Graduate Program Manual
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General Information

The Department of Psychiatry offers full-time and part-time programs leading to the degrees of Master of Science (MSc) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD). Both programs require coursework, completion of a research project and the successful defense of a written thesis. Staff members are currently carrying out research in areas of neurochemistry, neuropsychopharmacology, pharmacogenetics, neuroimaging, and translational neuroscience. Main research areas of interest within mental health are mood disorders, addictions, schizophrenia, and child/adolescent psychiatry. The following are the regulations governing graduate studies in the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Alberta. Adhering to the equivalent regulations of the Graduate Program Manual set out by the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR: https://uofa.ualberta.ca/graduate-studies/about/graduate-program-manual), the Graduate Program in the Department of Psychiatry has specific regulations that supersede those of the FGSR in some cases.

Graduate Program Contacts

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Department of Psychiatry:
https://www.ualberta.ca/psychiatry

Faculty of Graduate Studies & Research (FGSR):
https://www.ualberta.ca/graduate-studies/

Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry
https://www.ualberta.ca/medicine

Graduate Students’ Association:
https://www.ualberta.ca/graduate-students-association
Deadlines

The following list contains key deadlines and events at the University of Alberta. The precise dates change each year. The current online University of Alberta Calendar and the FGSR website should be consulted for actual deadlines.

https://calendar.ualberta.ca/
https://www.ualberta.ca/graduate-studies/

September
- Early: Fall term classes begin
- Mid-month: Fall term registration deadline
- End of Month: Fees payment deadline
- End: Last day for submission of theses to FGSR to ensure graduation at Fall Convocation

November
- Mid to End: Fall convocation

January
- First week: Winter term classes begin
- Mid-month: Winter term registration deadline
- End of Month: Fees payment deadline
- Last day for submission of theses to FGSR to ensure graduation at Spring Convocation

February
- General awards applications due at FGSR

April
- Early: Last day for thesis submission to FGSR of programs to ensure graduation at Spring Convocation

June
- Spring Convocation

The following are approximate deadlines for some popular scholarships in the department. This is not a complete list and Students and Supervisors are advised to familiarize themselves with other scholarship possibilities and check the exact deadlines each year.

Please consult with the FGSR Awards Database:
https://www.ualberta.ca/graduate-studies/awards-and-funding/scholarships

Alberta Innovates: ~October

Tricouncil
– Canadian Graduate Scholarship Master’s (CIHR, NSERC, SSHRC): Nov/Dec
– CIHR Doctoral Awards October (early)
– NSERC Doctoral Research Awards October (mid)
– SSHRC Doctoral October (mid-end)

**Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry 75th Anniversary and Recruitment awards**: October 1

**Dean’s Doctoral Student Award**: September

**Graduate Student Recruitment Studentship**: September

**FGSR General Awards**: ~ February 1 and September 1

**BranchOut Neurological Foundation**: early March (MSc), early May (PhD)

**Alberta Gambling Research Institute**: mid-April
Overview on Graduate Program Requirements

Minimum Degree Requirements
The minimum requirements to obtain an MSc or a PhD degree in the Department of Psychiatry are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MSc</th>
<th>PhD</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Minimum of 2 courses (6 credits)</td>
<td>• Minimum of 3 courses, incl. PSYCI 511 (9 credits) unless explicitly exempt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Participation in Grand Rounds</td>
<td>• Participation in Grand Rounds</td>
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<tr>
<td>– Attendance ≥ 75% of Grand Rounds</td>
<td>– Attendance ≥ 75% of Grand Rounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Oral presentation (1/academic year)</td>
<td>– Oral presentation (1/academic year)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Psychiatry Graduate Seminar – 10 per year</td>
<td>• Psychiatry Graduate Seminar – 10 per year</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Presentation of a talk/poster at Research Day (1/year)</td>
<td>• Presentation of a talk/poster at Research Day (1/year)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ethics component</td>
<td>• Ethics component</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Professional development (fall 2016 onwards)</td>
<td>• Professional development (fall 2016 onwards)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Documented supervisory committee meetings (minimum: 1x/year)</td>
<td>• Documented supervisory committee meetings (minimum: 1x/year)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Written thesis</td>
<td>• Written thesis proposal &amp; oral evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Thesis defense</td>
<td>• Candidacy exam</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Written thesis</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Thesis defense</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Time Limits for Completing Programs
Students are to complete their degree requirements within a set time. Any time spent as a qualifying (or probationary) Graduate Student is not counted in the time limit for completion.

MSc: 2-4 years (full-time and part-time programs).
PhD: 3-6 years (full-time and part-time programs).

• For students who transfer from an MSc program to a PhD program (i.e., without completing the MSc program), program time counts from the beginning of the student’s second year in the MSc program. See chapter 16 for example timelines.
• PhD: All program requirements other than the thesis/defence must be completed within three years of the commencement of the PhD program.
• For PhD students admitted Fall 2011 and onwards who are paying program fees, no less than 12 terms (3 full years) of program fees are required; if a student registers for less than 12 terms, the fees are adjusted so the full amount is paid.
• For further guidance, see University Calendar.
Extensions

MSc & PhD Program Extension
In exceptional circumstances, a Student who has failed to complete the requirements for the degree within the appropriate period of time specified in the Calendar may be considered for an extension. Requests for extensions will only be considered if there are well-documented reasons specific to a particular type of research that precludes completion within the time limit, or if there are sufficient and substantial unforeseen circumstances beyond the control of the Student and/or Supervisor which prevent completion of the program within the time limits.

- The first extension to a Student’s program is granted by the department for a period of up to one year.
  - Documents required:
    - A letter or email from the student and supervisor explaining the delay and a timeline/plan to mitigate further delays, with defense no later than 1 year past application for extension is approved by the Graduate Program Director.
- To request a second or subsequent extension, the department must submit a ‘Request for a Program Extension form’ and accompanying documentation to FGSR. Students whose time limit has been reached are not permitted to register until an extension to the program has been granted.
  - Documents required:
    - Program extension form
    - An explanatory letter summarizing the student’s progress to date
    - A timeline for completion of program approved by the supervisor/or supervisory committee
    - an explanatory letter with the expected date of completion
    - the timeline for completion of program

Coursework
The Supervisor and Student have to discuss all course selections. Courses can be a combination of graduate-level courses (500-level or higher) offered by the Psychiatry Department or by other departments. PhD Students are normally expected to enroll in PSYC511 for credit. **Should a PhD student be exempted from PSYC511, their Supervisor needs to justify this request in writing to the Graduate Program Director.** Students intending to register for thesis-relevant undergraduate courses must justify their course selection in writing to the Graduate Program Director, copying their Supervisor. Undergraduate coursework is considered additional to the graduate degree.

Note: Under the Western Deans’ Agreement it is possible to register in courses at some other universities without incurring additional fees. Information is available at the FGSR website [https://www.ualberta.ca/graduate-studies/about/graduate-program-manual/section-6-](https://www.ualberta.ca/graduate-studies/about/graduate-program-manual/section-6-)
**Students are responsible to ensure their continued registration during each term to remain active in the program.** For Students admitted in Fall 2011 and onwards, Spring and Summer term registration will occur automatically. After completion of coursework, continued registration in THESIS is required to remain in the program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MSc</th>
<th>PhD</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Must register in and be assessed fees for a minimum of 24 course weight equivalents over the duration of their program</strong></td>
<td><strong>Must register in and be assessed fees for a minimum of 36 course weight equivalents</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A combination of courses and thesis research</td>
<td>A combination of coursework (where required) and thesis research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to 9 credits (2 to 3 single-term courses) of graded graduate courses or approved equivalent are required, graduate level courses are worth 3 credits each.</td>
<td>9 credits (3 single term courses) of graded graduate courses, or approved equivalent are required, graduate level courses are worth 3 credits each.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Term Registrations Requirements</strong></td>
<td><strong>Term Registrations Requirements</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time: 3 credit units per term</td>
<td>Part-time: 3 units per term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-Time: 9 credit units per term</td>
<td>Full-Time: 9 units per term</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students in the PhD program are expected to have credit in Psychiatry 511, unless exempted.

For Students entering the PhD program, the minimum course requirement is 9 credits (3 single term courses) of graded graduate courses, or approved equivalent.

