



School of Environmental Studies Graduate Handbook

Last Updated: July 2025

Email: esoffice@uvic.ca (Main Office)

esgradsec@uvic.ca (Grad Program Assistant)

Website: www.uvic.ca/socialsciences/environmental

Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	2
Territorial Acknowledgement	4
Welcome to the School of Environmental Studies!	5
Who's Who in the School of Environmental Studies	5
<i>Supervisor</i>	5
<i>Co-Supervisor (if applicable)</i>	5
<i>Supervisory Committee</i>	5
<i>Graduate Program Assistant</i>	6
<i>Graduate Advisor</i>	6
<i>Graduate Committee</i>	7
<i>Graduate Student Representative</i>	7
<i>Director of the School of Environmental Studies</i>	7
Who's Who External to the School	7
<i>Dean of Graduate Studies</i>	7
<i>Associate Deans of Graduate Studies</i>	7
<i>Director of Graduate Admissions and Records</i>	7
<i>Ombudsperson</i>	8
Your Home in the School of Environmental Studies	8
<i>Desk Space and Keys</i>	8
<i>Technical Services</i>	8
<i>Mail</i>	8
<i>Listservs</i>	8
<i>ES Graduate Student Resources Sharing Site</i>	9
<i>Seminars/Colloquium Series</i>	9
<i>Additional connections</i>	10
Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.....	10
<i>Current EDI initiatives at UVic include:</i>	10
Health and Wellness	11
<i>Personal leaves</i>	12
<i>Safety</i>	12
Program Specific Course Requirements	12
<i>Master of Arts (MA), Master of Science (MSc)</i>	13
<i>PhD in Environmental Studies</i>	14
Tuition Payments.....	15
Graduate Supervisor and Student Responsibilities.....	15
<i>Supervisor</i>	16
<i>Supervisory Committee and Nominations</i>	16
Expected Meeting Frequency	17
<i>With your Supervisor</i>	17
<i>With your Supervisory Committee</i>	17
Expected Turnaround Time of Annotated Thesis, Dissertation, or Paper.....	17
Placement, Co-op Terms and Internships.....	18

Required Thesis and Dissertation Formats	18
Transfer to PhD from MA/MSc	18
<i>Faculty of Graduate Studies requirements for transfer from MA/MSc--> PhD</i>	18
<i>School of Environmental Studies requirements for transfer from MA/MSc -> PhD</i>	18
<i>Procedure</i>	19
Human Research Ethics Board (HREB)	19
Thesis/Dissertation Preparation and Defense	20
<i>Completing and Defending your Thesis</i>	20
<i>Request for Oral Examination form</i>	21
<i>Thesis/Dissertation Withholding Form</i>	21
<i>Thesis Defense and Submission Checklist</i>	22
Research Dissemination.....	26
<i>Conferences and professional presentations</i>	26
<i>Publications</i>	26
Research Data	26
School of Environmental Studies Funding Policies	28
<i>Funding Implications for Extended Degree Times</i>	28
<i>Eligible Years for Guaranteed Funding</i>	29
<i>Teaching Assistantships</i>	30
Appendix A. Communications and interpersonal relations	31
<i>Establishing Expectations</i>	31
<i>Recognizing Different Styles</i>	31
<i>Interpersonal Communication</i>	31
<i>Utilizing Peer Support</i>	31
<i>Conflict Resolution</i>	31
<i>Faculty Availability</i>	32
Appendix B. Guidelines for Graduate Supervisor and Student Responsibilities Supplement to Faculty of Graduate Studies	33
<i>The Responsibilities of the Supervisor Include:</i>	33
<i>The Responsibilities of the Student Include:</i>	33
Appendix C. University Guidelines on Conflict of Interest in Student-Faculty Relationships.....	35
Appendix D. Graduate Co-op Guidelines and Procedures	38
<i>Goals of the Graduate Co-op Program in Environmental Studies</i>	38
<i>Guidelines</i>	38
<i>Procedures</i>	38
Appendix E. PhD Candidacy Requirements.....	40
<i>Comprehensive Exam</i>	40
<i>Dissertation Proposal</i>	41
Appendix F: Important Acronyms.....	43

Territorial Acknowledgement

We acknowledge and respect the lək'wəŋən peoples on whose traditional territory the university stands and the Songhees, Esquimalt and W̱SÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

The School of Environmental Studies recognizes that colonization and associated attitudes, policies and institutions have significantly changed Indigenous Peoples' relationship with this land. We also acknowledge that these institutions and processes have excluded and continue to exclude many Indigenous students from higher education.

Today, we are proud that Indigenous students are enrolling and succeeding in UVic programs in increasing numbers. We are taking steps to create a warm, welcoming, and respectful learning environment and sense of place to support our goals of generating a campus community that is accepting of diversity and inclusive of Indigenous ways of knowing and being.

While there is much to be done to redress the historical and continued barriers facing Indigenous students, a territorial acknowledgement is an important part of working together with our local Indigenous Nations in a good way.

We see several ways that doing a respectful and meaningful territory acknowledgement can contribute to this work. It can inspire people to think about how they have come to be here, and to reflect on the impacts of colonialism. It can foster a sense of responsibility to learn more about the people whose lands we live on, wherever we come from. It can serve as a reminder to reflect on what we will do differently based on what we have learned.

The territorial acknowledgement provided at the top of this page was prepared in consultation with local Indigenous communities and it is the recommended and preferred statement to read at the commencement of UVic events on campus. We can use this acknowledgement any time we come together as colleagues.

If we are inviting people to campus, it is appropriate to request a Lekwungen Elder or Knowledge Keeper to do a welcome to the territory in accordance with Coast Salish protocol. For more information, please see [UVIC Indigenous Academic & Community Engagement](#)

Welcome to the School of Environmental Studies!

Welcome to graduate studies in the [School of Environmental Studies](#) (the School) at the University of Victoria. We are a dynamic group of [faculty](#), [staff](#) and [students](#) working to create positive change across a breadth of disciplines, centered on ecological restoration, ethnoecology, and political ecology.

The School of Environmental Studies offers graduate degrees including: a Master of Arts (MA), a Master of Science (MSc) and a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), but we also host post-docs (post-doctoral researchers who have completed their PhDs but are doing further research training). Our program has approximately 65 graduate students and post-docs at any one time, and is committed to research excellence, community engagement, and maintaining a supportive environment for learning.

Our school offices, labs and classrooms are in the A and B wings of the [David Turpin Building \(DTB\)](#)¹, and in [University House 4 \(UH4\)](#), with the School's main office in DTB B243. This building has elements of energy efficient building design, including green roofs, patio gardens, and energy efficient lighting. It has been certified as LEED Gold by the national Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design program.

Who's Who in the School of Environmental Studies

The success of your program is dependent on the behind-the-scenes work of ES faculty and support staff. A spirit of collaboration is essential in any type of environmental work, and the School of Environmental Studies is no exception. Staff ask two things: first, respect in your interactions. Second, treat the workplace with care, which means keeping the mailroom, copier area, kitchen, and common areas clean. As a student, your relationships with faculty and staff work best if they are reciprocally positive. Although these individuals are here to support you in your learning, you can also support them by bringing a positive attitude and a willingness to collaborate wherever possible.

Supervisor

Also called the advisor, the supervisor acts as the student's principal advisor on all matters pertaining to the graduate program as outlined in this document, the UVic Graduate Calendar, and the Faculty of Graduate Studies Graduate Supervision Policy.

Co-Supervisor (if applicable)

A faculty member sharing supervisory duties on matters related to the student's graduate program. For information on finding an eligible supervisor or co-supervisor, visit the [Graduate Academic Calendar](#), or speak with the Graduate Advisor.

Supervisory Committee

Supervisory Committees are responsible for guiding student research and facilitating the academic progress of the student. Either the supervisor or the regular faculty co-supervisor will chair supervisory committee faculty meetings. All members of the supervisory committee must be members of the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

Committees differ slightly for Masters and PhD programs:

¹ The [David Turpin Building](#) is named after David H. Turpin, CM, PhD, FRSC, who served as President and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Victoria from 2000-2013.

MA/MSc. UVic regulations stipulate that MA/MSc committees are composed of two or more faculty members. One member is designated as the primary advisor and must be a member of the Environmental Studies faculty. Additional committee members may be selected from the list below but must be approved by the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

- a. Regular faculty in the School of Environmental Studies
- b. Adjunct faculty members in the School of Environmental Studies (Adjunct faculty can sometimes serve as co-supervisors).
- c. Faculty members from other academic units at UVic
- d. Specialists outside of UVic who are eligible for temporary appointment to the Faculty of Graduate Studies (see the Graduate Program Assistant or Graduate Advisor for details).

If you think your project is best served by having two faculty members serve as co-supervisors, you do not need additional committee members (i.e., only two faculty are required in total).

PhD. Doctoral (PhD) program committees have a minimum of three members. All members of the Doctoral Supervisory Committee must be on the Faculty of Graduate Studies membership list or be specifically approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies. The supervisory committee must have at least three members, one of whom is the primary supervisor.²

- a. Member #1: The primary supervisor must be from the home academic unit
- b. Member #2: May be a co-supervisor or committee member from inside or outside the home academic unit
- c. Member #3: A committee member from inside or outside the home academic unit

One of the committee members or co-supervisors (b or c above) must be from outside the home department.

Graduate Program Assistant

The Graduate Program Assistant (GPA) is responsible for managing the records, forms, and pertinent information required to help you complete your program. The GPA is your first point of contact for all your graduate administration needs. They can help you navigate the protocols, procedures, and systems of the UVic graduate program and are an important resource during your program. If you have a question about how to do something (like set up a committee meeting, book a video conference, apply for funding, or submit your thesis for a defense), the GPA is your first stop. They will also provide periodic reminders about important dates, funding, and other important details. **Please remember to read all the emails from the Graduate Program Assistant.** Come in and say hello to your GPA in the ES office (DTB B243) during regular office hours. You can also contact them by email at esgradsec@uvic.ca.

Important: A COPY OF ALL CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES MUST BE GIVEN TO THE GRADUATE PROGRAM ASSISTANT FOR A STUDENT'S FILE (e.g., program extensions, leaves of absence, grade changes, directed studies, course changes etc.). As a student, it is your responsibility to e-mail the Graduate Program Assistant a copy of any correspondence you receive from the Faculty of Graduate Studies so that we can keep your file up to date with important information about your program.

Graduate Advisor

² PhD program - University of Victoria, <https://www.uvic.ca/humanities/history/future-students/graduate/phd-program/index.php>.

The Graduate Advisor is a regular faculty member, serving for a 3-to-5 year term, who reports to the Director of the School for the administration of graduate studies. The Graduate Advisor acts as a liaison between students, the School, and the Faculty of Graduate Studies. The current Graduate Advisor is Dr. Natalie Ban, in DTB B250. She can be reached at esgrad@uvic.ca.

Graduate Committee

The graduate committee consists of the Graduate Advisor, a minimum of two additional regular faculty members and the Graduate Program Assistant. This committee assesses all applications for graduate admission, makes recommendations for awards and scholarships, and reviews and makes recommendations regarding the School of Environmental Studies' graduate programs. The current Graduate Committee consists of Natalie Ban, Trevor Lantz, Loren McClenachan, John Volpe, Jason Fisher and the Graduate Program Assistant, Margy Gamble

Graduate Student Representative

The Graduate Student Representative is a student who represents graduate students at School meetings. They act as a spokesperson and liaison between graduate students, the School, and the Faculty of Graduate Studies. They also represent the School of Environmental Studies at the UVic Graduate Student Society. This student typically brings information back to the graduate student body. There may be more than one student filling this role. This position changes as students graduate. If you do not know who the current student representative is, you may contact the Graduate Program Assistant to find out.

