9.0 units of graduate course work including ECON 516 prior to the commencement of their first work term. PhD students are typically required to complete ECON 693 Candidacy prior to the commencement of their first work term. Students are assessed co-op fees during work terms. Regular tuition installments are not assessed unless students are also registered in courses.

SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE

Each graduate student selects a supervisor who must be a faculty member from the department and on the FGS membership list. The supervisor is responsible for providing direction on the supervisory committee.

MA Essay and Thesis Supervisory Committee

The supervisory committee has one additional member who could be a co-supervisor. Although the supervisor is selected within the fall term of the second year of a student's program, the committee member may not be determined until later, in consultation with the student based upon the student's research interests and availability of faculty. For the essay option, the role of the committee member is to: (a) review the penultimate draft of the essay/thesis, suggesting changes and revisions that are limited to making the essay acceptable for proceeding to defense, and (b) attend the oral examination, along with the supervisor. For the thesis option, the committee member should be nominated no later than three terms after the beginning of the research work (ECON 599) and is expected to be involved in the supervision of the thesis.

PhD Supervisory Committee Structure

The supervisory committee has two additional members, one of which could be a co-supervisor. One of these members must be from **outside** the department, and the other must be from **within** the department. The supervisor, in consultation with the student, may declare the additional members on the PhD Program Planning Approval Worksheet or may recommend delaying the selection of the committee until the end of the first year of a student's program.

Determining Your Supervisor: MA Program

Upon enrolment, all MA students are supervised by the Graduate Advisor, who receives advice, as needed, from the graduate committee. During their first year in the program, students are responsible for seeking out potential supervisors and selecting a supervisor with guidance from the Graduate Advisor, as needed. The Graduate Advisor facilitates the matching of students and supervisors based upon a student's research interests and availability of faculty. The timeframe for selecting a supervisor is as follows:

- On or before March 31 of 1st year
 - Students submit the Research Proposal Form to the Graduate Advisor indicating field and supervisor preferences
 - Graduate Advisor connects faculty members and students to discuss their research interests
- On or before May 31 of 1st year
 - Students are required to have met with potential supervisors
- On or before September 30 of 2nd year
 - Student selects a supervisor
 - Student must submit the Essay Registration form or Thesis Registration form to graduate program assistant which declares the supervisor and research topic
 - Students who do not submit the form by this date are required to meet with the Graduate Advisor

Determining Your Supervisor: PhD Program

Supervisors are determined during the graduate program application process. PhD applicants research faculty bios and research interests using the list of [faculty](#) available for supervision. Students indicate their supervisor preferences in their application and the Graduate Advisor works to match each potential student with a supervisor that is suitable. All PhD students enter the program with an appointed supervisor. Background information on selecting a supervisor can be found on the FGS [website](#).

SUPERVISORY RELATIONSHIP

The Department recognizes that different students and faculty members have different expectations of the supervision process and that different models — frequency of contact, role of supervisory committee — can work equally well. What is required in all situations is early and clear communication between the supervisor and student about the supervision process. In particular, the supervisor and student should discuss and agree to the following matters: (a) Frequency of contact; (b) The specific nature of the project and methods to be used; (c) Expectations of research outcomes; (d) Expectations of the presentation of research; (e) Timing and selection of committee member; (f) Time frame for submission of drafts and completion of written work. It is recommended that the supervisor prepares a written summary plan of arrangements, provides an email copy to the student, and updates this plan when needed.

Responsibilities

Faculty and students are bound by university policies listed in the appendix and in particular the Graduate Supervision Policy which outlines the rights and responsibilities in the supervisory relationship and provides extensive information on graduate supervision. It is expected that the student and Supervisory Committee members are familiar with these documents.

Minimum Meeting Frequency

The minimum frequency with which students and supervisors would normally meet—either by direct meeting, by virtual meeting, or through detailed correspondence—to discuss the student’s research should not exceed 40 business days (i.e. supervisors and students should meet at least twice per term). In addition, students will also meet with other members of their Supervisory Committee by direct or virtual meeting, to discuss the student’s research at least once a year.