For Students transferring into the PhD program from the MSc program, credit for approved courses taken during the MSc program can be transferred to the PhD program. The Student, with approval from their Supervisory Committee (email copy suffices), needs to justify their transfer of credit request in writing to the Graduate Program Director. The final decision lies with FGSR.
Courses in the Department of Psychiatry

**PSYCHIATRY 511 - Biological Aspects of Psychiatry:** Mandatory for all PhD students (unless exempt, see Coursework for procedure)

**PSYCI 515 - Maternal, Child and Adolescent Mental Health**

**PSYCI 601 – Theory and Practice of Psychiatry**

**PSYCI 602 – Advanced Topics in Psychiatry**

**PSYCI 603 - Psychiatry Tutorial, Research and Reading Course**

**PSYCI 604 - Cognitive Neuropsychiatry**

**PSYCI 688 – Grand Rounds/Weekly Seminars Series: Mandatory for all students**

See the University Calendar (and Beartracks) for further details on all courses.

**Ethics Requirement**

Ethics and academic integrity training is mandatory. The Student is expected to complete the equivalent of at least eight (8) hours of structured academic activity to meet this requirement prior to convocation. Psychiatry Graduate Students can complete this requirement as follows:

Participation at the:
- **Annual Ethics & Scientific Integrity Day (ESI) organized the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry**

Note: The ESI takes place only once per year. Please ensure timely completion of this requirement after commencement of the program. Some professional or previous educational activities may be considered as equivalent to the ethics requirement. Please contact the Graduate Program Director for approval.

**AND**

Participation in the:
- **G.E.T. (Graduate Ethics Training) Web CT course offered by FGSR.**

The Graduate Program Administrator needs to be advised by the Student upon completion of each of the two ethics requirements.

**Students must complete the two ethics components in order to convocate.**

**Professional Development Requirement**

Professional development is mandatory for all graduate students admitted in fall 2016 or later. The PD requirement encompasses two components:

- **Individual Development Plan (IDP)**
  - To be established by the student month 12 (MSc) or month 18 (PhD)
  - At least annually revised by the student
- Annually reviewed by the supervisor or career mentor
- Annually reviewed/approved by the Graduate Program Director

**Eight (8) hours of PD activities**
- Students are automatically notified of qualified PD activities by the FGSR.
- Proof of participation in these activities needs to be retained for annual review purposes.
- Option – Full Attendance of the Psychiatry Graduate Seminars, will receive 50% of your PD hours (4hrs)

**Note:** Some previous professional or educational activities may be considered equivalent to the professional development requirement. Please contact the Graduate Program Director for approval.

**Students (fall 2016 or later admission) must complete the two PD components in order to convocate.**

**Psychiatry Graduate Seminar**
Minimum Attendance of 10 per year is mandatory for the monthly Graduate Seminars, which are found here, [https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/10mAOiR0QeMWxlbjc7fmq--tAtb8BeZX0rgoZA42IKE/edit#gid=0](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/10mAOiR0QeMWxlbjc7fmq--tAtb8BeZX0rgoZA42IKE/edit#gid=0). There is the option to have you minimum attendance count for 50% of your Professional Development hours.

**Research Day**
Research Day (RD) is an annual one-day event, normally taking place in May. RD is organized by the Graduate Student Representatives, with help from the Graduate Program Administrator and the Graduate Program Director. The goal of RD is to provide Students with opportunities for scientific exchange within and across Departments, and to invite a distinguished keynote speaker to provide a lecture at RD. The format is that of a typical scientific meeting. Each student is required to present their thesis work at Research Day. Depending on the stage in their program, this can include planned research or research findings. Formats usually are oral or poster presentations. Participation and full-day attendance at RD is **mandatory** for all Graduate Students.

**Grand Rounds**
Psychiatry Grand Rounds are held every Wednesday at 1200-1300 h from September to June excluding a short break for the holiday season in December and a summer break in July and August. Grand Rounds are an integral function of the Department of Psychiatry, combining clinical and research topics. Lectures in Grand Rounds include topics of current interest in Psychiatry and are held by graduate students, residents, and guest speakers. Regular attendance of and active participation (1 lecture / each academic year) in Psychiatry Grand Rounds is **mandatory** for all Students.

Students will be contacted by the organizer of Grand Rounds (currently: Dr. Nick Coupland) at the beginning of each academic year in order to schedule their lecture. It is expected of the Graduate Students to communicate with the organizer of Grand Rounds in a timely and respectful manner. Only in specific, extenuating circumstances can the Student be exempt from
their duty to present in Grand Rounds (e.g., the Student graduates prior to available lecture dates). In such cases, the Student is to write to the Grand Rounds organizer for permission, copying the Graduate Program Director in the correspondence.

**Student Responsibilities**

Graduate students are ultimately responsible for their own programs. They are expected to read the Calendar and any other relevant documents to become familiar with all regulations and deadlines relating to their programs. Unless stated otherwise, changes in degree program requirements (i.e., the required courses specified for a particular program of studies, or the units of course weight required in specified subject areas, or the total units of course weight required in the degree program) apply only to new Students and those readmitted to a Faculty. Continuing Students should refer to the Calendar in effect at the time they were admitted or readmitted for the regulations governing their degree program requirements (see Calendar). Students who interrupt their program and must apply for readmission to the program will be required to comply with any new regulations upon resumption of their studies.

**Student Responsibilities**

- Ensuring that program registration is accurate and does not lapse. The Graduate Program Administrator may not at all times be able to help with registration.
- Submitting appropriate forms to the department for signature and processing.
- Paying all fees required by the deadline dates set out in the Calendar.
- Maintaining open communication with their Supervisor and Graduate Program Director concerning any problem either real or perceived.
- Informing the Supervisor regularly about progress, and provide their Supervisor information to submit on their Annual Report.
- Being aware of deadlines for possible scholarship applications, and actively seek advice and assistance from their Supervisor and other Members of the Department if required.
- Being aware of the Supervisor’s expectations and asking for clarification if in doubt.
- Making themselves available in person, by phone, and/or email (at minimum at regular working hours) and informing the Supervisor regularly about progress, without needing to be prompted.
- Making research results accessible (beyond their appearance in a thesis) to an appropriate audience, i.e., in the form of scholarly publications.

**Academic Standing and Grades**

- As a minimum, graduate students must maintain a minimum cumulative program grade point average of 2.7 throughout their graduate program.
- If the cumulative grade point average falls between 2.3 and 2.7, the Department may recommend termination of program or continuation in the program for a specific probationary period.
• Notwithstanding the above, a Student whose academic standing falls below a grade point average of 2.7 may be required to withdraw at any time.

Course Registration
Graduate Students are ultimately responsible for their own programs. They are expected to read the sections of the University of Alberta Calendar (https://calendar.ualberta.ca/content.php?catoid=29&navoid=7442) relevant to Graduate Students and to familiarize themselves with all regulations and deadlines related to their program including, but not limited to, the regulations set out in the current document.

Supervisors (MSc and PhD)
Supervisors must be faculty members of the Department of Psychiatry. Adjunct full-time faculty members outside Psychiatry are required to appoint at least one member of the Department of Psychiatry to the Supervisory Committee of their student. New investigators and clinical academic faculty will normally be required to appoint a secondary academic supervisor.

Criteria for Supervisors
Each of the following criteria must be met by at least one of the supervisor(s):

- be a tenured, tenure-track, or retired faculty member of the Department of Psychiatry
- be active in the general subject area of the student’s research
- demonstrate continuing scholarly or creative activity of an original nature
- either hold a degree equivalent to or higher than that for which the student is a candidate, or have a demonstrated record of successfully supervising students for the degree.

For supervisors from outside the University of Alberta, working with a supervisor at the University of Alberta, there should be an indication of the means by which meaningful interaction can be maintained. This indication is to be made in writing to the Graduate Program Director.

Supervisor responsibilities

- Ensure that the Student knows and meets all the administrative requirements of the Department of Psychiatry and FGSR, and, when necessary, assists the Student in meeting these.
- Provide the research support necessary for completion of the thesis research.
- Secure continued financial support for the Student.
- Provide the Graduate Program Director with an annual written report on the Student's performance as requested.
• Arrange the Supervisory Committee and ensures Supervisory Committee Meetings are held and documented with the “Report of Supervisory Committee Meeting” form, to be submitted to the Graduate Program Administrator.
• Submit a written “Annual Report” on the progress of each Student, usually due in August.
• Arrange all examinations (as applicable: MSc to PhD Transfer Meeting, Candidacy Exam, Thesis Defense).
• Stay informed about the Student's research activities and progress.
• Have adequate time to supervise each Student.
• Review the thesis both in draft and in final form.

