

University of Victoria School of Environmental Studies Graduate Handbook



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WELCOME TO THE SCHOOL OF ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES!

Welcome to graduate studies in the [School of Environmental Studies at UVic](#)! We have a dynamic group of researchers doing work towards positive change across a breadth of disciplines, centered around ecology, ethnoecology, and political ecology. Our graduate program consists of MA/MSc students and PhD students. The School also hosts post-docs (post-doctoral researchers who have completed their PhDs but are doing further research training). Our program is of modest size (up to about 50 graduate students and post-docs at any one time), but has historically produced excellent research, discoveries, and a tight-knit grad community.

We are spread across three locations: the A and B wings of the [David Turpin Building](#) (where you will find the School's main office in DTB B43), and [University House 4](#).

Once you have been admitted to the ES Graduate Program, the Graduate Programs Administrator will add you to the ES Current Grad Students listserv.

This listserv es-current-grad-students@lists.uvic.ca will include information from the Graduate Programs Administrator, notices from around campus (including available Teaching Assistantships, funding opportunities, events, seminars of interest, etc.). You can also use this listserv to communicate with your fellow graduate students in ES on a number of topics like those above, as well as for things like housing, selling/buying furniture, cars, etc.

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

Green Grads listserv (<https://lists.uvic.ca/mailman/listinfo/green-grads>) 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, TAing, and work opportunities.

Ecology @ UVic listserv (<https://lists.uvic.ca/mailman/listinfo/ecology>). 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.

There are numerous seminar series 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-

<https://www.uvic.ca/science/biology/people/news/seminars/index.php> and <https://www.uvic.ca/socialsciences/geography/research/lecture/index.php>).

The School of Environmental Studies has a seminar series on Wednesday morning (11:30-12:50): all graduate students are expected to attend (as are all members of the ES community). School of Environmental Studies at UVic [ES Seminars Series](#) tab. The seminar series is also open to the general public.

Group ENVI is the name of the ES graduate student body, which includes Masters and PhD students currently in the program. It was created in 2006 to get all of the hard-working grad 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 grad 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 themes parties, documentary movie screenings, an ecology research derby, a clothing swap, R workshops, potlucks/socials, bike to work week, and inner-tube water polo tournaments.

Finally, ES maintains a Jobs in Environmental Studies and Ecology @ UVic Facebook site. Look it up and join on [Facebook](#).

Visit [Support for Newly Accepted Students](#) for campus resources.

Visit [Faculty of Graduate Studies FAQ](#) for additional graduate information.



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YOUR HOME in the SCHOOL of ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

Desk Space and Keys

When you arrive in ES, you will be assigned desk space in your supervisor's research lab or in a graduate room until you complete your degree requirements? There is a shared office space for when students are serving as Teaching Assistants and shared desk space in that office will be available to consult with students during office hours.

Students with permanent desks or authorized seating arrangements will be issued key(s) for graduate rooms and entrance to the building by the *Undergraduate Program Assistant and Reception* esoffice@uvic.ca after paying a refundable deposit (\$50). Other keys will be issued on an individual basis. 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), keys must be returned to the *Undergraduate Program Assistant* unless authorized by the student's Supervisor. Key deposits will be refunded only after ALL school keys have been returned.

Technical Services

All **teaching** and **audio-visual equipment** (e.g., LCD projectors, laptops, cameras) is available in the School general office (Turpin B243). Equipment is to be signed out with the *Undergraduate Program Assistant*.

Field equipment like GPS units, compasses, secateurs, gloves, quadrats, survey instruments, etc., can be signed out by students from Ryan Hilperts (ryzome@uvic.ca). Equipment needed by faculty or students in scheduled classes will be given priority.

Mail

Students will be assigned a mailbox in the ES mail room (Turpin B241) or at UH4.

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WHEN YOU ARRIVE, YOU MAY WANT TO KNOW...

WHO'S WHO IN ES GRADUATE STUDIES

Within the School

Supervisor

The person who acts as the student's principal advisor on all matters pertaining to the graduate program as outlined in this document and the UVic official calendar.

Co-Supervisor (not mandatory)

A faculty member sharing supervisory duties on matters related to the student's graduate program. One Co-Supervisor must be a regular full-time faculty member and the other can be an adjunct faculty member.