Maximum Turnaround Time for Comments on Submitted Work

The supervisor and committee members are expected to read and provide clear comments on submitted work in a timely fashion. However, students need to be aware that faculty members require time to read written work, both because of other commitments and to provide the required care and attention. The expected maximum length of time required for supervisors and members of the supervisory committee to return comments on a thesis, dissertation or essay to a student should not exceed 20 business days from time of receipt, unless a delay is required by field work, remote study, supervisor or student vacation, sick leave, or exceptional circumstances.

Formal Progress Review of MA Student

The Graduate Advisor reviews each student's performance at the end of each term for students taking courses. Should a graduate student receive a grade lower than a 'B' (lower than 73 percent), the instructor should notify the Graduate Advisor. The Graduate Advisor will meet (or use email correspondence if meeting is not possible) with both the instructor and individually with the student prior to submitting the grade, to determine appropriate remedial action, which may include: repeating the course in a future term, registering in a different course in a future term or withdrawal from the program.

From their second year onwards, each graduate student reviews in April and October the work completed during the previous 6 months, and reports on the Graduate Student Progress Review form progress toward their essay/thesis completion. This form must be submitted to the supervisor *before April 15th*. The supervisor assesses whether academic progress is satisfactory or unsatisfactory. In the event of satisfactory progress, the form is simply returned to the graduate program assistant by April 30th and filed. The following steps are taken in the less common event of unsatisfactory progress:

1. The supervisor, after consulting the committee member in the case of a thesis, completes the portion of the Student Progress Review form that explains the lack of progress and documents deficiencies in skills, knowledge, or expertise. The form is returned to the graduate program assistant and the supervisor, possibly with the Graduate Advisor, notifies the student in person of the results of the review prior to April 30th.
2. The supervisory committee meets with the student no later than four weeks from the day the form was returned to the graduate program assistant. The student will be given the opportunity to communicate progress and research results and members of the supervisory committee must (a) explain what the concerns are, (b) specify mechanisms for addressing identified problems, and (c) set a review date within 8 to 12 weeks.
3. The student completes a Graduate Student Progress Review form prior to the review date, submits it to the supervisor and the progress is assessed by the supervisory committee on the basis of the written material supplied.
4. In the case of two or more determinations of unsatisfactory progress on formal assessments, the supervisor will meet with the Graduate Advisor to decide whether to request the Dean of Graduate Studies to withdraw the student for failure to meet academic standards.

Formal Progress Review of PhD Student

The formal annual review for PhD students has two components: First, the student completes the Graduate Student Progress Review form and submits it to their supervisor by April 15th. The assessment is conducted by the supervisor until the supervisory committee has been formed, and by all members of the supervisory committee afterwards. The supervisor is responsible for returning the form to the Graduate Advisor prior to April 30th. The same procedure as described above for MA students is also followed for PhD students in the event of unsatisfactory progress.

Second, the supervisory committee is required to meet with the student at least once a year to review the students' work. This meeting can be held together with the completion of the progress review form or independently.

Dealing with Conflicts

Faculty members and students are encouraged to first attempt to resolve issues within the Department, involving, as deemed useful, other members of the supervisory committee, the Graduate Advisor and the Departmental Chair. Should issues remain after seeking assistance from these internal resources, FGS may be utilized to assist with resolution. It is important to keep a record of efforts at resolving issues.

PHD CANDIDACY EXAMINATION

The student must complete an oral examination on the student's dissertation proposal. The supervisory committee determines the timing, format and requirements of the oral examination. The oral exam has one of three outcomes: pass, fail or defer (did not pass but a 2nd attempt is recommended). (See form Oral Examination of the Dissertation proposal).

In the event the candidacy examination is failed, the student is recommended to withdraw from the program by the Graduate Advisor for failure to meet academic standards. Read the Department of Economics Candidacy Requirements for further information.

In exceptional circumstances, a student's supervisory committee, with the approval of the Department's Graduate Committee, may set alternative Candidacy requirements.