Further Guidelines for Supervisors
• Provide an environment for the Student that is conducive to research and in which the Student can grow intellectually.
• Maintain open communication with the Student concerning any problem; and in the event of a conflict in the Supervisor-Student relationship, discusses the issues with the Student and Graduate Program Director in a timely fashion.
• Provide appropriate guidance to the Student on the nature of their research and the standards expected, and is accessible to give advice and constructive feedback; at the beginning of the supervisory relationship, the Student should be made aware of any expectations held by the Supervisor and the Department that are not already defined in the Calendar, the FGSR Graduate Program Manual, or the Psychiatry Graduate Program Manual.
• With the Student, establish a realistic timetable for completion of various phases of the program.
• When going on leave or an extended period of absence, ensure that the Student is adequately supervised by the provision of an Acting Supervisor. This should be a member of the Supervisory Committee.

Supervisory Committees (MSc and PhD)

The purpose of a Supervisory Committee is to represent complementary expertise to that of the Supervisor and to provide academic mentoring as well as program planning advice. Supervisory Committees consist of the Supervisor and at least 2 other faculty members. Supervisory Committees must be appointed for Students in both the MSc and in the PhD program within six months of the Student’s first year in the program. Supervisors, in consultation with the Student, will suggest names of potential Committee Members to the Graduate Program Director. After approval by the Graduate Program Director, in consultation with the Graduate Program Committee, names of Supervisors and Supervisory Committee Members will be forwarded to FGSR.

Guidelines for Supervisory Committees
• Supervisory Committee Meetings are to be arranged by the Supervisor, not the Student.
• The Supervisory Committee meets at least once a year to determine the Student's progress and to advise on academic and research matters. A first Supervisory Committee meeting must be held within the first 6 months of the student’s first year.
• A “Report of the Supervisory Committee Meeting” form must be submitted to the Graduate Program Administrator after each supervisory committee meeting.
• Supervisory Committee Meetings may be held more frequently if deemed necessary by the Supervisor, Supervisory Committee or the Student. Meetings can be initiated by either the Student or the Supervisor.
• The Supervisory Committee takes part in all examinations required by the FGSR (Candidacy Examinations; Final Oral Examinations) and in Transfer Meetings (MSc to PhD), if applicable.
PhD Proposal Meeting

Within the first two years of the PhD program, the Student will submit a written thesis proposal document which will be evaluated by the Student’s Supervisory Committee. The Student will be required to defend their proposal orally in response to questions. Exceptions to this time frame may be granted by the Graduate Program Committee.

Purpose of the PhD Thesis Proposal Meeting
The purpose of the PhD Proposal Meeting is to evaluate the Student’s ability to formulate and defend a research program based on their knowledge of the literature relevant to the problem to be addressed. The Student must show an appreciation of the appropriate experimental design for their proposed research and the technical difficulties and pitfalls inherent in the chosen methodology.

Role of the Supervisory Committee in the PhD Thesis Proposal Meeting
- The Supervisory Committee will review the Student’s performance in formal course work and the Student’s competence as revealed by the thesis proposal itself and the Student’s ability to defend the content of the proposal.
- Committee members will assess the feasibility of the project within the projected timeline and determine whether the project is of sufficient quality and quantity for a PhD.
- Following this review, a determination will be made on the Student’s future status within the program and recommend any further courses that may be deemed necessary to attain an acceptable level of knowledge.
- Committee members are encouraged to provide feedback to improve the quality of the research project and identify potential obstacles or pitfalls.

Timeline and PhD Thesis Proposal Document

At least 3 weeks prior to the meeting:
- The Supervisor will provide the Graduate Program Administrator with the date, time, and place of the PhD Proposal Meeting.

At least 1 week prior to the meeting:
- The Student will provide each member of the Supervisory Committee with a copy of the thesis proposal document. This must include a brief introduction to the research topic, a summary of the Student’s work done to date and an outline of the research plan, including methodology and anticipated time lines for completion. Typically, the thesis proposal document should be between 10-20 double-spaced pages (not including figures or references).

Following the conclusion of the meeting:
- A “Report of Supervisory Committee” form must be completed, signed, and returned to the Graduate Program Administrator.
Possible outcome of the PhD Proposal Meeting

- **Proceed without conditions:** The Supervisory Committee approves continuation in the PhD Program, in which case there is no further action required.

- **Proceed with conditions:** The Supervisory Committee generally approves the Student’s proposal, but identifies areas of weakness to be addressed. The Committee proposes steps for remedial action, which the Student addresses in due time. The Supervisor is responsible to verify and report back to the Supervisory Committee that remedial action has taken place.

- **Repeat evaluation:** Only given if the Committee feels that there are extenuating circumstances or if the performance is much poorer than anticipated from the Student’s record.

- **Transfer to the MSc Program:** In addition to any conditions, the Student is asked to transfer to and complete an MSc program.

- **Withdraw:** The Student is asked to withdraw from the program.
Transfer from MSc to PhD Program

A transfer from the MSc program to the PhD program is expected to occur within two years of entering the program. Transfer to the PhD program will be based on the Student’s performance in coursework and demonstrated ability to conduct PhD level research. The transfer is decided upon in a Supervisory Committee Meeting in which the Student’s written PhD thesis proposal is discussed. For transfer meetings, there is the additional requirement of a Chair. The Chair has to be a member of the current Graduate Program Committee. The Chair cannot be the Supervisor or member of the Supervisory Committee.

Timeline and PhD Thesis Proposal Document

At least 3 weeks prior to the evaluation:
- The Supervisor will provide the Graduate Program Administrator with the date, time, and place of the PhD Proposal Meeting.
- The Chair is appointed by the Graduate Program Administrator, who then informs the Supervisor and Student.

At least 1 week prior to the evaluation:
- The Student will provide each member of the Supervisory Committee with a copy of the thesis proposal document. This must include a brief introduction to the research topic, a summary of the Student’s work done to date and an outline of the research plan, including methodology and anticipated timelines for completion. Typically, the thesis proposal document comprises between 20-40 double-spaced pages (not including figures or references).

After the evaluation:
- A “Report of Supervisory Committee” form must be completed, signed, and returned to the Graduate Program Administrator.
- In addition, if the transfer was approved, a “Change of Category” Form must be completed immediately after the approval.

Possible outcome of the Transfer Evaluation

Transfer approved
- **Proceed without conditions:** The Supervisory Committee approves transfer into the PhD Program.
- **Proceed with conditions:** The Supervisory Committee generally approves the Student’s proposal, but identifies areas of weakness to be addressed. The Committee proposes steps for remedial action, which the Student addresses in due time. The Supervisor is responsible to verify and report back to the Supervisory Committee that remedial action has taken place.
Transfer not approved

- **Repeat evaluation:** Only given if the Committee feels that there are extenuating circumstances or if the performance is much poorer than anticipated from the Student’s record.
- **Remain in the MSc Program:** If the Committee decides that:
  - no remedial action could elevate the Student to enter the MSc program
  - AND the proposal and performance are sufficient for an MSc degree, the Student is asked to remain in the MSc program.
- **Withdraw:** The Student is asked to withdraw from the program.
Candidacy Examination

The candidacy examination is to be held within three years of the commencement of the PhD program when most, if not all, of the course work is completed and the research project is started or well defined. Per FGSR regulation, the candidacy examination must be passed no less than six months prior to the final thesis defense.

Purpose of the Candidacy Examination
The Candidacy Examination is for the Student to demonstrate their ability to pursue and complete original research at an advanced level. This entails demonstration of knowledge of psychiatry, which can include, but cannot be limited to, the specific topics directly relevant to the thesis. The Graduate Program does not dictate specific readings to be mastered for Candidacy Examinations, but the Candidacy Examination Committee is to provide the Student with guidance for preparation (see below). Questioning within the Candidacy Examination has to cover a broader scope than the thesis topic and can include basic/classic findings in psychiatry, broader concepts in the student’s research area, as well as theoretical and technical aspects of data collection and analysis.