Supervisory Committee

Master's (MA/MSc programs): a committee of at least two faculty members, normally from the home academic unit; Doctoral (PhD program): at least three faculty members (one from outside the School of Environmental Studies) who are responsible for guiding the research and academic progress of the student. Either the Supervisor or the regular faculty Co-Supervisor will chair Supervisory Committee meetings. All members of the Supervisory Committee must be members of the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

Graduate Administrator

The keeper of all records, forms, and pertinent information on how to complete one's program. The Grad Administrator is your Number 1 Go-To for all your graduate administration needs: they know the protocols, procedures, and mazes of the UVic graduate program inside-out and will be a huge resource for you in your graduate 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 how to submit your thesis for a defense), the Grad Administrator is your first stop: they are located in DTB B243 or email the current Graduate Administrator, at esgradsec@uvic.ca. Periodic reminders about important dates, funding, and other important details. Read all emails from the Graduate Administrator!

Important: A COPY OF ALL CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES MUST BE GIVEN TO THE GRADUATE ADMINISTRATOR FOR A STUDENT'S FILE (e.g., program extensions, grade changes, directed studies, course changes).

Graduate Advisor

A regular faculty member, serving for a 3 to 5 year term, responsible 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. Trevor Lantz, in DTB B254, and can be reached at esgrad@uvic.ca.

Graduate Committee

The School of Environmental Studies committee that consists of the Graduate Advisor and a minimum of two additional regular faculty members. 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 program.

Graduate Student rep

A graduate student who represents graduate students at School meetings. She/he acts as a spokesperson and liaison between graduate students, the School, and 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.

Director of the School of Environmental Studies

The chief administrative officer of the School. All recommendations for acceptance, transfers, and deviations from normal practice must be supported by the Director, who can be contacted at ses@uvic.ca.

External to the School

Dean of Graduate Studies

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

Function as liaison 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 his or her absence, as well as assist the Dean with student appeals and the administration of fellowships and scholarships.

Director of Graduate Admissions and Records

Responsible for admissions and all records pertaining to Graduate Studies.

In general, if you feel you need help with what you perceive as these people's responsibilities, talk to the ES Grad Advisor or Grad Administrator first: they can help smooth your way through any administrative hurdles.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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

Title	Name	Office	Telephone	e-mail
Director	Dr. Brian Starzomski	DTB B243b	250-472-5050	ses@uvic.ca
Graduate Advisor	Dr. Trevor Lantz	DTB B254	250-853-3566	esgrad@uvic.ca
Graduate Secretary	Grad Prog Asst	DTB B243	250-472-5516	esgradsec@uvic.ca
Co-op Advisor	Co-op Coordinator	COR B136	250-721-7358	ssco@uvic.ca
GSS Student representative	ES Graduate student	Halpern Centre	250-472-4543	gssoffice@uvic.ca
Graduate Committee Member	Dr. John Volpe	DTB B156	250-472-4298	jpv@uvic.ca
Graduate Committee Member	Dr. Deborah Curran	FRA 218	250-853-3105	dlc@uvic.ca

RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE SUPERVISORY RELATIONSHIP

[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 given in the online calendar and in policy documents found on 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.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The MA and MSc degree programs are similar in overall program requirements but will vary in the type of elective courses and thesis research. The PhD program is a research-focused degree with different course requirements. The specific requirements of each degree are provided in the sections that follow.

The graduate program is primarily research based and the final outcome of the degree is the presentation and defense of a thesis. All students are required to attend a 3-day field camp at the beginning of their program (early September) as part of ES 500/600.

There is no formal residency requirement. However, in practice all students should be in residence in their first term of study, and residency during the first year is encouraged.

The following courses are available for graduate students. Note that not all courses are offered in all years.

