The University of Western Ontario

Department of Biochemistry

Graduate Student Handbook

Biochemistry Web Site:
http://www.schulich.uwo.ca/biochem/

The School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (SGPS)
Web Site: http://grad.uwo.ca/

June 2019
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Enrolment in the Department of Biochemistry Graduate Program implies compliance with a set of rules and criteria that are legislated by the Department and The School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (referred to as SGPS from this point on). Specific requirements are listed on the following pages. Continued enrolment also requires a level of productivity that will enable completion of the program in the time frame outlined by the SGPS. While the level of productivity will differ from student to student the minimum expected workload is 40 hours per week of lab, or lab related, work. Students should also be aware that regulations of stipend support allow two weeks (10 days) of vacation per annum.

International Students
International students must show original study permits to The School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies and the Department Graduate Administrator as soon as they arrive at Western. Students will also have to apply for a Social Insurance Number (SIN). Application for a SIN is made through the London Human Resources Centre of Canada, located at 120 Queens Ave., London. You will need your Study permit/Student authorization and a "Contract of Employment for International Students at the University of Western Ontario" provided by the Graduate Administrator. The Graduate Administrator should be notified as soon as the SIN is received.

Compensation (Stipend) Information
The Department of Biochemistry has set compensation rates for graduate student stipends. Compensation rates vary and academic averages (as calculated by the Department and SGPS) and external/internal funding will decide how your compensation rate is set. Please consult with your Faculty Supervisor or the Graduate Administrator if you have any questions on the makeup of your rate. Your compensation rate will be indicated in the initial offer letter and in the Minimum Financial Package Letter after you start your program.

For students who register in the program on or after September 1, 2006, the following policy limiting the length of time a Faculty Supervisor is obligated to provide compensation to a graduate student will be in place:

1. After two years (6 terms) from initial date of registration in the MSc program a Faculty Supervisor is not obligated to pay a stipend.
2. For students who have transferred from the MSc: After five years (15 terms) from initial date of registration, with an additional half year for exceptional circumstances, a Faculty Supervisor is not obligated to pay a stipend.
3. For students who enter the PhD program directly, having completed an MSc: After four years (12 terms) from initial date of registration, a Faculty Supervisor is not obligated to pay a stipend.
4. For students who enter the PhD program directly from the BSc: After five years (15 terms) from initial date of registration a Faculty Supervisor is not obligated to pay a stipend.
Graduate Students with Disabilities

The University accommodates students with disabilities, subject to not compromising the academic integrity of the course or program. The student informs the Graduate Chair of his/her disability after receiving a written "Offer of Admission". The Student Development Centre's Services for Students with Disabilities office (SSD) assesses the disability and special needs and advises the Graduate Chair on the appropriate remedy. Where the recommended relief entails an extraordinary expense or special equipment, students who are eligible for OSAP may receive support from an Ontario Ministry Bursary Fund that is administered by SSD and the University’s Student Financial Services. If there is still need, SSD should contact the program. If the program cannot provide the relief, SSD should contact The School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies who will review the case with all interested parties to seek remedy.

Health and Wellness

As part of a successful graduate student experience at Western, we encourage students to make their health and wellness a priority. Western provides several on campus health-related services to help you achieve optimum health and engage in healthy living while pursuing your graduate degree. For example, to support physical activity, all students, as part of their registration, receive membership in Western’s Campus Recreation Centre. Numerous cultural events are offered throughout the year. Please check out the Faculty of Music web page http://www.music.uwo.ca/, and our own McIntosh Gallery http://www.mcintoshgallery.ca/. Information regarding health- and wellness-related services available to students may be found at http://www.health.uwo.ca/

Students seeking help regarding mental health concerns are advised to speak to someone they feel comfortable confiding in, such as their faculty supervisor, their program director (graduate chair), or Advisory Committee members. Campus mental health resources may be found at http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health/resources.html

To help you learn more about mental health, Western has developed an interactive mental health learning module, found here: http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health/module.html. This module is 30 minutes in length and provides participants with a basic understanding of mental health issues and of available campus and community resources. Topics include stress, anxiety, depression, suicide and eating disorders. After successful completion of the module, participants receive a certificate confirming their participation.