Examination Committee Composition (Minimum five members)

• Effective November 2015, the Chair of the Candidacy Examination is to be a member of the Psychiatry Graduate Program Committee who is not the Supervisor or Member of the Student’s Supervisory Committee. Chairs can also act as Examiners.
• The Student’s Supervisory Committee.
• 2 arm’s length members. An arm’s length examiner must not be (or have been) a Member of the Supervisory Committee, or have been connected with the thesis research in a significant way. An arm’s length examiner should not have been associated with the student, outside of usual contact in courses or other non-thesis activities within the University, nor be related to the Student or Supervisor(s). Except in special circumstances (fully justified in writing to the Vice-Dean, FGSR), an arm’s length examiner should not be a close collaborator of the Supervisor(s) within the last six years.
• Effective April 2019 once the examining committee is identified the Arm’s length examiners will complete a “Conflict of Interest” form provided by the Graduate Program Administrator.

The Supervisor, often in discussion with the Student, selects and invites 2 additional examiners to be on the committee. The Supervisor, not the Student, is responsible for scheduling the Examination and informing the Graduate Program Administrator before and after the Examination.

Timeline
At least six weeks prior to the Candidacy Examination:

Supervisors:
• Arrange the Candidacy Examination Committee and exam date. This includes identification of the arm’s length members and scheduling.

• The Chair of the Candidacy Examination will be assigned by the Graduate Program Administrator who will then inform the Supervisor and the Student.

• The Supervisor will be given a completed FGSR “Notice and Approval of Doctoral Examining Committee & Examination Date” form **which the Supervisor must sign and return to the Administrator.**

• It is expected that the Supervisor allows the Student to take adequate time away from regular Graduate Student duties in order to prepare for the candidacy exam.

**Candidacy Examination Committee Members:**

• Members are to make the Student aware what areas he/she is expected to be knowledgeable in. Suggestions should extend past the student’s direct research topic and may include the Committee Member’s broader area of expertise. Suggestions may be in the form of a reading list.

• Reading suggestions should be available to the Student without financial cost if possible.

**Students** are to meet with each member of their Candidacy Examination Committee. The purpose of these meetings is to:

• Discuss expectations for and format of the examination.

• Receive suggestions of areas that will be addressed in the exam. These may be in the form of a reading list.

• The Student may request additional meetings with the Candidacy Examining Committee members for further clarification or help with preparation.

At least **three weeks** prior to the examination:

• The Graduate Program Administrator ensures that the “Notice and Approval of Doctoral Examining Committee & Examination Date” form is complete and submits the form to FGSR.

**After** the examination:

• Once the candidacy is passed (or conditions of a conditional pass are satisfied) the FGSR “Report of Completion of Candidacy Examination” form is to be signed by all members of the Examination Committee and submitted to the Graduate Program Administrator who will forward the form to FGSR.

**Format of the Candidacy Examination**

• There is no written component to the Candidacy Examination in the Department of Psychiatry.

• The examination should begin with excusing the Student to leave the room. The Supervisor will then review the Student's progress to-date, including course work, awards, publications and presentations. This review will be complemented by the Chair if necessary. The order of questioning will be determined by the Chair in discussion with
the committee, usually following the system from the most external examiner to the Supervisor, with the Chair asking questions last if so desired.

- The Chair is responsible to remind examiners to limit their questions to **15-20 minutes** in the first round of questions, and to 5 minutes in the second or following rounds of questions. There should be two rounds of questions with no more than three rounds, and the overall time for a Candidacy Examination should usually not exceed 3 hours.

- The Student is then asked back into the room and informed of the format and order of examiners. Prior to commencing the examination, the Student should be given the opportunity to ask for clarification.

- This will usually be followed by a short (15-20 minutes) oral presentation of the Student outlining their thesis and additional work during their PhD program to-date, including a timeline for completion of the remainder of the thesis. During the Candidacy Examination only minor attention should be given to the thesis work.

- Then the question period will ensue for two to three rounds of questions from the examining committee.

- Immediately before closing the Candidacy Examination, the Chair will provide the student with another opportunity to express any concerns or questions that might have arisen during the examination.

- The Student will then be asked to leave the room while the committee makes a decision on the outcome of the examination.

**Possible Outcomes of the Candidacy Examination**

If all but 1 member of the Committee agrees on a decision, the decision shall be that of the majority. If 2 or more dissenting votes are recorded, the department will refer the matter to the Vice-Dean (FGSR), who will determine an appropriate course of action.

The Candidacy Examination can have one of the following outcomes:

- **Pass:** If the Student passes the Candidacy Examination unconditionally, the FGSR “Report of Completion of Candidacy Examination” form must be signed by all Members of the Candidacy Examination Committee and submitted to the Graduate Program Administrator immediately following the exam. The Administrator will arrange for the final signatures and will submit the form to FGSR.

- **Conditional Pass:** If the Candidacy Examining Committee agrees to a conditional pass for the Student, the Chair of the Examining Committee shall provide **in writing** to the Vice-Dean (FGSR), the Student, and the Graduate Program Director:
  - the reasons for this recommendation,
  - details of the conditions,
  - and the timeframe for the Student to meet the conditions.

- The approval mechanism for meeting the conditions (i.e., approval of the Committee Chair or Supervisor; approval of the entire Committee; or select Members of the Committee).
• The supervision and assistance the Student can be expected to receive from the Committee Members, Chair, and/or ad hoc assigned experts in order to fulfill the conditions set out.

Once the conditions have been met, via approval through one of the above-stated mechanisms, the Graduate Program Administrator will complete the “Report of Completion of Candidacy Examination” form and submit it to FGSR. If unmet, the subsequent outcome will be selected.

• **Fail:** If the candidacy Examining Committee agrees that the Student has failed, the Committee Chair shall provide the reasons for this recommendation and the department’s recommendation for the Student’s program in writing to the Vice-Dean (FGSR), to the Student, and to the Graduate Program Administrator. For failed candidacy examinations, the Vice-Dean (FGSR), normally arranges to meet with the Student and with department representatives before acting upon any department recommendation. A decision of the FGSR which affects a Student’s academic standing (e.g., required to withdraw or transfer to a master’s program) is appealable.

The following options are to be considered by the Examining Committee when the outcome of a Student’s candidacy exam is “fail:”

• **Repeat the Candidacy:** If the Student’s candidacy exam performance was inadequate but the Student’s performance and work completed to date indicate that the Student has the potential to perform at the doctoral level, the Examining Committee should consider the possibility of recommending that the Student be given an opportunity to repeat the candidacy exam. If the recommendation of a repeat candidacy is formulated by the Examining Committee and approved by FGSR, the Student is to be notified in writing of his/her exam deficiencies by the Chair of the Examining Committee. The second candidacy exam is to be scheduled no later than 6 months from the date of the first candidacy. In the event that the Student fails the second candidacy, the Examining Committee shall recommend 1 of the next 2 options.

• **Change of Category to the MSc Program:** If the Student’s candidacy exam performance was inadequate and the courses and research completed to date indicates that the Student has the potential to complete an MSc degree, the Examining Committee should consider the possibility of recommending a change of category to the MSc program. In this case a “Change of Category” Form needs to be submitted to the Administrator.

• **Termination of the PhD Program:** If the Student’s performance was inadequate and the work completed during the program is considered inadequate for both a PhD and an MSc program, the Examining Committee should recommend termination of the Student’s program.
Final MSc Examination

The final MSc examination is normally held after two years of the MSc program. MSc Students have a maximum of 4 years from their first term of registration to complete all degree requirements, including the final MSc examination.

Purpose of the Examination

The purpose of the final MSc examination is to assess the Student’s: 1) knowledge of the literature relevant to their research area, 2) understanding of their data collection and analysis methods, 3) understanding of the significance of their research in the context of their research area, and 4) knowledge of the limitations and pitfalls of their chosen methods.

Role of the Examination Committee

The Committee will review the thesis and conduct an oral examination to test the Student's knowledge of the thesis subject. The final decision of the committee will be based both on the quality of the thesis document and on the Student’s defense of their work.