ES 500 Perspectives on Environmental Theories, Methods and Skills I
ES 501 Perspectives on Environmental Theories, Methods and Skills II
ES 503 MA/MSc Research Colloquium
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
ES 593 Thesis Proposal Preparation
ES 599 MA, MSc Thesis
ES 600 Advanced Perspectives on Environmental Theories, Methods and Skills I
ES 601 Advanced Perspectives on Environmental Theories, Methods and Skills II
ES 603 PhD Research Colloquium
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
ES 693 PhD Candidacy Examination
ES 699 PhD Dissertation

[ES Graduate Courses](#)

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MASTER OF ARTS (MA), MASTER OF SCIENCE (MSc)

An **MA/MSc** student must successfully complete 18 units of course study. Core and elective courses contribute 10.5 units toward the 18-unit minimum degree requirement, 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

At least 3.0 elective units to 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 stipulate additional courses to be taken.

All students are required to attend a 3-day field camp at the beginning of their program (early September) as part of ES 500.

The MA/MSc program is a research degree that nominally lasts for 24 months. In practice, the degree has typically taken about 30 months for many. The maximum time allowed is 60 months.

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: 10.5 units
- Meeting of supervisory committee: initial meeting (in first year) and then annually until completion
- Graduate proposal presentation: at the end of the second semester
- Thesis submission and defense: watch for emails regarding deadlines. There are further details on how best to navigate this below.

Consequences of going over two years in the MSc program -- FUNDING

In the School of Environmental Studies, we aim to provide MA/MSc students with a GPA greater than 7.0 a one-year funding guarantee of \$17,500. These funds can come from internal awards and fellowships, supervisor research grants, and external awards, among other sources. When students bring external awards (like NSERC, SSHRC, etc.), we will typically guarantee 2 years of funding (more details on funding can be found below). Support after this point depends on the goodwill of the supervisor, or more to the point, the ability of the supervisor to continue supporting the student. The level of support (if any) beyond two years is a matter to be discussed between supervisor and student. As the degree exceeds the expected time of completion, students may lose eligibility for scholarship and fellowships and may drop in priority for other forms of support including TAs and Graduate Awards.

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 Master degree.) Environmental Studies 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

Elective courses may be taken at the discretion of the student and committee.

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

- 21 units dissertation (ES699)

All students are required to attend a three-day field camp at the beginning of their program (early September) as part of ES 600.

There is no guaranteed funding level set for PhD students, though we will not admit PhD applicants without a funding agreement in place for three years. This can take the form of internal funding (like the Lorene Kennedy PhD award + School of Environmental Studies funding) or external awards (like NSERC and SSHRC), or a combination leading to three years of funding.

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 first year then, at least annually until completion
- PhD proposal presentation: end of 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 final year watch for emails regarding deadlines

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SUPERVISOR

Determining your supervisor

Your supervisor, or 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 you'll have during graduate school. You will want to have discussions early in your grad 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?
- Will you support my travel to conferences?
- Who will be authors on publications from my graduate work?
- How often do lab meetings occur?
- How will I fund my grad studies, especially if they go beyond 24 (or in the case of PhD students 36 or 48) months?

Websites like [Research and 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.

SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE

Nominating your supervisory committee

A supervisory committee should be in place within the first two semesters (8 months) of your arrival at UVic. 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. All committee members must also be members of the Faculty of Graduate Studies. For questions regarding FGS membership, please contact the Graduate Program Secretary at esgradsec@uvic.ca.

EXPECTED MEETING FREQUENCY

With your supervisor

The schedule of meetings with your supervisor will be worked out 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 a 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.

With your Supervisory Committee

There should be at least one meeting per year with your supervisory committee.

EXPECTED TURNAROUND TIME OF ANNOTATED THESIS, DISSERTATION, OR PAPER

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

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 available at the [link found here](#).

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 here](#).

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 Master's and with agreement of the student's supervisory committee. The committee must meet to give approval. Transfers must occur at the beginning of a term and PhD and the **candidacy process should occur within 8 months (2 terms) of transfer.**

Fee installments paid towards the minimum program fee for the master's program will be applied towards the minimum fee requirement for the PhD program.

Please contact the [Graduate Secretary](#) for more information on how to do this.

For MA/MSc → PhD transfer students the university requires a minimum of 45 units to be completed for a PhD degree (without completing MA/MSc). 37.5 units dissertation (ES699)

PHD CANDIDACY EXAMINATION PROTOCOLS

To advance to candidacy, students, in consultation with their supervisory committee, will normally prepare a comprehensive reading list, a dissertation proposal, and two major papers (on topics relevant to the PhD research field and decided on by the committee with a focus on topics explored in the reading list). They will then sit for an oral examination related to the proposal and major papers.