Leaves of Absence

The Vice-Provost, SGPS, may grant a leave of absence for pregnancy/parental, medical or compassionate grounds normally to a maximum of three terms or 12 months, on the recommendation of the Graduate Program.

While on leave, students are expected to be away from normal activities as graduate students (e.g. attending classes, conducting research). However, students and supervisors may negotiate ongoing communication during this period.

The start and finish of the leave may begin or end at any point in the term; normally the leave
will coincide with the start and end of terms. Students are advised to consult with their graduate program to make special arrangements especially if taking courses during this period.

The date for degree completion and funding of the degree program will be extended by the duration of the time taken on leave, i.e. one, two or three terms as appropriate.

**Withdrawal and Readmission after Withdrawal**

Withdrawal from a program can occur in two ways. A student can voluntarily withdraw, following formal notification to the program. Alternatively, the program or SGPS can withdraw a student for failure to meet admission conditions, progression requirements, specified deadlines for completion, or failure to pay fees. Once withdrawn from a program and SGPS, the person withdrawn is no longer a student and may not attend classes, receive supervision, or have access to any resources of the University.

Students who have voluntarily withdrawn or who have been withdrawn and wish to complete their program must formally re-apply for admission. Credit for previous work completed must be approved by the program and SGPS.

Students who are withdrawn for non-payment of fees will be considered for admission under the following payment conditions:

- Any student who has withdrawn or has been withdrawn may be required to pay fees for the terms in which registration has lapsed if admitted.
- Payment of all fees owing at the time of withdrawal including all penalty fees incurred as a result of the default
- Prepayment of full fees for the term in which admission is sought
- These payments must be money order, cash, direct debit, or certified cheque

**Transferring from MSc to PhD**

Programs may allow students to transfer their registration from the Master’s to the Doctoral degree within the same program, without completion of the Master's degree. The Provost, SGPS, will consider such requests on the recommendation of the student’s program.

Transfers from the Master’s to the Doctoral program must take place before the sixth term of Master's registration, unless the program’s OCGS-approved provisions state otherwise.

See “Qualifying Exam” Section, for Department requirements.

**Part-Time Status in a Full-Time Program**

Part-time registration in full-time programs may be granted in exceptional circumstances and only with the approval of the Graduate Program and the Vice-Provost, SGPS. Examples of such circumstances are: admission to another full-time university program or medical or compassionate circumstances that make it impossible for the student to continue to devote full-
time attention to his or her program of study. Supporting documentation must be submitted with the request for part-time status.

Part-time status is not to be used as a means for reducing or avoiding tuition fees. Being beyond the funding eligibility period will not, by itself, constitute grounds for a change from full-time to part-time status. Part-time status may be granted for up to a cumulative total of three terms.

Students registered part-time may take no more than two courses in a term. Undergraduate courses taken as extra courses or as degree requirements are to be included in the totals above.

The School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies Requirements

The following information is from the SGPS web site (http://grad.uwo.ca/), which has the most up-to-date information:

1. Must maintain a cumulative average of at least 70% calculated each term over all courses taken for credit, with no grade less than 60%.

2. May be absent from the University while visiting libraries, attending a graduate course at another institute, doing field work and the like. If such periods exceed four weeks in any term formal approval is required from both the program Graduate Chair and the Dean of Graduate Studies.

3. To be registered, graduate students must pay or make arrangements to pay all fees by the established deadline each term (see the Office of the Registrar’s website for exact deadline). Failure to pay fees will result in deregistration. See Withdrawal and Readmission after Withdrawal process.

4. Graduate students must maintain continuous registration in The School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies in each successive term from initial registration until the end of the term in which all requirements for the degree are completed.