Director of the School of Environmental Studies

The Director of the School is responsible for making all recommendations for acceptance, transfers, and deviations from normal practice (among many other things). The Director does not sit on the Graduate Committee and is not required to sit on your supervisory committee, unless they are your supervisor, co-supervisor, or are asked to sit as a committee member. The Director can be reached at ses@uvic.ca, but most graduate student questions should be directed to the Graduate Program Assistant or Graduate Advisor, who can forward questions to the Director.

Who's Who External to the School

In general, if you think you need help with what you perceive as responsibilities of those individuals listed below, talk to the ES Grad Advisor or Grad Program Assistant first. They can help smooth your way through any administrative hurdles.

Dean of Graduate Studies

The Dean of Graduate Studies is the final arbiter on all matters pertaining to graduate studies. The Dean accepts students, approves the student's supervisory committee, approves programs, sets examining committees, and recommends to [Senate](#) that a degree be conferred.

Associate Deans of Graduate Studies

[The Associate Deans of Graduate Studies](#) are the liaisons between the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Advisor. The Associate Deans review and approve special arrangement programs, and act on behalf of the Dean in their absence, as well as assist the Dean with student appeals and the administration of fellowships and scholarships. There are currently three Associate Deans and one Dean. The link above provides their names and contact information, as well as their start and end dates.

Director of Graduate Admissions and Records

The Director of Graduate Admissions and Records is responsible for all admissions and records pertaining to Graduate Studies.

Ombudsperson

The Ombudsperson helps students with the fair resolution of disputes in relation to topics including, but not limited to academic accommodations, academic concessions, academic integrity, appeals, and graduate supervision.

Your Home in the School of Environmental Studies

A directory of all ES faculty and staff can be found on the [Environmental Studies Website](#)

Desk Space and Keys

When you arrive, your supervisor will assign you a desk space in their research lab or office space until you complete your degree. Please contact the *Undergraduate Programs Assistant and Receptionist* (esoffice@uvic.ca) to let them know which room your desk will be in, and to schedule an appointment to pick up key(s).

Students will be issued keys after paying a refundable deposit (\$50 for 1-2 keys, \$75 for 3, \$100 for 4 keys). All key deposits must be paid in cash. Students are not permitted to have departmental keys privately cut at their expense. **No keys are to be passed to others without authorization.**

Upon completion of the graduate degree or residency period or following a withdrawal or leave of absence from the program, keys must be returned to the *Undergraduate Programs Assistant*. Key deposits will be refunded after all school keys have been returned. Refunds are deposited into your bank account if you are enrolled in [direct deposit](#). If you are not signed up for direct deposit, a cheque will be mailed following the return of the keys.

Technical Services

Teaching and audio-visual equipment (e.g., laptops, cameras) are available in the school's general office (DTB B243) and must be signed out with the *Undergraduate Program Assistant*. Equipment can be signed out for the purpose of conducting field work, working with students while TAing a class or doing research assistant work. This equipment is not to be used for non-academic purposes.

Field equipment like GPS units, compasses, secateurs, gloves, quadrats, survey instruments, etc., is stored in the ES/RNS equipment storeroom (DTB A136) and can be signed out by students from the Field School's Coordinator, Ryan Hilperts (ryzome@uvic.ca). Equipment needed by faculty or students in scheduled classes will be given priority. Please ensure that you have a clear understanding with your committee members about the ownership and distribution of any equipment that was purchased during your research. In general, equipment purchased with research support of any kind is the property of the University and is retained by your primary advisor (unless otherwise specified by a funding agreement).

Mail

Students will be assigned a mailbox in the ES mail room (DTB B241). Although most correspondence comes by email, you should check your mailbox regularly, as cheques and other important information may sometimes come by mail.

Listservs

Once you have been admitted to one of Environmental Studies' Graduate Programs, you will be sent an email by the Graduate Admissions and Records Office, asking you to sign-up for a NetLink ID and

email address. Your UVic email address will be your NetLink ID plus “@uvic.ca”. It is preferable to use your UVic email account for all correspondence with the University.

The Graduate Program Assistant will add you to the **ES Current Grad Students email list**. This email list provides a way for the Graduate Program Assistant, Graduate Advisor, and ES faculty and students, to distribute information on upcoming events, notices from around campus, Teaching Assistantship positions, funding opportunities, events, seminars of interest, etc. To send an email to the listserv, type: es-current-grad-students@lists.uvic.ca into the “to” field of the email. Try to reserve using this listserv for important information that might be relevant to many students. The [Slack channel](#) can be used for smaller announcements, questions and group discussions.

There are a few other listservs that may be useful during your time in ES:

- [Green Grads listserv](#) is a forum for graduate students in Environmental Studies, Biology, Geography, Anthropology, Political Science and Earth and Ocean Sciences to exchange information regarding academic, social and community events. This site can also be used for faculty to reach a wider audience of grad students and for postings regarding housing, Teaching Assistantship positions, and work opportunities.
- [Ecology @ UVic listserv](#)) is a low volume listserv for ecological science researchers at UVic. This listserv is targeted at ecology graduate students around campus, especially in Environmental Studies, Biology, Anthropology, and Geography.
- CIRCLE, the Centre for Indigenous Research and Community-Led Engagement has a [CIRCLE UVic listserv](#) that focuses on graduate student activities. The CIRCLE workshops and speaker series are open to everyone, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, but the focus is on Indigenous research.
- SAGE (Supporting Aboriginal Graduate Enhancements) is a UBC listserv that is open to everyone and is student driven, inter-disciplinary and cross-institutional. It focuses on promoting and fostering Indigenous values and ways of being in all areas of academia. Join the SAGE listserv by emailing: indigenous.education@ubc.ca.

The Ecological Restoration Club is a monthly newsletter which allows you to stay up to date with restoration club activities, field trips and community restoration opportunities. You can subscribe by clicking [here](#) and filling out the form.

ES Graduate Student Resources Sharing Site

ES Grad students have an MS Teams page where they can post useful documents to share or communicate through the Teams platform. Contact The Graduate Student Rep, Lauren Burton lbarton@uvic.ca or Graduate program assistant if you would like to be added to this Team.

Seminars/Colloquium Series

One of the School's greatest strengths is our interdisciplinary reach. Take an opportunity while you are a student to seek out conversations and ideas outside your comfort zone; this is good real-world training. The University's role is to integrate and encourage learning across many disciplines and fields of endeavour. Take opportunities to attend lectures in other departments and join organizations and clubs that allow you to meet people from all walks of campus life.

Tapping into this celebrated strength, the School of Environmental Studies has a seminar series on Wednesday morning (11:30-12:30). All graduate students are required to attend along with all members of the ES community. You can find out more by visiting the School of Environmental Studies website and navigating to [Research and Partnerships](#). The seminar series is also open to the public.

There are numerous seminars offered through other departments that provide excellent talks on a variety of topics. Look for them on departmental websites (for example, [Biology](#) and [Geography](#) have their seminars series on Friday afternoons).

Additional connections

Group ENVI represents our grad community of current Masters and PhD students. It was created in 2006 to get all the hard-working graduate students out of their offices to enjoy time together. There are typically 1 to 2 Group ENVI reps, whose responsibilities include attending school meetings on behalf of ES graduate students and providing organizational and financial support (from the GSS social & academic fund) for student-run events within the school. In the past couple of years, Group ENVI has held theme parties, documentary movie screenings, an ecology research derby, a clothing swap, statistical software (R) workshops, potlucks/socials, Bike to Work Week, and inner-tube water polo tournaments. All of this takes effort, and we encourage you to pitch in, whether it is helping to organize Group ENVI, joining one of our school's committees or being available for coffee. You can contact Group ENVI by emailing groupenvi@uvic.ca.

Students are also encouraged to use [Slack](#) to communicate among themselves for smaller, more frequent updates. This allows us to reserve emails for larger updates and reduces the email traffic in people's inboxes.

Finally, ES maintains a Jobs in Environmental Studies and Ecology on [Facebook](#). You can also follow the Twitter feed at [@UVicENVI](#).

Visit the [Faculty of Graduate Studies website](#) for additional information on [support for newly accepted students](#) and campus resources. You can also find resources on the [Graduate Admissions Website](#). Visit the Faculty of Graduate Studies Student Resource page for additional graduate information.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) are not only core values at UVic, but they are also the basis of our work and interactions and are central to the plans of our university. Although the University has been working to advance these values, there remains much work to be done, as systemic, long-standing inequities require more than words and short-term action to bring about lasting change. As a university, it is our collective responsibility to identify and address barriers that affect all members of the UVic community. Furthermore, as members of this learning community, we each have responsibilities to support the creation of a diverse, equitable and inclusive learning environment. In Environmental Studies, we are deeply committed to these EDI values and have established a People, Justice, and Culture Committee to help foster a welcoming and respectful environment for everyone. If you would like to participate, please contact James Rowe (jkrowe@uvic.ca), the current committee Chair.

Current EDI initiatives at UVic include:

- Student recruitment and retention objectives to increase the number of Indigenous and international students, as well as increasing the number of women and gender diverse people in STEM
- [Workshops and training](#) through the Office of Student Life on bystander intervention, consent, prevention of sexualized violence and more
- Awareness and advocacy events for [Truth and Reconciliation Week](#), Pride, Black History Month, Wellness week and other occasions
- Funding for student-led initiatives that provide a positive impact on the student community through the UVic Student Life Grant, and the Anti-Racism Supplement

- Facilitating diversity, equity and inclusion training and workshops for faculty and decision makers
- Recruiting and retaining diverse faculty, staff, and senior leadership
- Using Indigenous and anti-racism grants to support faculty, staff and instructors to decolonize their curriculum
- Acknowledging and profiling exemplary scholars through the Advocacy and Activism Award, Award in Engaged Scholarship and Distinguished Women's Award

While these initiatives indicate momentum and steps towards creating change, it is important to remember that there remains much work to do, and as members of this learning community, we are all required to work together to help make UVic a working and learning environment that is safe and healthy for all.

There are approximately 150 Indigenous graduate students currently studying at the University of Victoria. If you are an Indigenous student, there are many [academic and cultural programs](#) available to you on campus. [Indigenous Academic and Community Engagement](#) (IACE) is a support service for Indigenous students. As an Indigenous student, you are invited to meet with an IACE Staff member, and enjoy the student lounge, computer room and shared lunchroom.

International Students currently make up 20 per cent of UVIC's student population. If you are an International student, there are many resources available on campus through the [International Centre for Students](#), the [English Language Centre \(ELC\)](#), [UVic Global Community](#) and the [Graduate Student's Society](#).

Health and Wellness

You don't need a graduate handbook to tell you that graduate studies can be stressful! Stress associated with studies, work, personal life, and global events can compound, become overwhelming, and negatively impact mental wellbeing. The School of Environmental Studies is committed to supporting students in maintaining their health and well-being during their graduate programs. The ES Grad Student Resource Sharing Teams page (mentioned above) also has a document created by one of our graduate students that contains a collection of resources for students dealing with climate related mental health challenges. Contact Lauren Burton or the Grad Program Assistant to be added to the Teams site.