Examination Committee Composition (Minimum four members)

- Effective November 2015, the Chair of the Final MSc Examination is to be a member of the Psychiatry Graduate Program Committee, who is not the Supervisor or Member of the Student’s Supervisory Committee. Chairs can also act as Examiners.
- The Student’s Supervisory Committee.
- As per FOMD guidelines, the Examination Chair must also be impartial and cannot have a personal or financial relationship with either the student or the supervisor (i.e., they have to be in an arm’s length relationship; see below).
- At least 1 arm’s length member. An arm’s length examiner must not be (or have been) a Member of the Supervisory Committee, or have been connected with the thesis research in a significant way. An arm’s length examiner should not have been associated with the student, outside of usual contact in courses or other non-thesis activities within the University, nor be related to the Student or Supervisor(s). Except in special circumstances (fully justified in writing to the Vice-Dean, FGSR), an arm’s length examiner should not be a close collaborator of the Supervisor(s) within the last six years.
- Effective April 2019, once the examining committee is identified the arm’s length examiners will complete a “Conflict of Interest” form provided by the Graduate Program Administrator.

The Supervisor, often in discussion with the Student, selects and invites 1 arm’s length examiner to be on the committee. The Supervisor, not the Student, is responsible for scheduling the examination.

MSc Thesis Document

The MSc thesis, at a minimum, should reveal that the Student is able to work in a scholarly manner and is acquainted with the principal works published on the subject of the thesis. As far as possible, it should be an original contribution. The FGSR sets all regulations regarding the
preparation and formatting of the thesis. Please visit https://www.ualberta.ca/graduate-studies/current-students/academic-requirements/thesis-requirement-and-preparation for current requirements.

Timeline
At least **six weeks** prior to the final MSc examination:

*Students:*
- Send the complete MSc thesis to the Supervisory Committee along with a completed Preliminary Acceptance of Thesis Form. Allow a minimum of two weeks for potential revisions suggested by the Supervisory Committee.

At least **four weeks** prior to the final MSc examination:

*Supervisors:*
- Arrange the examination committee and exam date and communicate arrangements to the Graduate Program Administrator. This includes identification of the arm’s length member(s) and scheduling. Students cannot arrange their own MSc examination committees or examination dates.
- The Chair of the MSc examination will be assigned by the Graduate Program Administrator who will then inform the Supervisor and the Student.
- The Graduate Program Administrator will give to the Supervisor a completed FGSR “Notice and Approval of a Master's Final Oral Examining Committee & Examination Date.” The Supervisor must sign this form and return it to the administrator.

*Students:*
- Return the signed “Preliminary Acceptance of the Thesis” Form to the Graduate Program Administrator at least four weeks prior to the intended defense date. Not all members of the Supervisory Committee are required to sign the same form.

At least **three weeks** prior to the final MSc examination:

*Students:*
- Send the final thesis to the all members of the examining committee at least 3 weeks prior to the defense. You are required to account for sufficient time for the examiners to read your thesis.

At least **three working days** prior to the final MSc examination:

*Students:*
- The Student must provide the Graduate Program Administrator with the exact title of the thesis at least three working days prior to the exam.

**Format of the MSc Final Examination**
The examination should begin with excusing the Student to leave the room. The Supervisor will then review the Student's progress to-date, including course work, awards, publications and presentations. This review will be complemented by the Chair if necessary. The order of questioning will be determined by the Chair in discussion with the examining committee, usually following the system from the most external examiner to the Supervisor, with the Chair asking questions last if so desired.

The Chair is responsible to remind examiners to limit their questions to 15-20 minutes in the first round of questions, and to 5 minutes in the second or following rounds of questions. The Chair should explicitly offer the Student a break between the first and subsequent rounds of questions. There should be two rounds of questions with no more than three rounds, and the overall time for a Final MSc Examination should not exceed 3 hours.

The Student is then asked back into the room and informed of the format and order of examiners. Prior to commencing the examination, the Student should be given the opportunity to ask for clarification.

This will be followed by a 20-minute (max. 30 minutes) oral presentation of the Student summarizing their thesis work.

Then the question period will ensue for two to three rounds of questions from the examining committee.

Immediately before closing the Final MSc Examination, the Chair will provide the student with another opportunity to express any concerns or questions that might have arisen during the examination.

The Student will then be asked to leave the room while the committee makes a decision on the outcome of the examination.

Possible Outcomes of the MSc Final Examination

If all but 1 member of the Committee agrees on a decision, the decision shall be that of the majority. If 2 or more dissenting votes are recorded, the department will refer the matter to the Vice-Dean (FGSR), who will determine an appropriate course of action.

- **Pass**: If the Student passes the examination, the Committee shall sign the “Thesis Approval/Program Completion” form and submit it immediately to the Graduate Program Administrator. The Administrator will arrange for the final signatures and submit the form to FGSR.

- **Pass subject to revisions**: The Student has satisfactorily defended the thesis but there are some revisions to be made to the thesis before final approval. If the revisions are deemed not to require a reconvening of the Examining Committee, the process is as follows (note: There is no formal difference between *minor* and *major* revisions):
  - Members wishing to do so may sign immediately. The Committee Chair or Supervisor withholds their signature until the thesis is amended satisfactorily and all other Committee Members have signed. The “Thesis Approval/Program Completion” form needs to be signed and submitted to the Graduate Program Administrator indicating “pass subject to revisions”.
It is expected that the Student will make the changes in time to submit the thesis to the FGSR on or before the deadline for the next convocation.

The changes should be checked and approved by the Supervisor, who does not sign until the required changes are satisfactorily completed.

Other Committee Members may also wish to withhold their signature until they can verify that their required revisions have been made to their satisfaction.

Once the revisions have been satisfactorily completed, the Supervisor will visit the Graduate Program Administrator, sign the form, and the Administrator will submit the form to FGSR.

**Adjourned:** The final oral examination should be adjourned in the following situations:

- The revisions to the thesis are sufficiently substantial (e.g., if further research or major reworking of sections are required), or the Committee is not satisfied with the general format/presentation of the thesis, a reconvening of the Examining Committee is necessary. In such case, the Committee should not propose that the Student has passed, but instead adjourn the examination.
- The Committee is dissatisfied with the Student's oral presentation and defense of the thesis, even if the thesis itself is acceptable.
- Compelling, extraordinary circumstances such as a sudden medical emergency during the examination.

If the examination is adjourned, the Committee should:

- Specify in writing to the Student, with as much precision as possible, the nature of the deficiencies and, in the case of revisions to the thesis, the extent of the revisions required. Where the oral defence is unsatisfactory, it is recommended to arrange for individual or joint discussions with the Student prior to reconvening the examination.
- Decide upon a date to reconvene. If the date of the reconvened oral examination depends upon the completion of a research task or a series of discussions, it should be made clear which Committee Members will decide on the appropriate date to reconvene. The final date set for reconvening shall be no later than six months from the date of the original examination date. A final decision of the Examining Committee must be made within six months of the initial examination.
- Before the examination is reconvened, the Student is required to be given detailed instructions from their Supervisor and/or Supervisory Committee about the changes required compared to the original MSc thesis or its defense.
- The Committee is to specify the supervision and assistance the Student may expect from the Committee Members in meeting the necessary revisions.
- The Vice-Dean (FGSR) and the Graduate Program Director need to be advised by the Supervisor in writing of the adjournment and the conditions.

When the date is set for the adjourned final oral examination, the Supervisor will notify the Graduate Program Director and the Graduate Program Director will...
notify the FGSR. Normally the Dean, Vice-Dean, Associate Dean or Pro Dean attends the repeat examination.

- **Fail:** If the final examination Committee agrees that the Student has failed, the Committee Chair shall provide the reasons for this recommendation and the department's recommendation for the Student's program in writing to the Vice-Dean (FGSR), to the Student, and to the Graduate Program Director. The Vice-Dean (FGSR) will arrange to meet with the Student and with department representatives before acting upon any department recommendation. A decision of the FGSR which affects a Student's academic standing (e.g., required to withdraw) is appealable.

**Time Limit for Submission of Theses to FGSR**

Following completion of the final oral examination at which the thesis is passed or passed subject to revisions, the Student shall make the appropriate revisions where necessary and submit the approved thesis to FGSR within 6 months of the date of the final oral examination.

The Examining Committee may impose earlier deadlines for submitting revisions.

If the thesis is not submitted to FGSR within the 6 month time limit, the Student will be considered to have withdrawn from the program. After this time, the Student must apply and be re-admitted to FGSR and register again before the thesis can be accepted.

If the final oral examination is adjourned, the 6 month time limit will take effect from the date of completion of the examination where the thesis was ultimately passed with or without revisions.