5. All degree programs must be completed within a period not exceeding, in the case of the Master’s degree, three calendar years from initial registration and, in the case of a Doctoral degree, six calendar years from initial registration. For students who transfer from a Master’s program to a Doctoral program without completing the Master’s program, a maximum of seven calendar years from the initial registration in the Master’s program will be given to complete the Doctoral degree.

6. To be registered as a full-time student according to the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, a student must meet the following criteria:

7. be pursuing graduate studies as a full-time occupation.

8. be geographically available and visit the campus regularly. It is understood that a graduate student may be absent from the University while visiting libraries, attending a graduate course at another institution, doing field work and the like. If such periods of absence exceed four weeks in any term, the student must obtain written approval from the program Graduate Chair and the Dean of Graduate Studies.

9. must not be employed by the University for more than an average of ten hours per week in any term.

10. be considered a full-time graduate student by the graduate program.

11. must have paid, or made arrangements to pay, full-time tuition fees.
12. must identify himself or herself as a full-time graduate student in a degree program.

Department of Biochemistry Requirements

Department of Biochemistry Web Site:  [http://www.schulich.uwo.ca/biochem/](http://www.schulich.uwo.ca/biochem/)

1. Student must form a advisory committee during their first term of registration.
2. Students are required to have a minimum of one advisory committee meeting per year. These meetings must be reported to the Graduate Administrator. (Appendix A – sample of report form – form is available on the Biochemistry website [http://www.schulich.uwo.ca/biochem/about_us/administrative_forms.html](http://www.schulich.uwo.ca/biochem/about_us/administrative_forms.html))
3. They must have an admission average of 70% or above to be eligible for WGRS support. Students must then maintain a minimum 80% average to retain funding.
4. Students are required to attend departmental graduate program seminar/poster sessions. Students may absent themselves from a session if they are ill, or if there is a conflict with a scientific conference or event. Attendance will be monitored and if a student is absent from more than one session without a valid reason, the student will forfeit the 0.25 graduate seminar course credit.
5. Students should obtain written approval from their advisory committee to commence writing their thesis. Written approval must be filed in the student’s file.
6. Maintain a level of productivity that will enable completion of the program in the time frame established by SGPS.
7. Observe all safety regulations and policies established by the University.

See specific sections (i.e., Qualifying Exam – Transfer Exam) for more detailed requirements.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Program (Department)

1. The program should implement and follow the policies of SGPS.
2. Programs should provide sufficient information in the letter of offer of admission to new graduate students. This would include, for example, details about means of support (e.g., TA, scholarship, supervisor funding), amount of funding, time of funding, and any initial program expectations. Information should also be provided regarding supervisor arrangements, including the assignment of supervisors, or availability of potential supervisors and their research areas.
3. Programs should provide orientation/information sessions for both new and continuing graduate students. Information conveyed in these sessions might include: overviews of program policies and requirements, areas of expertise of faculty members for research supervision, expected performance and time-lines for completion of degree requirements, intellectual property policies, publication and authorship issues, scholarship and funding information, TA information (and for international students, information about visa
requirements and employment regulations), information on policies regarding the proper conduct of research, sexual harassment and race relations, AIDS policies, information about safety and work place regulations, procedures for complaints and appeals, and information on help lines, advisory offices, and counseling services.

4. The program should ensure that each new graduate student has an identified supervisor (or interim supervisor/program consultant) as soon as possible after starting the program. The program should also ensure that the advisory committee is in place at the appropriate point in time.

5. The program shall ensure that arrangements are made for an alternate supervisor if the regular supervisor either departs or is absent for an extended period.

6. The program should provide students with written guidelines of program policies and notification of any changes.

7. The program should assess and review each student’s academic and research progress, at least on an annual basis. This review would include such factors as performance on course work and Ph.D. comprehensive examinations, and thesis progress. The program should provide feedback which may include specific goals and time-lines for completion of various components of degree requirements. Feedback may also take the form of a written contract of expectations. Areas of concern and lack of progress must be clearly identified for the student.