Since our health and wellness are multi-faceted, the University uses a holistic approach to healthcare, and support services include counsellors, Indigenous counselors, Elders in residence, doctors, nurses, and spiritual care providers.

The [Health and Wellness Building \(HWB\)](#) houses the [Student Wellness Centre](#), which provides counselling services (individual and group) and health services. Other wellness supports include the [Multifaith Centre](#), which represents over a dozen faiths and offers free weekly events. These services aim to support students' physical emotional and spiritual health.

Contact the [Student Wellness Centre](#) for access to [various wellness supports](#) such as counsellors, nurses, physicians, and spiritual care providers. There are also group counselling workshops offered through the Wellness Centre and free weekly programs offered through the Multifaith centre. In addition, you can access the [SupportConnect](#) service at any time, 7 days a week. This service provides counselling, consulting, and life coaching, and can help with issues from financial challenges to personal and interpersonal challenges. You can access this service by phone and will be connected with a qualified counsellor.

Toll-free (calls from North America): 1-844-773-1427
International collect calls: 1-250-999-7621

There are many other services on campus that support physical and emotional well-being, such as the Vikes Active Living Programs. This includes facilities at the [CARSA Centre for Athletics, Recreation and Special Abilities](#), the McKinnon Gym and the Ian Stewart Complex ice rink. These centres contain a [climbing wall](#), [exercise classes](#), [CanAssist technologies](#) and [services for people with disabilities](#), a [pool](#), [ice rink](#), [weight room](#), [outdoor playing fields](#), [clubs](#), [intramurals](#) and more.

The [Student Union Building \(SUB\)](#) contains a variety of businesses and services to support your health and wellness needs. You can [watch a movie](#), have a coffee or lunch, browse [used textbooks](#), [magazines, gifts and snacks](#), as well as get a prescription filled at the [pharmacy](#), go to a [dental appointment](#), or visit a [massage therapist](#), [acupuncturist](#), [naturopath](#), [dietician or chiropractor](#). Many of these services are covered under the [Graduate Student's Society Extended Health and Dental plan](#).

The university also offers a variety of [academic supports](#) to help you complete your program. These include program advising, learning resources, and academic concessions.

Personal leaves

If you need to take a leave from your studies, you can apply for one of four types of leave of absence: personal, parental, medical, and compassionate. Personal leaves require a \$35 manual registration fee. Personal leave time taken counts towards the maximum time allotted to your degree completion. Parental, medical and compassionate leave are considered Leaves of Absence with Permission and are not included in the maximum time allotted to your degree completion. Medical leaves require a doctor's note.

If you are considering a leave, it is **very important that** you consult your supervisor prior to applying for a leave so they can offer support and advice as needed. More information about leaves can be found in the [Graduate calendar](#).

Safety

There is no research activity in the field or laboratory that is worth endangering your personal safety or the safety of those with whom you are working. If you are spending time in remote locations, it is essential to follow standard safety protocols and have appropriate training (wilderness first aid, bear safety, marine safety training etc.). Travel in sufficient numbers that you have backup support if needed. Ensure effective communications, and let key people know your whereabouts and expected return time. Many research groups utilize daily check-in procedures to minimize response time in the event of an emergency. UVic is constantly updating [safety protocols](#). Keep up to date by reviewing these periodically. UVIC Occupational Health, Safety & Environment offers several [safety courses](#), including WHMIS, Lab safety for Non-Lab Workers, and Wilderness First Aid.

Program Specific Course Requirements

Our Masters and PhD programs are research-intensive and culminate in the presentation and defense of a thesis (MA/MSc) or dissertation (PhD).

Our MA and MSc degree programs are similar in overall requirements but vary in the type of elective courses and thesis research undertaken. Our PhD program is a longer research-focused degree with different course requirements.

All students (Masters and PhD) are required to attend two overnight fieldtrips at the beginning of their program;

- September: ES500 (MA/MSc) or 600 (PhD) and
- March: ES 501 (MA/MSc) or 601 (PhD)

The specific requirements of each degree are detailed in the following sections. There is no formal residency requirement. However, in practice all students must be in residence (living in or near Greater Victoria) during their first two terms of study, and residency during the first year is encouraged.

For details about our courses see the [Graduate Calendar](#). Note that not all elective courses are offered in all years and 500 level courses are for MA/MSc students while 600 level courses are for PhD students.

Master of Arts (MA), Master of Science (MSc)

An **MA/MSc** student must successfully complete 18 units of course study. Of these 18 units, 7.5 units are required Core courses (listed below). Three units are taken as electives, and 7.5 units are taken as thesis.

Core Courses (required):

- ES 500 (1.5) Perspectives on Environmental Theories, Methods and Skills I
- ES 501 (1.5) Perspectives on Environmental Theories, Methods and Skills II
- ES 503 (3.0) MA/MSc Research Colloquium
- ES 593 (1.5) Thesis Proposal Preparation
- ES 599 (7.5) Master's Thesis

ES 500, 501 and 503 are taken in sequence in the first year of study and are required by all students in this program. ES 593 is completed once the research proposal is approved by your committee (by September 30th on your second year of study).

Elective courses: (Please note that not all courses are offered every year. Refer to the Graduate Calendar and the current timetable for available options) [Graduate Calendar](#)

- ES 570 Field Study
- ES 580 Seminar in Political Ecology
- ES 581 Seminar in Ethnoecology
- ES 582 Seminar in Ecological Restoration
- ES 590 Directed Studies

At least 3.0 elective units must be taken from within, or outside, the School with the permission of the student's supervisor. Up to 1.5 units may be taken at the 400 level. A student's advisory committee may also stipulate additional courses to be taken. Elective courses should be chosen to fill specific gaps in your knowledge or skills or extend your interests into a new domain. We suggest that only one of the two elective courses is a *pro forma* or Directed Studies (i.e., individual one-on-one course). Directed Studies courses offer flexibility but can look less strong on a transcript. You may choose courses in other departments too, though you will need to consult the instructor to determine if the course is appropriate and open to students outside that department. The course registration form is needed to register for the course outside ES. Students should contact the course instructor and inform the Graduate Program Assistant to submit the form to GARO for registration.

Masters students must register for both ES 593 (Thesis Proposal Preparation) and ES 599 (Masters Thesis) every term until you complete them. Once ES 593 has been completed, students should continue to register for ES 599 on its own. This will maintain full-time status.

The MA/MSc program is a research degree that nominally lasts for 24 months. In practice, the degree typically takes from 30-36 months to complete. The maximum time allowed is 60 months.

Several key components of the timeline of your graduate program are outlined below:

- Formation of a supervisory committee: within 8 months of entry
- Completion of course work: 10.5 units
- Meeting of supervisory committee: initial meeting (in the first year) and then annually until completion
- Graduate proposal presentation: at the end of ES 501 in the second semester
- Thesis submission and defense: watch for emails regarding deadlines. There are further details on how best to navigate this below in the [Thesis/Dissertation Preparation and Defense](#) section.

PhD in Environmental Studies

The **PhD** degree program is primarily research-based, and the final outcome of the program is the presentation and defense of a dissertation. The PhD program is nominally a 48-month research program. The current average time to completion is closer to 60 months. The maximum time allowed is 84 months.

The University of Victoria requires a minimum of 30 units to obtain a PhD degree (if the student has a Masters degree).

Environmental Studies PhD program requirements:

Core courses (required):

- ES 600 (1.5) Perspectives on Environmental Theories, Methods and Skills I
- ES 601 (1.5) Perspectives on Environmental Theories, Methods and Skills II
- ES 603 (3.0) PhD Research colloquium
- ES 693 (3.0) Candidacy Examination
- ES 699 (21) PhD Dissertation

Core courses contribute 9.0 units toward the 30-unit minimum degree requirement.

Elective courses:

- ES 670 Field Study
- ES 680 Seminar in Political Ecology
- ES 681 Seminar in Ethnoecology
- ES 682 Seminar in Ecological Restoration
- ES 690 Directed Studies

Elective courses are not required but may be taken at the discretion of the research advisor and in consultation with your supervisory committee.

PhD students must register for ES 693 (PhD Candidacy Exam), or ES 699 (PhD Dissertation) if you have already completed ES 693. You must continue to register for these courses every term until you complete them unless you are doing other coursework. You will have full-time student status when registered for either course. If you choose to be a part-time student, you may register for 1.5 units of

credit. In this case, you will have part time status. This will reduce your tuition for the term but may affect your eligibility for things like awards.

Several key components of the timeline of your graduate program are outlined below:

- Formation of supervisory committee: within 8 months of entry
- Completion of course work: 3 courses (6 units including ES693, ES600 and ES601: core courses should be completed in the first two semesters)
- Meeting of supervisory committee: initial meeting in the first year then, at least annually until completion
- PhD proposal presentation: at the end of ES 601 in the second semester
- [Candidacy examination](#): within 21 months of direct entry to the PhD program
- Departmental Seminar requirement: each finishing PhD student will present their work in the ES seminar series the semester before, or the semester of defense.
- Dissertation submission and defense: in your final year, watch for emails regarding deadlines. There are further details on how best to navigate this below in the [Thesis/Dissertation Preparation and Defense](#) section.

Tuition Payments

Graduate students are not charged per course but are charged a flat rate each term based on whether you are a part-time or full-time student. Students are charged a full tuition installment for every term during which they are registered full-time in a degree program and a half tuition installment for every term in which they are registered half-time or less in a degree program. Students must be registered in at least 3.0 units a term to maintain full-time status. Any additional courses added to your course load each term will not increase your tuition costs. This is because the total cost of your program is fixed for each term. Registration in Masters Thesis (ES 599), Dissertation (ES 699) and Thesis Proposal / Candidacy Examination (ES 593/693) courses result in full time status.

The total tuition cost is paid in [tuition installments](#). The minimum regular program fee for a Masters degree is 5.0 tuition installments and 7.5 tuition installments for a PhD degree, which can consist of a combination of regular full and regular half tuition installments. The School of Environmental Studies does not use any non-standard tuition fees.

In order to meet the Faculty of Graduate Studies' [continuity of registration](#) requirement, students must register in a minimum of 1.5 units each term. Neglecting to meet this requirement can lead to being Withdrawn Without Permission, which will cause the program to be terminated and the notation "Withdrawn Without Permission" to be entered on the transcript. As noted above, to maintain full-time status, students must be registered for at least 3.0 units in each term. Graduate students registered for **1.5 units every term** will have part-time status. Keep in mind that although registering as a part-time student will reduce your tuition, it may affect your eligibility for things such as student awards, extended health benefits, visas, study permits, etc.

See the Faculty of Graduate Studies for an estimate of [tuition & costs](#).

Graduate Supervisor and Student Responsibilities

[Faculty](#) and [students](#) are bound by policies set by the University, [Faculty of Graduate Studies](#), and the [School of Environmental Studies](#).

Faculty of Graduate Studies policies are detailed in the [Graduate Studies Calendar](#). In particular, students and faculty members should read the [Graduate Supervision Policy](#), which outlines the rights and responsibilities in the supervisory relationship.

Supervisor

Your supervisor, also sometimes called your advisor, will be determined well in advance of you arriving on campus. In practice, most graduate students have been in discussions with their supervisor for a year or more prior to beginning their studies. A student will not be admitted to the School of Environmental Studies graduate program without a supervisor who is willing to work with them.