In order to convocate, Students must submit their thesis to the FGSR for approval before the deadline dates set out in the Academic Schedule of the Calendar. Students must also ensure that they are registered in the appropriate Thesis course in their last registration prior to convocation.
Final PhD Examination

The final exam for PhD Students is normally held at the end of the fourth year in the graduate program. PhD Students have a maximum of 6 years from their first term of registration in their first program to complete all degree requirements. MSc Students who have transferred to the PhD program must complete all degree requirements within 6 years, starting from their second year as an MSc Student. This means, the first MSc year is **not** counted towards the maximum of 6 years in a PhD program, but all subsequent years in the MSc program prior to transfer in the PhD program **are** counted. Examples:

### Purpose of the Examination
The purpose of the final PhD examination is to assess the Student’s: 1) knowledge of the literature relevant to their research area, 2) understanding of their data collection and analysis methods, 3) understanding of the significance of their research in the context of their research area, and 4) knowledge of the limitations and pitfalls of their chosen methods.

### Role of the Examination Committee
The Committee will review the thesis and conduct an oral examination to test the Student's knowledge of the thesis subject. The final decision of the committee will be based both on the quality of the thesis document and on the Student’s defense of their work.

### Examination Committee composition (minimum five members)
- Effective November 2015, the Chair of the Final PhD Examination is to be a member of the Psychiatry Graduate Program Committee, who is not the Supervisor or Member of the Student’s Supervisory Committee.
- As per FOMD guidelines, the Examination Chair must also be impartial and cannot have a personal or financial relationship with either the student or the supervisor (i.e., they have to be in an arm’s length relationship; see below).
- The Student’s Supervisory Committee.
- An External Examiner from outside of the University of Alberta
- At least 1 arm’s length member. An arm’s length examiner must not be (or have been) a Member of the Supervisory Committee, or have been connected with the thesis research in a significant way. An arm’s length examiner should not have been associated with the student, outside of usual contact in courses or other non-thesis activities within the University, nor be related to the Student or Supervisor(s). Except in special circumstances (fully justified in writing to the Vice-Dean, FGSR), an arm’s length examiner should not be a close collaborator of the Supervisor(s) within the last six years.
- Effective April 2019 once the examining committee is identified the arm’s length examiners will complete a “Conflict of Interest” form provided by the Graduate Program Administrator.
It is the responsibility of the Supervisor (not the Student) to provide the Graduate Program Administrator with the names of the non-UofA External Examiner and the UofA arm’s length examiner(s) at least 2 months in advance of the prospective examination date.

PhD Thesis Document
A doctoral thesis, at a minimum, must embody the results of original investigations and analyses and be of such quality as to merit publication, meeting the standards of reputable scholarly publications. It must constitute a substantial contribution to the knowledge in the student's field of study. Please visit https://www.ualberta.ca/graduate-studies/current-students/academic-requirements/thesis-requirement-and-preparation for current requirements.

Timeline
At least 2 months prior to the examination

Complete PhD thesis to be sent to the Supervisory Committee
- The Student sends the complete PhD thesis to their Supervisory Committee. The Committee is given two weeks to review the thesis and suggest revisions.
- All members of the Supervisory Committee must recommend, on the “Preliminary Acceptance of Thesis” form (available on the Psychiatry website and FGSR forms cabinet), that the thesis is acceptable for examination. Note: This is a mandatory precaution governed by FGSR to avoid dissemination of substandard PhD theses to examiners external to the University of Alberta.

External Examiner outside of the University of Alberta
a) Once an External Examiner has been chosen by the Supervisor, the Supervisor must complete two forms: 1) the “Approve External Examiner for Final Doctoral Oral Exam” form (forms cabinet on the FGSR website) and 2) the “FoMD PhD External Examiner Conflict of Interest Checklist” (forms cabinet on Psychiatry website, or contact the Graduate Program Administrator). Both forms are to be submitted to the Graduate.
b) In addition, a CV of the External Examiner must accompany the forms. The CV must contain information on the supervisory experience of the proposed External Examiner.
c) As per FoMD guidelines, all external examiners must participate in the examination in person or through tele-/video conference to allow questions in real time. No readers will be approved by the FoMD.

University of Alberta Calendar, section 204.3.4.: An External Examiner...
- Must be a recognized authority in the specific field of research of the student’s thesis.
- Will be experienced in evaluating doctoral area work.
- Must be in a position to review the thesis objectively and to provide a critical analysis of the work and the presentation.
  It is essential that the External not have an association with the student, the supervisor, or the department, within the last six years as this could hinder objective analysis. For
example, a proposed External who has within the last six years been associated with the student as a research collaborator or coauthor would not be eligible. Also, a proposed External must not have had an association within the last six years with the doctoral student’s supervisor (as a former student, supervisor, or close collaborator, for instance). Under normal circumstances the same person will not be used as an External at the University of Alberta if that External has served in the same capacity in the same department at this University within the preceding two years; this does not preclude an External serving in another department.

d) The Graduate Program Director will review the External Examiner suggestion and, with provisional departmental approval, forward the Approval form, Conflict of Interest Checklist, and CV to the Graduate Office of the Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry (FoMD; Dr. Hanne Ostergaard) for approval. Once the FoMD Graduate Office approves the External Examiner, they will forward the form to FGSR.

e) The Psychiatry Graduate Program Administrator and Director will receive a copy of the correspondence from FoMD to FGSR, by which time the official letter of invitation is sent out to the External Examiner. The letter is to be prepared by the Psychiatry Graduate Program Administrator based on a standard invitation letter template, and signed by the Graduate Program Director. The Administrator will inform Supervisor and Student when the invitation has been sent, at which time neither the Supervisor nor Student can have any contact with the External.

f) In the letter of invitation, the External Examiner is requested to prepare and send to the Graduate Program Director, at least 1 week in advance of the examination, a brief written commentary (approximately 2 to 3 pages) on the structure, methodology, quality, significance and findings of the thesis. This commentary should not be given to the Student prior to the examination.

g) Limited funding is available from the Department of Psychiatry for the travel required by the external examiner. A written request must be made to the Chair of Psychiatry. There is also funding from FGSR (see FGSR forms cabinet) to cover the costs associated with bringing in external examiners; Supervisors must apply for this funding first, and only if unsuccessful, they can submit the decision of the request to the Chair of Psychiatry along with their request for funding from Psychiatry.

At least 5 weeks prior to the examination:

- **Preliminary Acceptance of Thesis**: The Student submits the “Preliminary Acceptance of Thesis” form, signed by all members of the Supervisory Committee, to the Graduate Program Administrator. Committee Members do not have to all sign the same form.
  - If the signatures are received and complete, the Graduate Program Administrator will inform the Supervisor that he/she can set the date, time, and place of the examination.
  - Mail contact with the External Examiner will be strictly limited to the Graduate Program Administrator and Director. They will inquire if the External Examiner wishes to receive a hard copy of the thesis, in which case the Student prints one hard copy of the complete thesis to be forwarded to the External Examiner.
At least 4 weeks prior to the examination:

- The External Examiners receives the thesis either in hard copy or through email. Please allow sufficient mailing time, if the External Examiner prefers a hard copy.

Supervisors:

- Arrange the examination committee and exam date and communicate arrangements to the Graduate Program Administrator. This includes identification of the arm’s length member(s) besides the External Examiner and scheduling. Students cannot arrange their own examinations or committees. The Supervisor must inform the Administrator once the examination information is confirmed.
- The Chair of the PhD examination will be assigned by the Graduate Program Director. The Administrator will then inform the Supervisor and the Student.
- The Graduate Program Administrator will provide to the Supervisor a completed FGSR “Notice and Approval of a Doctoral Final Oral Examining Committee & Examination Date.” The Supervisor must sign form and return it with the original signature.

At least 3 weeks prior to the examination:

- The Administrator must provide FGSR with the “Notice and Approval of a Doctoral Final Oral Examining Committee & Examination Date” at least 3 weeks prior to the exam.