Students will prepare and present to their supervisory committee an initial reading list, covering the broad scope of the dissertation topic, typically no later than the end of the third term, but preferably in the first two terms of the start of their program. The reading list will then be refined by their committee in discussion with the students. A final reading list will be finalized within one month. In all cases, this will occur no later than the end of the third term of study.

All students will prepare a dissertation proposal that will be regularly explored in committee meetings. The proposal will include, among other elements, an extended review of relevant research-specific topics, and should be in the range of 20 to 35 pages. The proposal is intended to be a living document that is explored in each committee meeting, and is then evaluated according to the following criteria: *acceptable as is*, *acceptable with minor revisions*, *acceptable with major revisions*, or *unacceptable*. If all of the committee members find the proposal to be acceptable (without or after revision), the student will have passed that particular part of the candidacy exam. It is intended that the proposal will be completed within the first 12-16 months of the program to ensure that students can move into the research phase of the PhD, the main component of the dissertation process.

Two candidacy papers will be prepared. The examining committee, comprising the student's supervisory committee, will assess these within two weeks of completion. The evaluation framework is analogous to that for theses and dissertations: *acceptable as is*, *acceptable with minor revisions*, *acceptable with major revisions*, or *unacceptable*. If all of the committee members find the two candidacy papers to be acceptable (without or after revision), the student will have passed that particular part of the candidacy exam.

If any of the candidacy papers requires revision, the following procedure will be followed:

The candidacy paper needing revision will be returned to the student with the comments of the committee members. The student will have a defined time period of no more than 6 weeks to re-submit his/her revised paper, subject to the decision of the dissertation committee and the regulations of the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

If the revised paper is deemed unacceptable, the examining committee will make a written report, submitted to the Environmental Studies Graduate Advisor, either stating that the student has one final attempt to revise the paper to the committee's satisfaction, or recommending that the student not continue in the program.

The student's dissertation research proposal and the topics explored in the list of readings and papers will be defended orally as the comprehensive examination (described above). The purpose of the comprehensive examination is to test the student's understanding of material considered essential to completion of a PhD and the student's competence to do research that will culminate in the PhD dissertation. Students will make a brief 15-20 minute presentation on their proposal topic and then answer questions posed by the examining committee, on theory, method, and significance of the proposed research. The oral defense will also be evaluated on a pass/fail basis. The oral examination committee will comprise the student's PhD committee, with the addition of a chair from FGS. One non-committee School of Environmental Studies faculty member will be present as chair. If the first oral is exam is

deemed a failure, a second may be scheduled. If that, too, is a failure, the committee may agree to allow the student to finish a MA/MSc degree, or withdraw from the program.

Students will advance to candidacy after they have successfully completed their proposal and passed a comprehensive examination.

To reach candidacy, the student must complete the following by the noted dates. Note that all judging of work is done by dissertation committee:

- Required courses (ES 600, 601, 603, 693) [end of 2nd year]
- comprehensive reading list in consultation with dissertation committee [preferably by end of 1st year]
- PhD proposal [preferably by end of 1st year]

- 2 major papers [end of 2nd year]
- Comprehensive oral exam on the contents of proposal and major paper (judged by the dissertation committee members as the examining committee) [end of 2nd year] -
- Revisions to proposal and major papers (when necessary) [beginning of 3rd year]

HUMAN SUBJECTS REVIEW COMMITTEE

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 prior to undertaking the study. Application forms are available from the [office of Research Administration](#). A request for approval from this committee should normally be made prior to the proposal defence.

THESIS PROPOSAL OUTLINE (ONE SUGGESTED FORMAT)

How to format the proposal:

Title Page

Introduction

This section should contain a clear statement of the scope and objectives of the research. The questions posed by the researcher should be related to the theoretical context from which they arose. A statement on the scientific, social, and practical significance of the research should also be included.

Literature Review

The literature review must clearly explain the theoretical context of the problem under investigation and how it has been studied by others. Relevant literature should be cited in the process of presenting the underlying theoretical and methodological rationale for the research. This means citing key studies and emphasizing major findings rather than trying to report every study available on the problem.

Question

Clearly state your question(s) (and hypotheses & predictions if you have them).