The relationship with your graduate supervisor is among the most important things you'll have during graduate school. You will want to have discussions early in your graduate school experience about how the relationship will work. Questions you might ask include:

- What is your supervisory style?
- How often will we meet?
- What hours do you expect me to spend on campus?
- How often do you want to see updates on my work?
- In what ways will you support my travel to conferences?
- Who will be listed as authors on publications from my graduate work?
- How often do lab meetings occur?
- How will I fund my graduate studies, especially if they go beyond 24 (or in the case of PhD students, 36 or 48) months?

Websites like [Working with Supervisors](#) can help with navigating this relationship, as can frequent discussions with your peers. There are MANY excellent resources online that you can read to help you work best with your supervisor. Also see [Appendix A](#), [Appendix B](#), and [Appendix C](#) for more information on creating successful working relationships with supervisors.

Supervisory Committee and Nominations

You will have a primary advisor identified at the start of your program, but adding committee members doesn't always follow a precise schedule. The ultimate deadline for MA/MSc students to add committee members is September 30th of your second year of full-time studies (i.e., 13 months from the start of your program). This is when you need to fulfill the requirements for ES 593. It is important to have your committee in place by this time, because your committee needs to approve your thesis proposal.

For PhD students, committee formation must take place prior to your candidacy examination. In practice, PhD students typically establish the core of their committee well before their comprehensive exam. The actual date depends in part on your project and how quickly it is coming together. Generally, the first few months of the second term of study is when most committees are formed. This allows you to scope your thesis project and meet the faculty best suited to supporting your research. Remember to *consider the advice of your supervisor* before making any commitments. If you rush into selection of a committee member, you run the risk of having to replace a committee member who is not a good fit for you or your research. To avoid this situation, take time to make the right decision, and consult with your supervisor before you finalize your decisions.

An MA/MSc committee requires one additional member beyond the supervisor, and a PhD committee requires two additional members including one member who is external to the School of Environmental Studies. All committee members must also be members of the Faculty of Graduate Studies. For

questions regarding FGS membership, please contact the Graduate Program Assistant at esgradsec@uvic.ca.

We recommend you avoid the temptation to enlarge your supervisory committee. Your research is almost certain to evolve during your program, and it is not always easy to know who will be best suited to advising you. The fewer members you have, the easier it is to make changes if they are required. Logistics such as committee meetings and oral exams are also much easier to organize with a smaller committee.

Expected Meeting Frequency

With your Supervisor

Each student/supervisor relationship is different. In many cases, students and supervisors may plan to meet weekly, especially early in the graduate program, and toward the end as the defense is imminent. This is a discussion you and your supervisor should have early in your graduate studies to set a schedule that works best for both of you. For more information on the student/supervisor relationship, and conflict of interests, see Appendices A, B and C.

With your Supervisory Committee

There must be at least one formal committee meeting per year with your supervisory committee. However, more frequent meetings are generally desirable, and in the first year you might expect at least one meeting per term. This becomes a record of your progress and can provide an important benchmark for your evolving project.

At formal committee meetings, notes on progress and next steps are recorded on the [Graduate Student Committee Meeting Report](#). This form provides a record of the meeting, and is shared among the student, their committee, and the Graduate Program Assistant. You will work with your supervisor to fill out. This form will be sent to the Graduate Program Assistant to help track your progress.

Expected Turnaround Time of Annotated Thesis, Dissertation, or Paper

The nominal length of the MA/MSc program is two years; for the PhD, it's four years. At the beginning of your program these intervals may seem like a generous amount of time to design, conduct, analyze, and write about an original research project. Don't be fooled. Completing your program requirements within the nominal time frames requires you to be realistic about what can be accomplished, to work closely with your committee to develop a reasonable work plan, and to avoid the slippery slope of scope creep. Please listen carefully to your advisor and committee member(s) if they counsel you to curtail your ambitions. To complete in the nominal time horizon means scoping field-based project appropriately (typically only one field season for MA/MSc students). Many students experience professional or personal demands that pull them away from their studies. This can cut in two directions: you can experience wonderful opportunities for enrichment, but these can also prove distracting and in some cases may delay the completion of your degree. Before making major commitments outside your studies, please consult with your research advisor.

As you proceed with your program, please try to remember that things always take longer than you think they will. Your instructors do their best to lay out the schedule for course assignments, thesis expectations, and so on. This should provide a clear framework to plan your work. Please make sure to build-in ample time for your advisory committee and other collaborators to respond. And please be

respectful of your advisory committee's schedules. There are better and worse times to submit your thesis draft for quick turnaround. Since you don't know the schedules and work commitments of your advisor or committee members, please consult well in advance about your needs and how best to accommodate them. Typically, faculty members in the School require that a complete draft of your thesis be submitted in the term before the term in which you plan to defend. Under most circumstances, supervisors and members of the supervisory committee return comments on a thesis, dissertation, or paper to students within 20 business days from time of receipt, unless a delay is required by fieldwork, remote study, supervisor or student vacation, sick leave, *etc.* Again, you should have a conversation with your supervisor about these sorts of deadlines early in your studies.

Placement, Co-op Terms and Internships

Co-op internships can be discussed with your supervisor and the co-op advisor. For more information on co-op internships, see Appendix D.

Required Thesis and Dissertation Formats

Thesis/dissertations are prepared according to guidelines available from the [Graduate Studies website](#).

DO NOT FOLLOW FORMATTING FROM THESES/DISSERTATIONS ALREADY IN PRINT. You must follow the [FGS guideline](#) to write your thesis/dissertation.

Theses can be prepared in either a standard historical thesis format or may be prepared as a series of submission-ready manuscripts, depending on the decision of the committee.

Thesis copyright information can be found on the [UVic Libraries website](#).

Transfer to PhD from MA/MSc

[Transferring from an MA/MSc to a PhD](#) is only possible after completing 2 full terms (8 months) of a masters degree and with agreement of the student's supervisory committee. The University requires a minimum of 45 units to be completed for a PhD degree (without completing an MA/MSc). 37.5 units are from the dissertation (ES699).

Fee installments paid towards the minimum program fee for the masters program will be applied towards the minimum fee requirement for the PhD program.

Faculty of Graduate Studies requirements for transfer from MA/MSc--> PhD

- A baccalaureate degree from a recognized institution with a cumulative grade point average of 7.0 (A-) on the final two years of the bachelor's degree (see Minimum Degree Requirements), **or** Completion of at least two terms in a masters program at UVic.

School of Environmental Studies requirements for transfer from MA/MSc --> PhD

- MA/MSc coursework completed and a cumulative GPA of 7.0 (A-). Courses include: ES 500, ES501, ES503, ES593, and two electives = 10.5 units.

- Minimum funding for PhD students in place. \$17,500 per year for 4 years³⁴.
- Transfer is supported by the student's advisory committee and the graduate committee.
- Student completes the PhD candidacy process within 18 months of transfer.
- Transfers should be completed between 8 and 16 months following the start of an MA/MSc program.

Procedure

1. The student applying to transfer to a PhD prepares a 1-2 page justification, which includes details on the revised scope and research questions included in the proposed PhD-level research.
2. The student's supervisory committee prepares a supporting memo outlining: 1) the rationale for transfer, 2) evidence that a transfer is consistent with the student's performance to date, 3) any conditions of the transfer⁵, and 4) details of program funding (\$45,000 minimum).
3. These documents should be sent to the Graduate Advisor (esgrad@uvic.ca) and Graduate Program Assistant (esgradsec@uvic.ca)

The graduate committee reviews the request and decides:

1) Approval, 2) conditional approval, or 3) rejection. Transfers must occur at the beginning of a term and the candidacy process should occur within 18 months (2 terms) of transfer.

Human Research Ethics Board (HREB)

Any research that involves the participation of human subjects (personal interviews, mail surveys, etc.) must be approved by the University of Victoria's Human Research Ethics Board (HREB) prior to undertaking the study. Approval can take up to 6 weeks, depending on the nature of the project and the board's current workload. Failing to obtain approval from the HREB has significant implications for your defense and your ability to graduate. If you have even the slightest doubt about whether your project requires approval, contact the [Human Research Ethics Board](#) at UVic. The ethics process also gives you a chance to begin detailing the purpose of your work, summarizing why it is important and clarifying who you will work with. The application process also calls for concise descriptions of what researchers will do with their results, how they will contact subjects, etc. In some departments, an ethics approval or copies of the forms submitted is a part of getting your thesis proposal approved.

Research that involves animals may also require approval from the UVic Animal Care Committee. Application forms are available online through the [Office of Research Services](#). A request for approval from this committee should normally be made prior to the proposal defense, and must be made in advance of any data collection.

³ Note that SSHRC and NSERC awards are sometimes referred to as Tri-council or Tri-agency awards. This is because the SSHRC, NSERC and the Canadian Institute of Health Research (CIHR) jointly administers these awards

⁴ Includes funding obtained prior to the transfer.

⁵ Conditions of transfer specified by the supervisory or graduate committees are added to the student's record by Graduate Admissions and Records (GARO) and will trigger a hold on registration if the condition is not met by the date(s) set.

Thesis/Dissertation Preparation and Defense

Both MA/MSc theses and PhD dissertations are defended orally and in public. Many defenses also have an option to join remotely via video conference or Zoom. The examining committee for all oral defenses (MA/MSc or PhD) consists of the student's supervisory committee plus an external examiner. Your supervisor is responsible for finding an external examiner and graduate students are not to have contact with their external examiner prior to the oral exam (i.e., during the period from submission of thesis to the defense date).

For MA/MSc oral examinations, the external examiner may be from within the university, but must be from outside the home academic unit. For a PhD oral exam, the external examiner must be from outside the university.

MA/MSc and PhD external examiners can participate in the oral defense via video conference, and there are excellent facilities on campus to facilitate this. The Graduate Program Assistant can help you arrange a video conference. More information can be found at the [Faculty of Graduate Studies website](#).

The thesis defense normally lasts 1.5-2 hours. During the defense, the student gives a 10–20-minute presentation summarizing their work. The examining committee then asks two rounds of questions. External committee members ask the first questions, followed by the internal examining committee and then the supervisor. If time permits, members of the Faculty of Graduate Studies may ask questions, as well as members of the audience. When questioning is completed, the candidate and audience leave the room so the examining committee can discuss the thesis and defense. Detailed explanations about defense outcomes can be found on the [Faculty of Graduate Studies website](#), but generally these are:

- The thesis is acceptable subject to editorial changes as presented and the oral defense is acceptable.
- The thesis is acceptable subject to minor revisions and the oral defense is acceptable.
- The thesis is acceptable subject to major revisions and the oral defense is acceptable.
- The examination is adjourned.
- The examination is failed.

The candidate is then invited back to the examination room and the results of the defense are discussed.

Completing and Defending your Thesis

Once you have reached the final stages of your program, consult your supervisor to determine the next steps. Each supervisor will have a slightly different approach, but in general you should count on the supervisor being responsible for reading your thesis/dissertation and offering suggestions for revision before your committee sees it. In most cases, several rounds of revisions will be needed before your thesis or dissertation is reviewed by your committee. This might seem to create an additional step, but experience shows that it can be much more efficient to have one person helping to hone a draft. Besides, your supervisor is the one who is offering the senior guidance and has responsibility for your program.

Once revisions are completed, the thesis circulates to the committee (typically one additional person). Depending on the committee member and the relationship they have with you and your supervisor, this can be an intensive or a relatively light process. Regarding timing, most faculty require you to complete *a full draft of your thesis/dissertation by the end of the term* prior to the term you intend to submit it for defense and sit for your oral examination. In planning a time to defend, make sure to include ample time to make revisions based on your committees' feedback. This process can take a month or more.