Format of the PhD Final Examination

- The examination should begin with excusing the Student to leave the room. The committee will then review the Student's performance in the program. The order of questioning will be determined. It is preferred that most time is allotted to the External Examiner and the arm’s length examiner(s) and the least to the Supervisor. The Chair can, but is recommended not to, be asking questions. If so desired, they should ask questions last.
- The Chair is responsible for reminding examiners to limit their questions to the time limits agreed upon. It is expected to provide ample time (20 minutes max.) to the External/Arm’s Length Examiners in the first round of questions, with other examiners being given 15-20 minutes each. The Chair should explicitly offer the Student a break between the first and subsequent rounds of questions. In the second or following rounds of questions, each examiner should limit their questions to about 5-10 minutes, again favouring the External/Arm’s Length Examiners. There should be no more than three rounds of questions, and the overall time for a Final PhD Examination should not exceed 4 hours.
- The Chair should remind Examiners to avoid discussions among themselves that exclude the Student and encourage them to ask detailed questions about the thesis and occasional broad, disciplinary questions. Lecturing, typographical and stylistic errors should not take up examination time.
• The Student is then asked back into the room and informed of the format and order of examiners. Prior to commencing the examination, the Student should be given the opportunity to ask for clarification.
• This will be followed by a 20-minute (max. 30 minutes) oral presentation of the Student summarizing their thesis work.
• Then the question period will ensue for two to three rounds of questions from the examining committee.
• Immediately before closing the Final PhD Examination, the Chair will provide the student with another opportunity to express any concerns or questions that might have arisen during the examination.
• The Student will then be asked to leave the room while the committee makes a decision on the outcome of the examination.
• For the adjudication, each examiner has to provide their opinion before the verdict. The Chair will solicit two opinions from each examiner: (1) on the acceptability of the thesis; and (2) on the acceptability of the defence.
• The Student is invited back into the room and the Chair announces the decision and provides feedback on the committee's discussions regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the thesis and the thesis defence.

Possible Outcomes of the PhD Final Examination
If all but 1 member of the Committee agrees on a decision, the decision shall be that of the majority. If 2 or more dissenting votes are recorded, the department will refer the matter to the Vice-Dean (FGSR), who will determine an appropriate course of action.

• **Pass**: If the Student passes the examination, the Committee shall sign the “Thesis Approval/Program Completion” form and submit it immediately to the Graduate Program Administrator. The Administrator will arrange for the final signature and submit the form to FGSR.
• **Pass subject to revisions**: The Student has satisfactorily defended the thesis but there are some revisions to be made to the thesis before final approval. If the revisions are deemed not to require a reconvening of the Examining Committee, the process is as follows (note: There is no formal difference between minor and major revisions):
  o Members wishing to do so may sign immediately. The Committee Chair or Supervisor withholds their signature until the thesis is amended satisfactorily and all other Committee Members have signed. The “Thesis Approval/Program Completion” form needs to be signed and submitted to the Graduate Program Administrator indicating "pass subject to revisions".
  o It is expected that the Student will make the changes in time to submit the thesis to the FGSR on or before the deadline for the next convocation.
  o The changes should be checked and approved by the Supervisor, who does not sign until the required changes are satisfactorily completed.
  o Other Committee Members may also wish to withhold their signature until they can verify that their required revisions have been made to their satisfaction.
Once the revisions have been satisfactorily completed, the Supervisor will visit the Graduate Program Administrator, sign the form, and the Administrator will submit the form to FGSR.

- **Adjourned:** The final oral examination should be adjourned in the following situations:
  - The revisions to the thesis are sufficiently substantial (e.g., if further research or major reworking of sections are required), or the Committee is not satisfied with the general format/presentation of the thesis, a reconvening of the Examining Committee is necessary. In such case, the Committee should not propose that the Student has passed, but instead adjourn the examination.
  - The Committee is dissatisfied with the Student's oral presentation and defense of the thesis, even if the thesis itself is acceptable.
  - Compelling, extraordinary circumstances such as a sudden medical emergency during the examination.
  - If the examination is adjourned, the Committee should:
    - Specify in writing to the Student, with as much precision as possible, the nature of the deficiencies and, in the case of revisions to the thesis, the extent of the revisions required. Where the oral defence is unsatisfactory, it is recommended to arrange for individual or joint discussions with the Student prior to reconvening the examination.
    - Decide upon a date to reconvene. If the date of the reconvened oral examination depends upon the completion of a research task or a series of discussions, it should be made clear which Committee Members will decide on the appropriate date to reconvene. The final date set for reconvening shall be no later than six months from the date of the original examination date. A final decision of the Examining Committee must be made within six months of the initial examination.
    - Before the examination is reconvened, the Student is required to be given detailed instructions from their Supervisor and/or Supervisory Committee about the changes required compared to the original MSc thesis or its defense.
    - The Committee is to specify the supervision/assistance the Student may expect from the Committee Members in meeting the necessary revisions.
    - The Vice-Dean (FGSR), and the Graduate Program Director need to be advised by the Supervisor in writing of the adjournment and the conditions.
  - When the date is set for the adjourned final oral examination, the Supervisor will notify the Graduate Program Director and the Graduate Program Director will notify the FGSR. Normally the Dean, Vice-Dean, Associate Dean or Pro Dean attends the repeat examination.

- **Fail:** If the final examination Committee agrees that the Student has failed, the Committee Chair shall provide the reasons for this recommendation and the department's recommendation for the Student's program in writing to the Vice-Dean (FGSR), to the Student, and to the Graduate Program Director. The Vice-Dean (FGSR) will arrange to meet with the Student and with department representatives before acting
upon any department recommendation. A decision of the FGSR which affects the Student's academic standing (e.g., required to withdraw or transfer to a master's program) is appealable.

Time Limit for Submission of Theses to FGSR
Following completion of the final oral examination at which the thesis is passed or passed subject to revisions, the Student shall make the appropriate revisions where necessary and submit the approved thesis to FGSR within 6 months of the date of the final oral examination.

The Examining Committee may impose earlier deadlines for submitting revisions.
If the thesis is not submitted to FGSR within the 6 month time limit, the Student will be considered to have withdrawn from the program. After this time, the Student must apply and be re-admitted to FGSR and register again before the thesis can be accepted.
If the final oral examination is adjourned, the 6 month time limit will take effect from the date of completion of the examination where the thesis was ultimately passed with or without revisions.

In order to convocate, Students must submit their thesis to the FGSR for approval before the deadline dates set out in the Academic Schedule of the Calendar. Students must also ensure that they are registered in the appropriate Thesis course in their last registration prior to convocation.

Restricting Access to the Publication of a Thesis
Students wanting to restrict public access to their theses for a temporary period of time must submit a written request with supporting documentation to the Graduate Program Director. If approved, the form (see FGSR forms cabinet) will be submitted to FGSR for processing at the time of submission of the thesis to FGSR. At the end of the approved embargo period (usually 1-2 years), the thesis will become publicly accessible. It is a student’s responsibility to contact the Dean of FGSR if there are any extenuating circumstances that warrant an extension to the original embargo period.

Possible reasons for restricting access to a thesis include:
• Losing originality of research dissemination in imminent publication(s).
• Contractual (i.e., a company, funding agency or sponsor requires that the research conducted for the thesis must remain confidential for a specified period of time).
• Patent Pending, where a patent application has been lodged by the student, or by another on the student’s behalf, relating to a discovery or novel method in a thesis.
• Publication Pending, where a student has a contract with a publisher indicating that the publisher regards the electronic availability of a thesis as a prior publication.
• Ethical Confidentiality, where a thesis requires an embargo period in order for additional steps to be taken to remove information from the thesis where electronic
access to the thesis in a university repository without amendment could endanger the physical or mental health or the safety of people.

Funding & Scholarships

Graduate Student Funding

Students accepted in a full-time program will receive from their Supervisor a stipend. All Supervisors are responsible for financial support of Graduate Students under their supervision. This includes the following options:

- Stipend support will be provided from either an operating grant or an independent award to the Student. The minimum level of funding is currently set at $22,000 / p.a.
- Supervisors must make Students aware of their financial situation by providing a letter of commitment or a formal contract at enrollment into the Graduate Program. The letter needs to detail the funding amount per annum, funding source, and duration of funding. The letter is signed by both Supervisor and Student. If funding is provided by an alternate source such as a different department then a letter from that source needs to accompany the letter of commitment outlining these details. The letter(s) are required for admission accompany the application that is approved by the Graduate Program Committee.
- Initial funding commitments should be made for a minimum of one year. At least 3 months prior to the end of a stipend commitment, a new funding offer (letter of commitment or contract) should be completed, signed by the Student and Supervisor, and submitted to the Graduate Program Administrator. If any changes to the funding have occurred this should be updated and submitted to the Graduate Program Director.