Methodology

This section should clearly state how the objectives will be achieved. The first task is to indicate what type of method and analysis you are proposing: experiment, survey, field research, available data analysis, critical or humanistic approaches. The type of study will influence the design and procedural issues that must be addressed.

For example:

- In the case of experiments, the key issues include the type of experimental design and procedures of implementation. Be very clear about EXACTLY what your question is.
- In surveys, the type of survey instrument, its length, and the sampling design.
- In field research, the nature of the setting.
- In research using available data, the sources of data and their completeness.

Timetable

An outline of the research agenda and how you envision completing your thesis. It is to your benefit to be as realistic as possible.

Preliminary Table of Contents

A provisional table of contents that lists the anticipated outline of chapters that will be included in the thesis/dissertation. Think about the titles of each of your 2 chapters for an MA/MSc, your 4 chapters for a PhD.

References

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. As your research progresses, you will no doubt acquire other references.



THESIS/DISSERTATION PREPARATION AND DEFENSE

Both MA/MSc theses and PhD dissertations are defended orally and in public. The examining committee for all oral defenses (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 Secretary can help you arrange a video conference. More information can be found at the [Faculty of Graduate Studies website](#).

EIGHT EASY STEPS TO THESIS COMPLETION

At the beginning of each term, the Grad Administrator sends out an email providing information about defending, including deadlines, guidelines, procedures, etc. From start to finish, the defending process is a lengthy one. Before defense, MSc students must allow at least 6 weeks and PhD students must allow at least 8 weeks from the time the supervisor allows the thesis/dissertation to go to the Supervisory Committee.

1. 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 available at [this link](#). Note that this link may be updated over time and you should always check for the most up-to-date FGS guidelines.

2. Notify the Graduate Administrator of your intention to defend.
3. Check the deadlines for:
 - Convocation – Fall or Spring Ceremony
 - [Deadlines for application to graduate](#)

You must apply to graduate once the defense process has been started.

4. When distributing your thesis/dissertation to your committee, check their availability for the period during which you intend to defend. On the date you distribute your thesis, email the Grad Administrator and attach a copy of your title page. **This starts the “defense clock” ticking.**
5. **Request for Oral Examination form (ROE).** While your committee is reviewing your thesis/dissertation, Grad Administrator will prepare the ROE form. This form must be completely filled in before submission of your thesis to Graduate Studies. You will need the signatures of your committee members and the Graduate Advisor, your defense date/time, the room booking for your defense, and your external examiner’s information (Grad Administrator will work with your supervisor to confirm this information; you should NOT take part in this process).

When all required information is confirmed and signatures are complete, submit the form to the Grad Admin, who reviews all committee members' memberships, student course requirements, human ethics etc.

Grad Admin will submit the completed ROE directly to FGS. At that time, you will be registered in GS 599/699 and can submit the examination version of your thesis/dissertation to FGS. This is the final for examination. No changes can be made prior to your exam date.

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 this option must be approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies or designate prior to the expiry date. In some case, 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.

6) PhD students – arrange your 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. Contact Seminar Coordinator to arrange a seminar.

7) 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 Secretary 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 Secretary.

8) **Defend!** 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 them 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 of the questions, so take a deep breath and give yourself time to really think through the answer.
- Practice, practice, practice! Students tend to be 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.



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SCHOOL OF ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES FUNDING POLICIES

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 very good idea for the student and supervisor to have a meeting early in the graduate program to discuss these issues.

Graduate students who have questions or concerns about their funding can seek advice and guidance from the Graduate Advisor (Dr. Trevor Lantz as of July 1, 2019) and/or Faculty of Graduate Studies.

In the School of Environmental Studies students are not admitted unless there is significant funding in place to support their graduate work. National or Provincial awards are available to those with a first-class grade point average (minimum 7.0 but in practice much higher) in the last two years of undergraduate studies. Eligibility criteria vary with agency. Currently national fellowship holders receive an additional award from the university. A limited number of University Graduate Fellowships are available to applicants with a GPA over 7.5.

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, typically September -November in the year prior to commencing studies.