Students are also responsible for checking on their committees' availability during the time they plan to defend.

The Faculty of Graduate Studies' [checklist for masters and PhD Students](#) provides a general guide of the steps needed to complete your degree requirements. At the beginning of each term, the Graduate Program Assistant sends out an email providing information about defending, including deadlines, guidelines, procedures, etc. From start to finish, the defense process is a lengthy one.

Oral exams are scheduled 5-6 weeks after a thesis is approved and a Request for Oral Examination has been submitted. To complete your program by the end of the current term, you must submit your thesis by the **last day of the last month of the term** (April 30, August 31, and January 2 - aim for the last working day in December) and make all format corrections before the last day of the term to avoid paying tuition in the following term.

Request for Oral Examination form

The Request for Oral Examination (ROE) form, must be completed and submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS) along with your completed thesis, [Thesis Withholding Form](#) (if you intend to Withhold your thesis- see below) and Human Research Ethics Form (if you needed ethics approval). To complete the ROE, you will need the signatures of all your committee members and the Graduate Advisor, your defense date/time, the room booking for your defense, and your external examiner's information (the Graduate Program Assistant will work with your supervisor to confirm your external examiner's information; you should NOT take part in this process). You can fill out the Request for Oral Examination to the best of your ability, obtaining signatures from your committee and filling in the exam date, time and Zoom link if possible. Your Graduate Program Assistant can help with this process as needed. When you have filled out the form to the best of your ability, send it to the Graduate Program Assistant, along with your Thesis, Thesis Withholding form (if needed) and Human Research Ethics form (if needed).

The Graduate Program Assistant will submit the completed ROE, along with your thesis and any accompanying forms directly to FGS. At that time, you will be registered in ES 599/699 and will not be able to make any changes to your thesis prior to your exam date.

PhD students must complete a School seminar in either the term prior to the one you plan to defend in, or at the latest in the same term you plan to defend. This is an oral presentation summarizing a student's PhD research that is given during the ES colloquium. Students should plan on giving a 45-minute talk followed by 15 minutes of questions. Ask the Graduate Program Assistant to contact the Seminar Coordinator to arrange a seminar.

Thesis/Dissertation Withholding Form

Effective 1 May 2011, all approved theses and dissertations must be submitted electronically to the institutional repository, [UVicSpace](#). Students seeking publication or patents may delay the publishing of the thesis or dissertation in UVicSpace for an initial period of twelve months from the date of the oral examination by submission of a signed [Withholding form](#) prior to uploading their thesis or dissertation. It is recommended that you check with your potential publisher regarding their regulations on prior publication of the work. Some publishers permit documents to be held in campus repositories (UVicSpace), which means withholding would not be required.

During the period of withholding, the thesis or dissertation will not be accessible to anyone, but a brief record of its existence will be available. A request to extend the option to withhold must be approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies or designate prior to the expiry date. In some cases, like when working with community partners such as First Nations, this may be essential to protect sensitive data. If no request is received when the expiry date is reached, the embargo on the thesis or dissertation will be

removed and the thesis or dissertation will be available in the ETD (Electronic Theses and Dissertations) Open Access Collection. Extension requests are made by submission of a further [Withholding Form](#) together with a statement from the author outlining the progress made toward publication or patent during the preceding twelve months.

Thesis Defense and Submission Checklist

Before your Oral Defense

- ☐ Notify the Grad Program Assistant (esgradsec@uvic.ca) that you intend to defend once you are getting close to finishing your thesis.
 - Email them a copy of your title page and the names of your committee members, including which members are supervisors, co-supervisors, outside members etc.
- ☐ Check your Curriculum, Advising and Program Planning ([CAPP report](#)) for completeness (notify the Grad Program Assistant if changes are needed).
- ☐ Check the deadlines for convocation and the application to graduate.
 - There are two application deadlines a year, which can be found on the [Graduation and Convocation page](#). The spring deadline for applying to graduate is February 15th (for spring graduation), and the fall deadline is July 15th (for fall graduation).
 - The late application deadline is April 30th (for spring graduation), August 31st (for fall graduation). Late applications are subject to additional fees. If you miss the deadline, you can apply for a future graduation period.
 - Graduations are approved by Senate: mid-May (for spring graduation), mid-October (for fall graduation).
- ☐ Finish your thesis/dissertation and submit it to your committee for review.
- ☐ Receive and complete edits until your committee has agreed that your thesis is ready to move to defense.
- ☐ Decide with your committee and supervisor on a date and time for your defense. Your defense date should generally be before the 15th calendar day of the last month of the term (i.e. December 15th, April 15th, or August 15th. See Endnote about Completion Postponement Fee Adjustment⁶).
- ☐ Ask the Grad Program Assistant to book a room for your defense and confirm the details with your committee members and the external examiner. **You should NOT communicate with the external examiner before your defense. This correspondence should be handled by your advisor or the Grad Program Assistant.**
- ☐ Ask the Grad Program Assistant to create a Zoom meeting for your defense in case not everyone can attend in person.

⁶ Note that if you defend your thesis or dissertation within the first 15 days of a term, you may be eligible to opt out of paying your full term's tuition and instead, pay the Completion Postponement Fee Adjustment (\$255) along with a full term of ancillary fees. To do this, register in your thesis course for the new term (full tuition will be assessed). Defend your thesis on or before the 15th of the first month of the new term. Submit everything by the last working day of the first month: January 31, May 31, or September 30. Your convocation ceremony will be either June (if you completed your program in the fall or winter) or November (if you completed in the summer). GARO will adjust your tuition from the regular fee assessment to the reduced CPFA amount. See the graduate calendar for details: [CPFA](#). Ancillary fees will be assessed for the term. Questions should be addressed to the [GSS](#). If you have not yet paid the [minimum tuition fee assessments](#) for your program, the remainder will be assessed to your tuition account when your program is complete. See the calendar for the minimum number for your program.

- ☐ Fill out a [Request for Oral Examination \(ROE\)](#) once all committee members have agreed that the thesis/dissertation is ready for defense.
- ☐ Submit the completed ROE package to the Grad Program Assistant. The ROE package should contain:
 - Your ROE (filled out to the best of your ability, with signatures of committee members and supervisors if possible). The Grad Program Assistant can obtain remaining signatures if needed. The ROE also has the date, time, room # and Zoom link for the defense. The date, time and location should be confirmed with all committee members before the form is submitted.
 - Your [Thesis Withholding Request](#) (if you intend to [temporarily withhold](#) your thesis.) Note that approval must be obtained before you upload your thesis to UVicSpace.
 - Your Human Research Ethics Approval form (if applicable).
- ☐ Apply to Graduate through [Online Tools](#) before your oral defense. Read the [Graduation Requirements and Deadlines](#) page.
- ☐ Create an account in [UVicSpace](#).
- ☐ Complete the oral exam.

***NOTE1:** The Grad Program Assistant must submit your ROE, thesis, Thesis Withholding Form, and Human Research Ethics Approval to the Faculty of Graduate studies 20 working days prior to the date of the examination for Masters defenses, and 30 working days prior to the exam for PhD defenses). **This means that you should submit the ROE to the Grad Program Assistant a minimum of 25 working days prior to the date of the examination for Masters defenses and 35 working days prior to the exam for PhD defenses. This gives the Grad Program Assistant time to collect missing signatures and make corrections before submitting.**

****NOTE2:** If you defend your thesis or dissertation within the first 15 days of a term, you may be eligible to opt out of paying your full term's tuition and instead, pay the Completion Postponement Fee Adjustment (\$255) along with a full term of ancillary fees. To do this, register in your thesis course for the new term (full tuition will be assessed). Defend your thesis on or before the 15th of the first month of the new term. Submit everything by the last working day of the first month: January 31, May 31, or September 30. Your convocation ceremony will be either June (if you completed your program in the fall or winter) or November (if you completed in the summer). GARO will adjust your tuition from the regular fee assessment to the reduced CPFA amount. See the graduate calendar for details: [CPFA](#). Ancillary fees will be assessed for the term. Questions should be addressed to the [GSS](#). If you have not yet paid the [minimum tuition fee assessments](#) for your program, the remainder will be assessed to your tuition account when your program is complete. See the calendar for the minimum number for your program.

After your Oral Defense

- ☐ Make all corrections as required by your examining committee.
- ☐ Submit the revised/final copy of your thesis/dissertation and required documents prior to 3PM on the last calendar day of the same month.
- ☐ Upload your thesis to the library archives at UVicSpace once you have completed the revisions and your supervisor and committee have approved them.

- ☐ Log into UVicSpace and if you don't see any collections in the "select a collection" drop-down menu, email grad18@uvic.ca and they will attach your account to the correct archival collection.
- ☐ Ensure your thesis format and file name match [the thesis format checklist and sample pages](#).
- ☐ [Submit](#) a .pdf of your final approved thesis to UVicSpace for format review. Wait for an email from Graduate Admissions and Records, either requiring corrections or confirming that your thesis has been approved.

*Have questions about UVicSpace, copyright, creative commons, etc.? Check the [UVicSpace FAQ](#)

The Grad Program Assistant will:

- ☐ Update UVic systems with Committee Members.
- ☐ Ensure FGS has an Examination chair for the student's defense (they will send the Grad Program Assistant an email approximately 10 days before the exam).
- ☐ For MA/MSc defenses, confirm supervisor has chosen the external examiner. For PhD defenses, complete an [Arm's Length Form](#) and submit external examiner approval and their current, full CV to the Program Clerk in the Faculty of Graduate Studies Office of the Dean. (It is best if this is done prior to submitting the ROE)
- ☐ Submit thesis, ROE, Thesis Approval Form and Thesis Withholding Form and Human Research Ethics Approval or Waiver (if applicable) to FGS (fgs@uvic.ca or fgssec2@uvic.ca)
- ☐ Ensure that the Notice of Final Oral Examination/Oral Announcement form has been prepared by FGS.
- ☐ Circulate the Notice of Final Oral Examination to everyone involved and the ES community once the exam date has been finalized.
- ☐ Book a room for the defense and confirm the details with your committee members and the external examiner (if requested by the student or supervisor).
- ☐ Book the Zoom meeting and provide the link to the Zoom meeting to anyone who responds asking for it (if requested by the student or supervisor).
 - Go to: uvic.zoom.us and log in. Go to Schedule a Meeting and fill out the name and time, which you can get from the ROE. You should make the meeting two and a half hours long. Make sure that the supervisor(s) and the student are alternative hosts, so that the Grad Program Assistant does not need to start the Zoom meeting.
- ☐ Prepare a [Thesis Approval form](#) (and send it to student's Supervisory Committee for signatures during the defense).
- ☐ Verify that the Chair's report has been received by FGS.
- ☐ Prepare an announcement one week before the oral exam to send to everyone (BCC all faculty, staff, and the grad student email list). This announcement will include the attached Notice of Oral Announcement document received from FGS.
- ☐ Print a copy of oral exam announcement on coloured paper and post it in the hallway on the glass display case outside the office.
- ☐ Send the thesis Approval Form and Letter of Recommendation to appropriate people for signatures (on the day of the exam).
- ☐ Send signed Thesis Approval Form and Letter of Recommendation to GARO Advisor.
- ☐ Prepare a Letter of Recommendation and send it to student's supervisor and the School director for signatures.