ESSAY, THESIS, DISSERTATION AND ORAL EXAMINATION

MA Essay and Thesis

The extended essay is an independent research project, which may consist of an extended version of a course project. Students can expect to take the equivalent of one term of full-time work to complete an extended essay. A list of past essays is available [here](#). The essay should have a title page, table of contents, section numbering and references. The length is expected to be between 30 and 40 pages (double-spaced, 12-point font). More specific guidelines may be required by individual supervisors.

For research completed at a more advanced level, students are encouraged to undertake the thesis option. Students and their supervisory committee determine the thesis topic based on a major research project. The thesis option involves more extensive supervision and examination (see pgs. 5 & 9). Students can expect to take the equivalent of two terms of full-time work to complete a thesis. Past theses are available on UVicSpace [here](#).

Students should discuss early in the process a timeline for the completion of their essay or thesis with their supervisor. Students should bear in mind that supervisors and committee members will require adequate time to read drafts. Note that the draft submitted for the MA essay to the committee member is in effect a final draft. Students must ensure that the draft submitted for examination does not violate the [University's regulations on plagiarism](#).

PhD Dissertation

The PhD dissertation is a substantial piece of original research work which should, in the opinion of scholars in the field, merit publication in international journals. It must embody original work and constitute a significant

contribution to knowledge in the candidate's field of study. It should contain evidence of broad knowledge of the relevant literature and should demonstrate a critical understanding of the works of scholars closely related to the subject of the dissertation. Students determine the research topic in consultation with their supervisory committee. Length of the dissertation will vary with the field and the nature of the work presented. Past PhD dissertations are available on UVicSpace [here](#).

All dissertations shall be presented in a form which constitutes an integrated submission. The dissertation may include materials already published by the candidate, whether alone or in conjunction with others, but conducted while registered in ECON 693 or 699. When joint work is included, the dissertation should include a statement of contribution that identifies the student's own work from the work of other researchers. At the final oral examination, the doctoral candidate is responsible for the entire content of the dissertation, including the work done by co-authors in joint papers.

Thesis and Dissertation Formatting Requirement

A student's thesis or dissertation will be submitted to FGS and placed in the University of Victoria's electronic collection, UVicSpace. Before doing so, the student must ensure that the thesis adheres to FGS's [formatting requirements](#). Students who are concerned about copyright issues are advised to contact FGS to withhold their work from publication in UVicSpace.

Examination Committee

For the MA essay, the supervisor is responsible to select a committee member and arrange an examination chair. For the MA Thesis and PhD dissertation, the supervisor is responsible to nominate an external examiner who has not been involved with graduate supervision of the student. FGS approves the external examiner and nominates the chair. For the MA thesis, the external examiner may be from within the home academic unit, provided that there is at least one non-unit member on the supervisory committee. In the case of the PhD dissertation, the external examiner must be from outside the University. The oral examining committee is composed of the supervisory committee and, in the case of the MA Thesis and PhD dissertation, the external examiner.

Notification Deadlines for Oral Examinations

Once a student and the examining committee have agreed on a date for the oral defense of an essay, thesis or dissertation, the student must notify the graduate program secretary of their intended defense date and time by following the deadlines below:

MA Essay	: 10 business days prior to the defense date
MA Thesis	: 25 business days prior to the defense date
PhD Dissertation	: 35 business days prior to the defense date

Failure to comply with these deadlines may result in a delay of the intended defense date, program completion date or convocation.

TRANSFER FROM THE MASTERS TO THE DOCTORAL PROGRAM

Transfer from the Master's to the PhD Program is decided on a case-by-case basis by the graduate committee. Students should have achieved at least an A- in ECON 545 and an A- in at least one of ECON 500 and ECON 501 and they must nominate a faculty member who is willing to act as their PhD supervisor. Together with their supervisor, they set up a plan which includes any course exemptions, transfer credits and field courses (see

subsection Curriculum PhD Program) and fill out the PhD Program Approval Worksheet. The graduate committee reviews each application and decides whether to authorize the transfer after possibly consulting with the supervisor.