Students work with 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, grant support, and personal finances. An offer of financial support typically accompanies an admissions offer. The amount of the award varies and amounts can be higher depending on external funding (including top-up awards), and teaching and research assistantships. Our aim is to offer reasonable and competitive offers with leading universities in Canada, and our emphasis is on strong recruitment offers for the first year of study. Students are encouraged to work with their supervisor on ensuring funding throughout their program, and 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 Canadian students. Typically, we cannot provide sufficient UVic-based funding to cover the [expenses of international students](#).

In the School of Environmental Studies, we aim to provide MA/MSc students with a GPA greater than 7.0 a one-year funding guarantee of \$17,500. When students bring

external awards (like NSERC, SSHRC, etc.), we will guarantee two years of funding. There is no guaranteed funding level set for PhD students, though we will not admit PhD applicants without a funding agreement in place for three years. This can take the form of internal funding (like the Lorene Kennedy PhD award + School of Environmental Studies funding) or external awards (like NSERC and SSHRC), or a combination leading to three years of funding.

Some examples of funding that students may be eligible for:

a) **UVic Graduate Fellowships (\$10,000-\$18,000 per year, minimum 7.0 or equivalent GPA required):** The Faculty of Graduate Studies awards entrance fellowships for outstanding students. The amount of funding is variable. To be eligible for these awards, a minimum GPA of 7.0 (on the UVic scale) over the last 30 units of undergraduate work (for Master's applicants) or Master's work (for PhD applicants) is necessary. All students with GPAs >7.0 are considered for these fellowships, but they are highly competitive and an A average (GPA of 8.0 on the UVic scale) or higher is normally required to win these awards in Environmental Studies. Fellowships are usually for one year, and non-renewable.

UVic also offers a range of scholarships and awards. Information [can be found here](#).

b) **UVic Graduate Entrance Awards (\$1,000-\$10,000 per year, minimum 7.0 GPA required; UVic Graduate Awards: \$1,000-\$5,000 per semester, minimum 6.5 GPA required):** The School offers a limited number of merit-based Graduate Entrance Awards to exceptional graduate students. The amount of Graduate Award funding distributed to each student is determined by departmental policy (see **Appendix A**).

c) **School of Environmental Studies Scholarships:** A number of scholarships are only open to [ES graduate students](#). Nomination forms are available from the Graduate Administrator, and the deadline for the Graduate Advisor to receive the completed nomination forms is **early September**, with notification of awards usually in November. All of these scholarships are based on high GPA standing and qualifications specific to each award (minimum GPA of 7.0).

d) **The Dr. Lorene Kennedy (LK) Awards:** Through a generous endowment from the wonderful Dr. Lorene Kennedy, several awards are available including the Lorene Kennedy Research Field Award (to help pay for field research costs: call for applications usually goes out in the Spring) and the Lorene Kennedy Writing-Up Award (for students in the writing-up stage of their theses; call for applications usually goes out in the Spring). Each year, the School also awards: 1) a competitive PhD-level award called the LK PhD Award, given to one or more outstanding incoming PhD students each year, and a LK Graduate award for academic excellence with financial need.

d) **Faculty Research Grants:** Students may also receive funding in the form of a research assistantship from their Supervisor's research grants or through 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.

*****Important***** 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 the department or elsewhere. In this case, the Supervisor should be consulted to ensure that the student's research program is not adversely affected.

e) 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. These can be applied for in the year preceding the start of the graduate program or in the first year. Before preparing an application, students should consult with the relevant grant advisors in the department and their Supervisor for information on grant deadlines.

As of 2019 there are also British Columbia Graduate Scholarships available. More information on these will be available as the program matures.

f) 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 Master's 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, and the responsibilities vary widely. A TAship can also help with funding for your graduate studies.

The Hourly rate for a teaching assistantship (as of September 1, 2021) is \$27.65 + 4% vacation. TAships may be from 50 to 125 hours, depending on the course. Typically, you will be sent information from the ES School Administrator, 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, include which terms you are available, and 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 for TAships. If you do not TA in your first year in the School of Environmental Studies and you wish to TA in your second year, the priority is given to graduate students previously appointed as incoming students, and who will be in their 2nd year of the Master's program. This does not mean you must TA in your first year, just that if you decide to TA in your second year, previously appointed second year students will receive priority when applying.