The day of the exam

Be at the exam location a minimum of 15 minutes early, if not earlier, to check computer and room set-up.

The Graduate Program Assistant will have already provided the supervisor with the Thesis/Dissertation Approval form for signatures. The supervisor is responsible to return the completed form to the Graduate Program Assistant.

Suggestions for the defense:

- Bring a hard copy of your thesis (if it's in a binder it may be easier to flip through).
- Keep your presentation to 20 minutes maximum.
- In your presentation, if possible, tell your committee what motivated you to embark on the topic.
- Remember that you are the expert on this piece of research; sometimes questions are just asking you to explain what you did and why, not necessarily disagreeing with what you did or what conclusions you are reaching.
- Feel free to ask a questioner to rephrase the question if you don't understand, or to start your response by confirming what you think they are asking.
- If you don't know the answer, be honest.
- You will probably have to think fast on your feet and there's no way to predict all the questions, so take a deep breath and give yourself time to really think through the answer.
- Practice, practice, practice! We all get nervous, and practicing your presentation not only makes sure that the talk is within the time limit, but it also makes it go much more smoothly.
- It's fine to say you don't know! The mark of a responsible researcher is knowing the limits to which your research can go.

Working backwards, it may be helpful to see the timeline to explain why this process is a lengthy one.

1. Submission of final thesis/dissertation to the Faculty of Graduate Studies is typically before the last day of term (e.g., April 30). This means your thesis has been signed off by all committee members, revised as needed, and approved by the Faculty of Graduate Studies (including e-submission). Formatting issues can be time consuming at this stage. Assume a minimum of two weeks for making corrections following the oral examination.
2. Oral examination. You will need a minimum of twenty working days (MA/MSc and thirty working days (PhD) from the time you submit your revised thesis to the Faculty of Graduate Studies until your defense. Remember that the scheduling of your defense can be a delicate dance of schedules, especially because you need to account for the availability of an external, arms-length examiner (for PhD).
3. Revisions. You can count on a minimum of two to three rounds of revisions: the first one or two with your supervisor and the second or third with your committee. The minimum amount of time your supervisor or committee member(s) need to return comments is two weeks. And you'll need two weeks to complete revisions during each round (sometimes less, sometimes more). The exact schedule will depend on the intensity of revisions and the schedule of your committee. For example, if your committee members are heading into the field, or facing an exceptional compression of duties, you may not be able to get things turned around as fast as you might like. It is important to keep open channels of communication about the timing of your

thesis. The net time for revisions is on the order of two months, which, when added to the other steps, averages out to a term. Thus, if you wish to complete at the end of April, you will need to have a full first draft of your thesis ready by December 31st.

4. New regulations (Summer 2015) by the Faculty of Graduate Studies have created some flexibility about the timing of final submission of theses. If your defense is scheduled in the first two weeks of a term, and your final submission is completed by the end of the first month of that same term, then you are eligible for a one-time Completion Postponement Fee Adjustment (\$255) instead of a full term's tuition. Refer to the Footnote on Page 31 for more information.

Research Dissemination

Conferences and professional presentations.

Presenting your work at conferences, professional seminars, and community gatherings refines your communication skills. The Faculty of Graduate Studies makes [funding available](#) for graduate students to attend conferences. The Graduate Student Society also has [travel support](#) available. If you have a TAsip, you may be eligible for funding from the CUPE 4163 Component 1's [Conference Fund](#).

Publications

Publishing your work in an accessible forum brings your research to a wider audience. A peer-reviewed publication shows potential employers, funding agencies, professional associations, and others that your work has made an important contribution to the field. Publishing your work in a peer-reviewed journal also honours those with whom you've worked: your primary advisor, committee members, research partners, sponsors, and field personnel. Individual faculty members differ in their perspectives on this topic. We recommend that you discuss publication with your advisor at an early stage in your program. We offer the following guidelines as basis for discussion.

- Count on publishing an article or book chapter based on your thesis and make time for doing so. Building this into the end stages of your thesis writing is one of the best ways to make sure that this happens.
- In general, consider co-authoring with members of your advisory committee. Some advisors insist on this, and it's a reasonable request in many cases. The experience of your committee members will make the process easier, and it is often easier to prepare a manuscript when you have several motivated contributors. There are different cultures of co-authorship in the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences, and you will need to discuss this with your advisory committee at an early stage. The default, we believe, should be co-authorship.
- In almost all cases of co-authorship, you would be first author, which confers significant weight in terms of responsibility and credit.

Research Data

Please follow appropriate ethical guidelines respecting the retention and distribution of any research data. If not governed by ethics protocols, all original data remains with your primary advisor. You may take copies with you when you have completed your program to assist in writing papers.

All graduate students should archive their data with the library or an appropriate data repository (find the best practices in your field). This may differ between fields, so please discuss this with your supervisor.

School of Environmental Studies Funding Policies

Funding Implications for Extended Degree Times

Graduate students receive funding from many different sources, including fellowships, scholarships, teaching assistantships, and research assistantships. UVic has policies and guidelines for each of these funding sources, and academic units also have distinct policies for graduate funding. Graduate students should ensure they are aware of the policies governing their funding. It is very important for each graduate student to clarify exactly how their funding will work, where it will come from, and what the supervisory expectations are regarding this funding. It is a good idea for the student and supervisor to have a meeting early in the graduate program to discuss these issues. Learning how to successfully obtain research funding is also a vital part of your graduate education and will add an important dimension to your CV. While your primary advisor can typically help you with funding, including providing support from their research grants, *it is your responsibility* to seek out and apply for additional funding. In discussing mutual expectations with your supervisor, it is a good idea to talk about the specific funding options available to you and come up with a strategy to ensure that you will have the support you need to focus on your studies and research. Graduate students who have questions or concerns about their funding can seek advice and guidance from the Graduate Advisor.

In the School of Environmental Studies, most students are not admitted unless there is significant funding in place to support their graduate work. Many national or provincial awards are available to students with a first-class grade point average (minimum 7.0, but in practice much higher) in the last two years of their undergraduate studies, although eligibility criteria varies. [SSHRC](#) and [NSERC](#) fellowship holders also receive a President's Research Scholarship from the University. A limited number of University Graduate Fellowships are available to applicants with a competitive GPA.

Students are encouraged to apply for external financial support (awards, scholarships, fellowships, research grants, sponsorships). Many of our students are successful with external fellowships, scholarships, and awards. Such funding provides essential financial support and confers prestige on students, but also allows UVic funding to stretch farther. Thus, we encourage all students to seek out external funding such as national SSHRC, NSERC, and [Trudeau Foundation fellowships](#). Extensive lead times are required for these applications. Applications for these awards are typically due in the fall a full year before a planned program start.

The School of Environmental studies is committed to providing **MA/MSc students** with a two-year funding guarantee of \$15,000 per year. In most cases, **PhD students** are guaranteed funding of \$17,500 per year for four years. This can take the form of internal funding (like the Lorene Kennedy PhD award plus School of Environmental Studies funding), external awards (like NSERC and SSHRC) and support from faculty grants. Students are also expected to work with their prospective supervisors to construct a portfolio of funding for their graduate studies from a variety of sources, including external fellowships and scholarships, UVic fellowships, scholarships and awards, bursaries, teaching and research assistantships, and grant support. This often involves significant initiative on the part of the student.

International students should be aware that external funding might be essential for successful completion of their programs. There may be awards available to international students that are not available for domestic students. Typically, we cannot provide sufficient UVic-based funding to completely cover the higher [expenses of international students](#).

The [Dean's Award for Indigenous Graduate](#) Students offers awards of \$6000-\$15,000 for Canadian Aboriginal (First Nations, Métis or Inuit) students registered in full-time graduate studies from September to August. Students must have a first-class average (7.0/A- or higher). Applications are due September 15th. There are other awards offered through the Faculty of Graduate Studies and IACE. To

link to apply for these awards is: <https://www.uvic.ca/graduatestudies/finances/search-funding/index.php>. Students can search by “Indigenous” as a filter type. External Awards for Indigenous students are summarized here: <https://www.uvic.ca/registrar/assets/docs/safa/external-aboriginal.pdf>

UVic also offers a range of scholarships and awards. Some examples of funding that students may be eligible for include:

a) **University of Victoria Donor Awards: Eligibility, and selection criteria for these awards vary.** Several donor awards are only open to ES graduate students. Students are asked to self-nominate for these awards in August.

b) **The Dr. Lorene Kennedy (LK) Awards.** Generous endowments from the wonderful Dr. Lorene Kennedy were used to create several needs-based awards specifically for Environmental Studies students. These include the Lorene Kennedy Research Field Award (to help pay for field research costs) and the Lorene Kennedy Writing-Up Award (for students in the writing-up stage of their theses. The call for applications usually goes out in the spring. Each year, the School also awards several LK Graduate awards for academic excellence in students with financial need. Students are asked to self-nominate for LK Graduate awards in the late summer or early fall.

c) **Faculty Research Grants.** Students may also receive funding in the form of a research assistantship from their supervisor’s research grants or contracts. The decision to provide a research assistantship is made by the supervisor. Limits for the maximum level of student support from a research grant may be set by the funding agency. Normally, expenses incurred as part of the student’s research are paid by a research grant or contract held by the supervisor at their discretion. There is no school support for graduate student research; everything from photocopying to long distance telephone calls must be paid from faculty research grants. In some circumstances, students may also receive offers of contract or research grant support from faculty other than their supervisor, in Environmental Studies or another department. In this case, the supervisor should be consulted to ensure that the student’s research program is not adversely affected.

d) **External Grants.** Outstanding students are also encouraged to apply to Canada’s main research funding agencies for graduate scholarships. These include the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC), Canadian Institute for Health Research (CIHR), and the Michael Smith Foundation. Applications for these awards can be submitted in the year preceding the start of the graduate program or in the first year of a graduate program. Before preparing an application, students should consult with the grant advisors in their department and their supervisor for information on grant deadlines. Note: UVic President’s Research Awards are given to students who have won NSERC, SSHRC or CIHR Scholarships. These are administered by the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

e) **Co-op Program.** The School of Environmental Studies participates in the University’s Graduate Cooperative Education Program, which allows graduate students to work in government or industry as part of their degree studies. The program is open to both masters and doctoral students. Students may participate with the permission of their supervisor (see [Appendix B](#)).

Eligible Years for Guaranteed Funding

UVic has guidelines related to GPA and year of studies that control the amount of fellowship funding that a student can receive. In practice, we endeavour to have each student with a high enough GPA receive some funding from the School. Funding may come from various sources, and the School of Environmental Studies will typically offer one year of funding (at a level set by a combination of available funds, student GPA, student publications, etc.) to MA/MSc students, and up to 3 years of funding for PhD students.

Teaching Assistantships

We encourage all graduate students to take a Teaching Assistantship during their graduate studies. This is an excellent way to learn a bit about teaching while working with a professor for an undergraduate course. You may also find opportunities for presenting your research activities in front of a classroom. If you wish to hone your teaching abilities, there are excellent opportunities available through the [Learning and Teaching Centre's Professional Development Program](#). There are also workshops and events for TAs through [LTSI – Learning and Teaching Support and Innovation](#)

A TAship can also help with funding for your graduate studies. A chronic challenge is sorting out how much time to commit to being a TA. To ensure that you work the number of hours allocated, please work with the instructor to complete a [CUPE hours planning worksheet](#) and a midterm review of this document. Work with the instructor on a time budget for your TAship to set clear guidelines about how much effort you can put in. Following this procedure protects everyone's interests and allows you to plan for a great TA experience. Maintaining open communication with the instructor is also critical. If you're having difficulties meeting a deadline, let the instructor know early. Seek guidance on how to handle difficult matters. Good communication will make a big difference in achieving a rewarding experience. Consult the [CUPE Local 4163 website](#) for information and support as needed. The union exists to ensure you have a fair and reasonable experience.