8. The program should identify paths/resources available to students for assistance, and if they wish to raise concerns about their program, supervisor, etc.

9. The program should encourage open communication and feedback between students and supervisors on all issues, including supervisory practices.

10. The program should strive to maintain an atmosphere conducive to scholarly work by graduate students, and help enhance their creativity and productivity.

11. The program should provide mechanisms for monitoring/resolving problems which may arise between graduate students, supervisors, and members of the advisory committee, and do so in a timely fashion. Programs should further ensure that these mechanisms are congruent with established appeals policies and procedures.

12. The program should ensure a safe working environment for students, and inform them of all relevant safety and work regulations.

13. The program should ensure that a supervisor takes on only as many graduate students as he/she can properly supervise.

14. The program should ensure students are aware of evaluation criteria for all work before work commences.

**The Supervisor**

1. The supervisor should make and maintain a strong commitment to devote the required time and energy needed to successfully engage in graduate student supervision. As part of this
commitment, the supervisor should display the highest ethical standards of behavior at all times.

2. Potential supervisors should have sufficient familiarity with the field of research to provide appropriate guidance and supervision, or indicate a willingness to gain that familiarity before agreeing to act as supervisor.

3. The supervisor should discuss with the student any expectations and the relevant policies concerning authorship on publications, and issues surrounding ownership of intellectual property (this may include patents/licenses). This may result in written agreements or contracts between the supervisor and student covering these issues.

4. The supervisor should make the student aware of program requirements and deadlines, various sources of funding, policies covering the conduct of research, and any relevant safety and/or workplace regulations. The nature of any financial support provided by the supervisor should be communicated clearly to the student, in writing, including such details as the amount of financial support, the length of time of such support, and any specific conditions pertaining to this financial support.

5. The supervisor should discuss and formulate with the student a plan of study for completion of degree requirements and thesis work, with clear milestones denoting progress. This would include, for example, assisting the student in selecting and planning a suitable and manageable research project, as well as setting a viable time schedule and adhering to it for thesis progress and completion.

6. The supervisor should be available for regular consultation with the student. The supervisor and student should discuss and agree on an appropriate schedule for supervision meetings, and the supervisor should provide constructive and timely feedback to the student. More generally, the supervisor should maintain open communication and feedback with the student on all issues, including supervisory practices.

7. The supervisor should provide regular evaluations and assessments of the student’s progress and academic performance. This would include a review with the student and advisory committee, at least on an annual basis, of progress on thesis research and any other relevant degree requirements. The supervisor should then provide input to the program regarding the student’s progress.

8. The supervisor should make reasonable arrangements to ensure that adequate and appropriate research resources are available for the student’s thesis project. The supervisor should help ensure that the research environment is safe, healthy, free from harassment, discrimination, and conflict. To this end, the supervisor should be aware of all pertinent regulations and policies covering these issues.

9. The supervisor should provide guidance, instruction, and encouragement regarding the research activities of student. The supervisor should help ensure that the student has access to intellectual resources and research opportunities, and should also encourage the dissemination of research results by publications and conferences.

10. The supervisor should monitor any major discrepancies in advice given to the student by members of the advisory committee and/or supervisor, and attempt to achieve resolution and
consensus on the issue(s) involved.

11. Supervisors should make satisfactory alternative supervisor arrangements if away for a prolonged period of time.

12. Supervisors should inform the program (i.e., graduate chair or chair), in a timely fashion, of any serious difficulties which may arise in supervision. These might include major professional academic disagreements, interpersonal conflicts, or potential conflict of interest situations.

The Advisory Committee

1. In conjunction with the supervisor, the advisory committee should help the student develop a program of study, and also report on the progress of the student’s work. Members of the advisory committee thus serve to broaden and deepen the range of expertise and experience available for providing advice and for assessment of the student. As such, membership on this committee should be determined by consultation between the supervisor, student, and program if questions arise (e.g., graduate chair).