Summary of Duties and Responsibilities

Under supervision of the course instructor, performs some or all of the following duties: Grading exams and quizzes, marking papers, checking homework, preparing exams/quizzes, assisting and/or conducting labs and tutorials, preparing grades, assisting with field trips, maintaining electronic teaching links, providing student consultation at established hours, and in-class assistance. Responsibilities vary widely: in some cases, you will work very closely with the professor, in others the professor will expect you to lead in the instruction you are asked to do (typically responsibilities like marking, leading tutorials, etc.).

Required Qualifications and Experience

Applicants should possess an undergraduate degree in a field related to environmental studies or environmental science; familiarity with the subject matter of the course is an asset.

Other criteria considered include the career and/or pedagogical value a particular position will provide to the graduate/undergraduate student, the student's preferences, and other sources of graduate student financial support being received. The Appointment Priority Policy provides priority to graduate students in the School.



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APPENDIX A. SCHOOL POLICY FOR ALLOCATION OF UVIC GRADUATE AWARDS

GRADUATE ENTRANCE AWARDS

The School allocates a limited number of competitive, merit-based Graduate Entrance Awards to exceptional graduate students. Entrance Awards range from \$1,000-\$10,000 for the first year and are non-renewable. A minimum GPA of 7.0 is required to be considered for a Graduate Entrance Award.

GRADUATE AWARDS

The school also allocates funds for Graduate Awards, which are distributed in the Fall, Spring, and Summer terms of each academic year following an assessment of the eligibility requirements listed below. Graduate Awards range from \$1,000-\$5,000 per year.

Eligibility for a Graduate Award

- A minimum GPA of 7.0 is required to be eligible for a Graduate Award as mandated by the Faculty of Graduate Studies.
- Graduate students must be registered as a full-time student (3.0 units per term). Graduate students identified and notified by the Graduate Affairs Committee not to be students “in good standing” do not qualify for a Graduate Award.

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APPENDIX B. 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, as long as consent has been given by the Supervisor or Supervisory Committee.

Co-op terms can be planned once graduate students have satisfactorily completed their research proposal. Graduate students close to completion of their research should be encouraged to complete their thesis instead of accepting graduate co-op jobs. Once students have defended their thesis or dissertation, students may complete their remaining co-op terms to earn the co-op designation on their degree, but may not begin doing co-op terms at that point.

Graduate co-op employment opportunities must be arranged in consultation with the co-op coordinator. Graduate students may be allowed to take a double or triple work term as long as consent has been given by the Supervisor in consultation with the Supervisory Committee. In order to earn the co-op designation on their degree, graduate students must take a minimum of two 4- month work terms at the Master's 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.

Procedures

Faculty should be 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 normally consult with, and obtain written approval from, their academic Supervisor prior to enrolling in graduate co-op, and should 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 through the co-op office.

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 will be handled initially between the student, the 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.



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APPENDIX C. GUIDELINES FOR GRADUATE SUPERVISOR AND STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES SUPPLEMENT TO FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

Communication and the exchange of ideas in a research environment between Supervisor and student is fundamental to graduate studies and necessary for a successful partnership throughout a graduate program. 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.

The responsibilities of the Supervisor include:

- a) Recommending courses for the program of study, recommending appropriate Supervisory Committee members, and discussing potential research topics and preliminary reading material.
- b) Arranging meetings with the Supervisory Committee and student for formal requirements such as thesis proposal review, candidacy oral exam, and thesis/dissertation defence 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 to apply 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 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, Co-Supervisors, and Graduate Affairs Committee of dates and duration, as soon as possible, if the Supervisor is taking a study or other type of leave.

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, in conjunction with, and acceptable to, the Supervisor. Choosing Supervisory Committee members in conjunction with, and acceptable to, the Supervisor and choosing courses for the program of study.
- c) Bringing research progress and problems to the attention of the Supervisor in a timely manner.

- d) Meeting with the Supervisory Committee for formal requirements such as thesis proposal review, candidacy oral exam, and thesis/dissertation defence, 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 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 where the student may be contacted and of extended leaves from campus.
- k) Acknowledging assistance, materials, and data provided by other scholars, including 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.

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APPENDIX D. 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. In particular, 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 in a position 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 or not a review committee should be struck.