The current hourly rate for a teaching assistantship is listed on the [UVic Human Resources website](#). TAships may be from 50 to 125 hours, depending on the course. Typically, you will be sent information from the Administrative Officer, indicating what TAships are available, how and when to apply, and how many hours are available in each course. You will indicate your course preferences, including which terms you are available. This will be taken into consideration when offering appointments. Note: appointments are subject to funding availability, course enrolments, and schedule changes.

Note: There are various criteria used to determine eligibility and [appointment priority](#) for TAships. For second-year students, priority is given to those who held a TA position in their first year. This does not mean you must TA in your first year to be eligible, but previously appointed students will receive priority when applying.

For PhD students who have completed candidacy requirements, you may have the opportunity to teach a course. Since this is a significant undertaking, it will depend on your professional aspirations, research commitments, committee advice, and opportunities. Discuss this in detail with your academic advisor. Doctoral students may also wish to enroll in the [Learning and Teaching in Higher Education \(LATHE\) graduate certificate](#). This program includes workshops and guided experience that will improve your knowledge and skills as an instructor.

Appendix A. Communications and interpersonal relations

The Faculty of Graduate Studies has developed a [policy](#) on guidelines for Graduate Supervisor responsibilities. It is beneficial to read and understand this policy to maximize the potential for a successful relationship with your supervisor.

Establishing Expectations

Both students and supervisors have their own expectations about their working relationships. Some students might expect frequent contact to discuss research progress, while others may prefer a more independent approach with less frequent consultations. These expectations can vary widely, and unspoken assumptions can become a major source of stress in graduate school. Take the time to have an open conversation with your advisor about your mutual expectations. One effective approach is to create a document together that outlines these expectations. This can serve as an important reference point throughout your studies.

Recognizing Different Styles

Professional relationships between students and their committee members can vary greatly. Some are formal, while others are more casual. Knowing your own preferred relationship style and communicating it to your supervisor can help in managing expectations. For example, if you find it difficult to receive criticism and your supervisor tends to provide little positive feedback, you might feel discouraged after meetings. Being able to explain your needs can help in creating a more supportive and productive relationship. Remember, the key is that your academic needs are being met and that you are making steady progress.

Interpersonal Communication

Bushe (2010) describes "interpersonal mush" as interactions based on unverified assumptions about each other. This can lead to misunderstandings and strained relationships. Clear and direct communication is crucial to avoid such issues. For example, if a meeting with your advisor leaves you feeling unsupported, discuss this with them directly rather than venting to peers, which can reinforce negative feelings and lead to further misunderstandings. Here are some suggestions to maintain clear communication:

- a) *Direct Communication*: Address concerns directly with your advisor. Express your feelings and seek their perspective.
- b) *Open Mindset*: Be open to feedback and alternative viewpoints. This can help you understand the situation better and find constructive solutions.
- c) *Avoid Gossip*: While it's natural to discuss your experiences with peers, focus on solutions rather than just venting to maintain a supportive environment.

Utilizing Peer Support

While it's important to avoid gossip, seeking support from your fellow graduate students can be valuable. Upper-year students and those within your cohort can provide insight and support, having navigated similar challenges themselves. However, be mindful to discuss concerns constructively and focus on finding solutions rather than dwelling on problems. If you're unsure about how to approach a particular issue, seeking advice from a trusted mentor or the graduate advisor may be more appropriate.

Conflict Resolution

Conflicts can arise in any professional relationship. Here is the general course of action for managing conflicts:

a) *Direct Discussion*: Speak directly with the person involved in the conflict. A clear discussion can often resolve the issue or lead to a reasonable compromise. Focus on your interests rather than entrenched positions.

b) *Seek Advice*: If the conflict remains unresolved, seek advice from the graduate advisor or the School's director. Consultations are confidential, and advisors aim to support your best interests.

c) *Formal Appeals*: In rare cases, more senior intervention may be required. The School's director or a senior University body can assist with academic disputes through formal appeals processes.

Faculty Availability

Faculty members are often very busy, balancing research, teaching, and other professional responsibilities. Here are some tips for making the most of your interactions with them:

a) Find out their preferred meeting style: Drop-in or scheduled? Office meetings or coffee chats?

b) Determine how much lead time they need for scheduling meetings.

c) Be efficient with your time. Organize your questions and thoughts to make the most of your meetings. If extra time is available, use it to catch up.

By being respectful of their time, you can foster a positive and productive relationship with your committee members.

Appendix B. Guidelines for Graduate Supervisor and Student Responsibilities Supplement to Faculty of Graduate Studies

Communication and the exchange of research ideas between a student and their supervisor is fundamental to the success of graduate studies and research. By making explicit the responsibilities of supervisors and students, these guidelines, in addition to those distributed by the [Faculty of Graduate Studies](#), provide the foundation upon which a mutually beneficial supervisor-student partnership can be built. Supervisors and students are encouraged to discuss these guidelines in detail.

The Responsibilities of the Supervisor Include:

- a) Recommending courses for the program of study and appropriate supervisory committee members and discussing potential research topics and preliminary reading material.
- b) Arranging meetings between the supervisory committee and student to facilitate the completion of formal requirements such as thesis proposal review, candidacy oral exam, and thesis/dissertation defense, as well as any other meetings deemed to be necessary.
- c) Working with the student to identify and apply for necessary operating funds and other resources for the research project, such as data, equipment, and access to facilities.
- d) Directing, encouraging, and assisting students with the process of applying for funding sources which cover living expenses, including external grants, scholarships, and work terms, as well as departmental and university funding such as fellowships and awards.
- e) In the event of a conflict with the student, after discussions with the student and the supervisory committee, requesting the Graduate Affairs Committee to reassign the student to another supervisor if this is deemed in the best interest of the student or supervisor.
- f) Informing the student, Graduate Affairs Committee, and any co-supervisors as soon as possible of the dates and duration, of any leave the supervisor is taking.

The Responsibilities of the Student Include:

- a) Recognizing that responsibility for timeliness and quality of the course and research work lies with the student.
- b) Choosing a topic of research, supervisory committee members, and courses for the program of study, in conjunction with, and acceptable to, the supervisor.
- c) Bringing research progress and problems to the attention of the supervisor in a timely manner.
- d) Meeting with the supervisory committee to complete formal requirements such as thesis proposal review, candidacy oral exam, and thesis/dissertation defense, as well as any other meetings deemed to be necessary.
- e) Adhering to all deadline dates and regulations associated with registration, program completion, and graduation requirements as specified in the Graduate Calendar, Faculty of

Graduate Studies, and departmental guidelines, recognizing that, except in compassionate and exceptional circumstances, these deadlines are final and regulations definite.

- f) Producing a thesis/dissertation which is the student's own work and conforms to the required standards.
- g) Recognizing that the supervisor has other educational, research, and service obligations which may preclude immediate response to the student.
- h) Submitting work within agreed deadlines and giving serious consideration and responding to the advice and suggestions made by the supervisor and any co-supervisors.
- i) Actively seeking out available funding sources for research and living expenses, if required, in consultation with the supervisor.
- j) Keeping the supervisor and university informed regarding how the student may be contacted and of extended leaves from campus.
- k) Acknowledging assistance, materials, and data provided by other scholars, including the supervisor, supervisory committee members, fellow students, and technicians as appropriate.
- l) After consultation with the supervisory committee, submitting a request to the Graduate Advisor to replace a member of the supervisory committee should it be deemed in the best interest of the student.

Appendix C. University Guidelines on Conflict of Interest in Student-Faculty Relationships

[Supervisory Practices/Complaint Procedures](#) from Graduate Studies in the UVic calendar:

POLICY MANUAL 1. PREAMBLE

The University of Victoria is committed to ensuring a learning environment in which students have the right to equitable conditions and treatment. Particularly, it is important to ensure fair methods of evaluation and to eliminate any perceptions of bias arising out of personal relationships between teachers and students. At the same time, there should be no unfair restrictions on the educational and employment opportunities of any students or on the reasonable freedom of association and interaction which is part of a healthy learning environment. The following guidelines are intended to balance these objectives.

2. TO WHOM DO THESE GUIDELINES APPLY?

2.1 While all members of the University community should avoid conflicts of interest, these guidelines are drafted specifically for students and teachers.

2.2 Students include anyone enrolled, or applying to be enrolled, in a course or program offered by the University for credit towards a degree or diploma.

2.3 Teachers include anyone responsible for teaching, evaluation, or academic supervision.

3. WHAT IS A CONFLICT OF INTEREST?

3.1 It is neither possible nor desirable to specify all those situations in which there may be a conflict of interest. However, members of the University community are entitled to guidance in this respect.

3.2 A conflict of interest may arise in situations in which there is a reasonable apprehension that a particular relationship between a teacher and a student may confer upon one of them an unfair advantage or subject one of them to an unfair disadvantage. Such relationships include, but are not limited to:

3.2.1 Close family relationships such as those between spouses or spousal equivalents, parents and children, siblings, in-laws, grandparents, and grandchildren;

3.2.2 Amorous relationships;

3.2.3 Relationships between persons whose economic interests are closely interrelated.

3.3 A conflict of interest may arise in any situation where one person in such a relationship is able to make decisions or take actions that affect the other person. Such situations include, but are not limited to:

3.3.1 The decision to admit a student to a program;

3.3.2 The provision of instruction;

3.3.3 The evaluation of a student;

3.3.4 The awarding of prizes, scholarships, financial assistance, and other benefits;

3.3.5 The award of teaching or research assistantships or other remunerative employment, either within the University or using funds administered by the University.

3.4 Even in the absence of a conflict of interest as defined in these guidelines, teachers and students should be aware that relationships between teachers and students involve trust and disparities in power, and may give rise to perceptions of bias, unfair advantage, or unfair treatment.

4. HOW ARE CONFLICTS TO BE DEALT WITH?

4.1 It is the responsibility of Chairs, Directors, and Deans to ensure compliance with this policy.

4.2 It is incumbent upon teachers to avoid situations in which a conflict of interest may arise, and to deal promptly with any conflict of interest that does arise.

4.3 Where a conflict of interest arises, as defined above, the teacher must notify the relevant Chair, Director, or Dean.

4.4 Other persons who apprehend a conflict of interest may also bring the matter to the attention of the appropriate Chair, Director, or Dean.

4.5 Where a conflict of interest may arise, one or more of the following methods should be used to avoid or resolve such conflict:

4.5.1 The teacher should normally decline or terminate a supervisory, teaching, evaluative, or decision-making role in which a conflict of interest arises, unless the Chair, Director, or Dean is of the view that this will create undue hardship to the student.

4.5.2 In situations where the conflict of interest involves teaching, supervision, or evaluation, and where alternative courses or supervision exist that are reasonable and appropriate to the student's program, the student should utilize those alternatives.

4.5.3 Where no reasonable and appropriate alternative exists, the Chair, Director, or Dean shall ensure that a fair and unbiased mechanism of evaluation is put in place. This will normally require that another suitably qualified evaluator review all material submitted for evaluation, review the grades assigned, and report whether those grades are reasonable.