It is the Graduate Student’s responsibility to apply for appropriate external funding, and it is the Supervisor’s responsibility to facilitate those applications in a timely fashion.

Scholarships and Awards

Students are expected to actively seek sources of alternative funding through competitive scholarships from the university and granting agencies. A few of the many scholarships can be found below. If a scholarship value is less than the minimum stipend, the award must be supplemented by the Supervisor.

Tricouncil (note: only for Canadian applicants)

- Canadian Institutes for Health Research (CIHR) - (Master’s and doctoral research awards from CIHR ($17,500 to $35,000 annually) provide support to Students pursuing a degree in a health-related field.
- Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) -Provides support ($17,500 to $35,000 annually) to students engaged in master's or doctoral programs in the natural sciences.
• Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) - Provides support ($17,500 to $35,000 annually) to students engaged in master's or doctoral programs in the humanities and social sciences.

Alberta Innovates

• Alberta Innovates Graduate Student Scholarship - The Alberta Innovates Graduate Scholarship program (Master’s full-value: $26,000; PhD full-value: $31,000; Top-up value: $12,000) is designed to enable promising students to succeed in platform areas of scientific research which are strategically important in Alberta. These are: Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Nanotechnology, and Omics. The application process is fully outlined on the FGSR website.

Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry

• 75th Anniversary Graduate Student Award – The Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry will offer up to twenty awards valued at $7,000 each year.

• Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry/ Alberta Health Services Graduate Student Recruitment Studentship - A major priority for the University of Alberta is to increase the number of graduate students. To support this initiative, the Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry (FoMD) and Alberta Health Services (AHS) are pleased to announce a studentship competition for the recruitment of new graduate students (M.Sc. or PhD) to the Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry. The FoMD and AHS will make available up to 12 recruitment scholarships of $10,000 each for one year to new graduate students registered in the FoMD.

• Dean’s Doctoral Student Award – The Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry award up to thirty awards of $12,500 for a maximum of three years.

• Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry/ Alberta Health Services Med Star Award for Graduate Students – In recognition of the excellence of research done by graduate students (MSc and PhD) in the Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry (FoMD) at the University of Alberta.

FGSR

• Please consult the FGSR awards website for specialized and other awards

Automatic top up for CIHR, NSERC, and SSHRC winners

• President’s Doctoral Prize of Distinction - $10,000 in Year 1 of a major doctoral scholarship (CIHR, NSERC, SSHRC) and tuition fees in each remaining year of scholarship.

Travel Awards

• FGSR Travel Award - The FGSR offers graduate travel awards to financially support graduate students who travel in the interests of disseminating their research results or developing their research.
• **GSA Professional Development Award** - A program to allow students to participate in academic activities such as conferences and research trips

• The Department of Psychiatry Travel Award (up to $800 for national travel and up to $1200 for international travel) can be applied for 1 time during the MSc degree and 2 times during the PhD degree. Additional awards will be decided on a case-by-case basis by the Graduate Program Committee. The award typically covers travel costs related to dissemination of the graduate students’ work (active conference participation). The Department of Psychiatry Travel Award Form can be found on the Website and needs to be submitted to the Graduate Program Administrator, with accompanying documents.

**Graduate Student Leaves**
A leave of absence for up to one year may be requested by graduate students who are pregnant or need to be away from grad school for a period of time with a ‘documented compelling reasons, such as a serious illness. Students should initially discuss the need for such absences with their Supervisors. See section 7.11 of the FGSR Graduate Program Manual for more details.
Department of Psychiatry Graduate Program Committee

The committee consists of the following members:

- Committee Chair – Graduate Program Director and member of FGSR council
- Secretary – Graduate Program Administrator
- Members – Chair or Vice-Chair (Research) of the Department of Psychiatry
  - Alternate member of FGSR Council
  - No less than two additional GFT members of the Department of Psychiatry
  - Elected Graduate Student representatives

The Director acts as the convener and Chairman of the Committee. The director and three other members of the Committee are appointed by the Chair of the Department of Psychiatry.

Terms of Reference

The Committee will meet on a monthly to bimonthly basis to coordinate all aspects of operation of the Graduate Program of Psychiatry. For this Committee, a quorum will constitute the majority of Committee Members present at the meeting. The work of this Committee aims to foster the development and growth of the Graduate Program. The primary role of this Committee will be to maintain a high standard of academic excellence in accordance with the regulations of the FGSR published in the University of Alberta Calendar. The Committee will advise and offer direction to the Graduate Program Director of the Department of Psychiatry.

Specific Functions

- The Committee reviews and maintains the departmental regulations for the Graduate Program and ensure that these regulations conform to FGSR regulations in the University of Alberta Calendar.
- Each meeting will regularly include updates related to the activities of other relevant entities such as the Residency Program Committee of the Department of Psychiatry, the Medical Sciences Graduate Program Committee and the FGSR Council.
- The committee will review all applications for admission into the Graduate Program. Recommendations for admission will be sent to FGSR. In the case of refusal, each applicant will receive written notification of the decision (successful applicants receive an admission letter from FGSR).
- The committee will review and approve supervisory arrangements for a prospective Graduate Student prior to recommending the Student’s admission to the FGSR.
- The Committee will ensure that supervisory committee meetings are held at least once a year for each Student. Whenever necessary, the Committee will make recommendations to FGSR concerning the academic program of each Student.
- At least once a year, the committee will review academic progress and financial support arrangements of each Student.

The committee will provide an Annual Report on the Graduate Program to the Chair of the Department of Psychiatry. This report will include information concerning recruitment, time to completion of degrees, outcomes of examinations, program changes etc. The purpose of the report is to maintain quality of the program and faculty involvement.
## Example Graduate Timelines in the Department of Psychiatry

Please note that these timelines are for illustration purposes. If you have questions or concerns about your own timeline or need help applying this template to your case, please consult with your supervisor and/or the Graduate Program Director.

**Candidacy extension:** Completion of the candidacy examination within 3 years of the PhD, as per FGSR regulation.

### MSc - Short path

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Start of MSc Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entry to MSc</td>
<td>Fall 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fall 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Defense</td>
<td>Prior to Fall 2014</td>
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</table>

### MSc - Typical path

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entry to MSc</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fall 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Defense</td>
<td>Prior to Fall 2015</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### MSc - Maximum path (discouraged)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entry to MSc</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Fall 2014</td>
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<td>Fall 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>Defense</td>
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<td>Program extension</td>
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### PhD direct - Short path

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<tr>
<td>Defense</td>
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</table>

### PhD direct - Typical path

<table>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fall 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Candidacy</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Fall 2016</td>
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### PhD direct - Maximum path (discouraged)

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### MSc-transfer to PhD (short path)

<table>
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<th>Milestone</th>
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<th>Start of PhD Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer to PhD</td>
<td>Prior to Fall 2013</td>
<td>(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candidacy</td>
<td>Fall 2014</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Fall 2015</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defense</td>
<td>Prior to Fall 2016</td>
<td>(4)</td>
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### MSc-transfer to PhD (typical path)

<table>
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<th>Milestone</th>
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<th>Start of PhD Year</th>
<th>Extension required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entry to MSc</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>Prior to Fall 2013</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fall 2014</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fall 2015</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candidacy</td>
<td>Prior to Fall 2016</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Candidacy extension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fall 2017</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defense</td>
<td>Prior to Fall 2018</td>
<td>(6)</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### MSc-transfer to PhD (maximum path - discouraged)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Milestone</th>
<th>Start of MSc Year</th>
<th>Start of PhD Year</th>
<th>Extension required</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Candidacy</td>
<td>Prior to Fall 2016</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Candidacy extension</td>
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<td>Fall 2017</td>
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<td>Program extension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defense</td>
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<td>(9)</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

### Example milestone completion times for MSc-transfer to PhD after 1 year (typical path length)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Milestone</th>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Transfer to PhD</td>
<td>Prior to Fall 2013</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2 year gap</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fall 2014</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fall 2015</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Candidacy extension</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fall 2017</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defense</td>
<td>Prior to Fall 2018</td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Example milestone completion times for MSc-transfer to PhD after 2 years (typical path length)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Milestone</th>
<th>Start of MSc Year</th>
<th>Start of PhD Year</th>
<th>Extension required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entry to MSc</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer to PhD</td>
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<td>(3)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1 year gap</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Fall 2015</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>4</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Defense</td>
<td>Prior to Fall 2018</td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td></td>
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