FUNDING POLICIES

All students admitted to the Economics Graduate Program, whether domestic or international, are automatically considered for financial support, with the level of support determined on a competitive basis (amounts range from \$1,000 to \$25,000). The three principal sources of financial assistance are teaching assistantships, FGS funding (fellowships and graduate awards; the difference between the two being their monetary value) and donor awards. In addition, some faculty members offer research assistantships. UVic has [regulations](#) for fellowships and graduate awards and graduate students should ensure they are aware of the regulations associated with their funding.

Eligible years for guaranteed funding

MA graduate students are typically funded for their first year in the graduate program PhD graduate students are typically offered funding for the first 3 years of their program. Funding for additional years may be available in the form of future teaching assistantship (TA) positions and/or additional awards based on academic achievement.

Teaching Assistantships (TA)

Graduate students may apply through the Department of Economics for a TA position. Information regarding the TA program including guidelines, responsibilities and appointment selection can be found on the department's [website](#).

FGS Funding and Donor Awards

The Department of Economics distributes FGS funding each year. The amount of this funding varies from year to year and students are not required to apply:

- **Eligibility**
The academic performance of students will determine eligibility. To qualify, students must hold a minimum GPA of 7.0 or 6.0 depending on the funding offered.
- **Award Values**
Graduate awards are between \$1000 and \$10,000 per year; Fellowships are between \$10,000 and \$17,500 (MA) per year or between \$10,000 and \$20,000 (PhD) per year.
- **Decision Timeline**
The Department of Economics distributes most of its funding in the fall term but may reserve some funds for the spring and summer terms which are awarded on the basis of availability and academic performance in the program.
- **Distribution of funds**
FGS funding is processed once a student arrives for the fall term and is typically distributed by the end of September or early October.

In addition, the department nominates students for donor awards each fall. Donor awards are distributed to recipients in November. Information regarding UVic and external awards can be found on the [Graduate Studies website](#). Eligibility and award values vary, but all students nominated for donor awards must hold a 6.0 GPA to be considered. Finally, the department offers the following donor awards that require students to [apply](#): (a) The Phillips, Hager and North Scholarships for Research in Environmental and Resource Economics (b) The Women in Economics Graduate Scholarship.

Termination of Awards

Awards are only paid out to students who are registered in the Economics graduate program. Award payments will not continue in a subsequent term if fees from the previous term have not been paid in full. Students who take a personal leave during the course of their program will lose their award funding. Students on parental, compassionate or medical leave do not receive funding during the term of their leave but carry forward the award.

Research Assistantships

Students interested in research assistant positions with a particular faculty member or in a particular field of economics are advised to contact the faculty member directly. [Current student opportunities](#) can be found on our website.

APPENDIX : GRADUATE STUDENT ONLINE RESOURCES

Department of Economics

- [Completed MA Extended Essays and Theses](#)
- [Economics Co-op Program](#)
- [Economics Faculty Listing](#)
- [Economics Financial Assistance and Fees](#)
- [Economics TA/RA Employment Opportunities](#)
- [Graduate Calendar: Economics Program](#)

Faculty of Graduate Studies

- [Faculty of Graduate Studies Supervisor Selection](#)
- [Fellowship and Graduate Award Regulations](#)
- [Policy on Academic Integrity](#)
- [Tuition and Fees](#)
- [UVic Graduate Calendar](#)
- [UVic Space Completed Theses and Dissertations](#)

University of Victoria

- [Campus Security](#)
- [Centre for Academic Communication](#)
- [Centre for Accessible Learning](#)
- [Counselling Services](#)
- [CUPE 4163](#)
- [Equity and Human Rights](#)
- [Graduate Students Society](#)
- [Health Services](#)
- [Indigenous Student Services](#)
- [International Student Services](#)
- [Labour/Employee Relations](#)
- [Occupational Health, Safety & Environment](#)
- [Office of Student Life](#)
- [Office of the Ombudsperson](#)