4.5.4 Where third parties are concerned about a perceived conflict of interest, the teacher, Chair, Director, or Dean should consider informing them that the conflict has been dealt with pursuant to these guidelines. Such a step is for the protection of the student, teacher, and the University.

4.6 Any person concerned about a conflict of interest may also initiate an inquiry through the office of the Director, Equity Issues and Assistant to the President. Following such an inquiry, the Director, Equity Issues:

4.6.1 May bring the matter to the attention of the appropriate Chair, Director, or Dean;

4.6.2 May make recommendations for the resolution of the matter;

4.6.3 Shall be notified of the outcome.

4.7 A failure to comply with these guidelines constitutes unprofessional conduct.

5. HOW WILL THESE GUIDELINES BE IMPLEMENTED AND MONITORED?

5.1 In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the guidelines and assess the need for revision, Chairs, Directors, and Deans will file annual reports with the Director, Equity Issues and Assistant to the President for a period of two years. These reports will, while preserving any necessary confidentiality, state the number and nature of conflict cases dealt with over the year, the solutions adopted, continuing difficulties, and suggested revisions to the guidelines and/or procedures.

5.2 Following the review of the reports, the Director, Equity Issues and Assistant to the President will report to Senate and state whether a review committee should be struck.

Appendix D. Graduate Co-op Guidelines and Procedures

Goals of the Graduate Co-op Program in Environmental Studies

- to foster cooperative research with industry and government;
- to attract high quality graduate students;
- to fund graduate students while conducting graduate research;
- to support students in developing and understanding their workplace competencies, thus helping students transition from their academic program to employment.

Guidelines

Graduate co-op should be mutually beneficial to the graduate student, their research program, the supervisor, the department, and [the co-op program](#).

[Graduate co-op](#) is available to all graduate students in Environmental Studies (MA/ MSc, PhD, and Interdisciplinary) irrespective of grade point average, if consent has been given by the supervisor or supervisory committee. Details about the co-op program can be found on the Graduate Co-op website, listed above.

Co-op terms can be planned once graduate students have satisfactorily completed their research proposals. The first graduate work term must precede completion of program's academic requirements, and all work terms must be completed prior to completion of degree requirements. Graduate students close to completion of their research should be encouraged to complete their thesis instead of accepting graduate co-op jobs. Masters students are required to complete 2 work terms for their co-op designation, while PhD students are required to complete 3 work terms. Work terms typically last for four months and in some cases two work terms can be done back-to-back, as long as students complete the requirements for each work term. This is needed to receive credit for two work terms.

Graduate co-op employment opportunities must be arranged in consultation with the co-op coordinator. Graduate students may be allowed to take up to four work terms as long as consent has been given by the co-op coordinator and the supervisor and the supervisory committee have been consulted. To earn the co-op designation on their degree, graduate students must take a minimum of two 4- month work terms at the masters and three 4-month work terms at the PhD level to qualify for co-op recognition on their transcript. Graduate students are discouraged from doing more than four graduate work terms. Graduate co-op experience will not count towards graduate course credits.

While registered for a co-op term, graduate students have full-time student status. Students who enrol in the co-op work terms will have additional months added to the normal completion time of their degree equal to the time registered in co-op work terms, to a maximum of 12 months.

Students are charged a co-op program fee for each term in which they are registered in a work term. This is in addition to tuition fees and student fees and is due the first month of each work term.

Procedures

Faculty are encouraged to discuss possible co-op and related funding opportunities for their existing and incoming graduate students with the co-op coordinator.

Graduate students must consult with, and obtain written approval from, their academic supervisor prior to applying to the graduate co-op program. Students should also meet with the co-op coordinator to identify and discuss possible employers and job recruiting.

To qualify as a co-op work term, job descriptions, job offers, work term conditions, and contractual details must be managed by the co-op coordinator.

As part of each co-op term, graduate students are required to submit a work term report which will be marked by a faculty member. Where necessary, the report must be revised until acceptable as satisfactory.

Grievances related to co-op work terms will be handled by organizing meetings between the student, the work supervisor, and the co-op coordinator. Where necessary, the next step will be to involve the Graduate Advisor, Director, and supervisory committee. Beyond this, the usual grievance procedure for graduate students will take place.

Appendix E. PhD Candidacy Requirements

Updated: July 2021

To advance to candidacy, PhD students in the School of Environmental Studies must: 1) finish all required coursework (ES 600, 601, 602, 693), 2) complete a comprehensive exam based on a reading list and two candidacy papers, and 3) prepare a dissertation proposal and present it to their supervisory committee for approval. The exam and proposal are to be completed as two separate, but complementary processes (see below).

Comprehensive Exam

The purpose of the comprehensive examination is to test the student's understanding of material considered essential to their PhD and to assess the student's competence to do research that will culminate in the PhD dissertation. In some instances, comprehensive exam questions will be more broadly scoped to ensure that students have the knowledge base required for teaching in one or more subfields. Normally the exam will be completed within the first 12-18 months of the student's program.

Step 1. Consult with the supervisory committee to prepare a reading list, which covers the literature critical to the student's discipline and research area.

In consultation with their primary supervisor and committee, PhD students will prepare a draft reading list that covers the broad scope of the dissertation topic. This list should be presented to the student's supervisory committee by their third term of study. Subsequently, this reading list will be refined by the committee, in discussion with the student. A final reading list should be approved by the committee and student no later than the fourth term of study. Students are encouraged to begin their reading as soon as possible.

Step 2. Prepare two major papers (candidacy papers) drawing on the reading list plus the wider literature not included on the list.

Once the reading list has been finalized, the supervisory committee will provide the student with questions to be explored in two major papers (please see note below about scheduling the written and oral exam). The student will have 25 working days for writing. The committee will also provide clear guidelines regarding length, style, and formatting. For example, a supervisory committee might ask a student to respond to each question by providing a synthesis of the literature written as 4,000-5,000 words review paper that includes summary tables and figures and can cite an unlimited number of references. A range of other formats are also possible but must be described in detail by the committee. In some cases, a student may be given a list of multiple topics or questions from which they will choose two. During the candidacy exam period, communication between the student and the committee must be limited. Students can seek clarification on the exam questions and formatting and style guidelines but are not permitted to request advice or guidance on how to prepare their answers.

Step 3. Sit for a two hour (maximum) oral examination focussed on the major papers and comprehensive reading list. This exam must take place within two weeks of the submitting the exam papers.

Prior to sending the topics to the student to begin writing, the supervisory committee will contact the Graduate Advisor and Graduate Program Assistant to arrange a date, book a

room, and secure a chair for the oral exam. The oral exam will last a maximum of two hours and should take place approximately seven weeks after the questions have been delivered to the student. Once an exam date and chair have been arranged, the student will have 25 working days to complete and submit their papers. The student's supervisory committee will have approximately ten working days to assess the papers prior to the oral exam. Committee members who have serious doubts about the acceptability of the papers submitted should contact the student's primary supervisor and the Graduate Advisor immediately. In such cases, it may be possible to delay the exam until any problems are resolved.

The oral examination is not a public event and will only be attended by the student, their supervisory committee, and a chair. The chair will be a member of the Faculty of Graduate Studies who is not on the supervisory committee. In most cases, the chair will also be from the School of Environmental Studies. If the student or any member of the supervisory committee has concerns about the neutrality of the process, they should contact the Graduate Advisor who will arrange for member of the Faculty of Graduate Studies from outside the school to chair the exam.

Students will begin the oral exam by making a 15-20 minute presentation summarizing their written answers to the questions posed by the supervisory committee. This presentation will be followed by two rounds of questions from the supervisory committee. The purpose of these questions is to assess the student's proficiency in the oral examination, and to test their knowledge of the literature central to their field. During the question period, students will be asked to defend and expand on their written answers. The committee can also ask questions about the material in the reading list that is not covered in the student's response to the exam questions (but not literature outside the reading list).

The evaluation framework for the exam papers is similar to the one used for thesis and dissertation defenses, which includes the following outcomes: 1) *acceptable as is*, 2) *acceptable with minor revisions*, 3) *acceptable with major revisions*, or 4) *unacceptable*. If all supervisory committee members find the two candidacy papers to be acceptable (without or after revision), the student will have passed that part of the candidacy exam. The oral exam will be evaluated separately on a pass/fail basis.

If the supervisory committee determines that any of the candidacy papers require revision, the following procedure will be followed. The candidacy paper needing revision will be returned to the student with a description of the changes required, and the student will have a defined time period (no more than six weeks) to re-submit their revised paper, subject to the decision of the supervisory committee and the regulations of the Faculty of Graduate Studies. If the revised paper is deemed unacceptable, or the student does not pass the oral defense, the supervisory committee will submit a written report to the Graduate Advisor, stating that the student has one final attempt to revise the paper to the committee's satisfaction, to re-sit the oral defense, or recommending that the student not continue in the program.

Dissertation Proposal

This step in the candidacy process is meant to ensure that students have a viable plan for their research project and that their supervisory committee has approved this plan.

Step 1. Prepare a dissertation proposal and submit it to the supervisory committee for review and approval.

All students will prepare a dissertation proposal outlining the research that they will conduct for their PhD. In their dissertation proposal, students must describe their research questions, methods and methodological approaches, and the anticipated significance of their research. It is recommended that students also include a timeline and a budget in their proposal. Dissertation proposals should also include a review of the literature relevant to the research topic. In most cases PhD proposals will be between 5000 and 7500 words + references.

Step 2. Once students have submitted their proposal, they must arrange a regular committee meeting to present and discuss it with their supervisory committee. The supervisory committee will have a minimum of 10 and up to 20 working days to review the proposal prior to the committee meeting to discuss it. The dissertation proposal can be completed no later than twenty months from the start of their program.

If major revisions are required to the proposal, students will make the required changes, and resubmit the proposal to their supervisory committee for approval. When determining if a dissertation proposal is acceptable, supervisory committee members should take it under consideration that PhD research proposals are intended to be living documents that are explored at each committee meeting. At the discretion of the supervisory committee, revisions can be approved during a follow-up meeting or by email. If the proposal is subject to minor revisions, the primary supervisor will assume the responsibility for ensuring that changes are completed. Once all supervisory committee members find the proposal to be acceptable, the student will have passed that part of the candidacy exam.

Appendix F: Important Acronyms

[CAPP Report](#): Curriculum, Advising and Program Planning report

CUPE: Canadian Union of Public Employees

DTB: David Turpin Building

EDI: Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

[English Language Centre \(ELC\)](#)

ES: Environmental Studies

FGS: Faculty of Graduate Studies

GARO: Graduate Admissions and Records Office

Group ENVI: Environmental Studies Graduate Student Body

GPA: Grade Point Average

HREB: Human Research Ethics Board

[IACE: Indigenous Academic Community Engagement](#)

LK Awards: the Dr. Lorene Kennedy Awards

MA: Master of Arts

MSc: Master of Science

NSERC: National Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada

PhD: Doctorate of Philosophy

RA: Research Assistant

RNS: Restoration of Natural Systems programs offered by the School of Environmental Studies in Ecological Restoration

ROE: Request for Oral Examination form

SES: School of Environmental Studies

SSHRC: Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada

STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

TA: Teaching Assistant

UVic: The University of Victoria

UVicSpace: The institutional repository where all approved theses and dissertations are held

Vikes: University of Victoria's Athletics program.

[WHMIS: Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System](#)