2. The advisory committee assists the supervisor with the monitoring process. This includes a report and meeting between the student, supervisor, and advisory committee, at least once per year, to review progress on degree requirements. Details on reports and advisory committee meetings are provided in the section “Advisory Committee Meeting and Reports”.

3. Members of the advisory committee may provide additional guidance and advice on the student’s thesis research project, thus complementing the expertise of the supervisor. The advisory committee members should be available to provide other sources of information to the student, and also provide constructive criticism and discussion of the student’s ideas as they develop.

4. Members of the advisory committee should be reasonably accessible to the student when called upon for discussion of the student’s academic progress, consultation on issues related to the thesis research project, and for general guidance. Advisory committee members should be reasonably available to meet at the request of the student or supervisor.

The Student

1. The student should make and maintain a strong commitment to devote the required time and energy needed to engage successfully in graduate work and research, write a thesis, and contribute fully to the scholarly and intellectual life of the University. The student should show dedicated effort to gain the background knowledge and skills needed to pursue graduate work successfully, and adhere to the highest standards of ethical behavior to assure academic integrity and professionalism.

2. The student should discuss with the supervisor any expectations concerning authorship on publications, and issues surrounding ownership of intellectual property (this may include patents/licenses). This may result in written agreements or contracts between the student and supervisor covering these issues. In this regard, the student should become familiar with relevant policies in these domains.
3. The student should become aware of all program requirements and deadlines, information about various sources of funding, and university policies covering the proper conduct of research, race relations, sexual harassment, AIDS, appeals, and any other relevant safety and/or work place policies and regulations.

4. The student should discuss and formulate with their supervisor a plan of study for completion of degree requirements and thesis work, with clear milestones denoting progress. This would include, for example, setting a viable time schedule and adhering to it for all graduate work, including thesis progress and completion. Any variations to this schedule, including prolonged absences by the student, should be discussed. More generally, the student should maintain open communication and feedback with the supervisor on all issues, including superadvisory practices.

5. The student and supervisor should discuss and agree on an appropriate schedule for supervision meetings. This discussion should also include agreement regarding appropriate time-frames for the submission of student materials to be reviewed by the supervisor, and the supervisor providing feedback. The student should be reasonably available to meet with the supervisor and advisory committee when requested, and be able to report fully and regularly on thesis progress and results.

6. The student should give serious consideration and response to comments and advice from the supervisor and committee members.

7. The student should maintain registration throughout the program and ensure, that where required, visas and employment authorization documents are kept up to date. The student should be aware of and conform to program, SGPS, and University requirements relating to deadlines, thesis style, and award applications.

8. The student should pay due attention to the need to maintain a workplace which is safe, tidy, and healthy. The student should respect the work and equipment of others, and show tolerance and respect for others sharing the same facilities. This would include, for example, cleaning up work space when finished, and complying with all safety and work regulations of the program/university.

9. The student should be thoughtful and reasonably frugal in using resources, and assist in obtaining resources for the research of other group members, when applicable.

10. Where applicable, the student should comply with all ethical policies and procedures governing human or animal research.

11. The student should meet agreed performance standards and deadlines of funding organizations, to the extent possible, when financing has been provided under a contract or grant. This would include adherence to any contractual terms under which the thesis research is conducted.

12. The student should meet the terms and conditions of any financial contractual agreements, such as a TA position.

13. The student should inform the program (i.e., graduate chair or chair), in a timely fashion, of any serious difficulties which may arise in supervision. These might include major
professional academic disagreements, interpersonal conflicts, or potential conflict of interest situations.

14. Set up a minimum of one advisory committee meeting annually.

Qualifying Exam- Transfer Exam

This exam is mandatory for all direct entry PhD students, in which case it is called qualifying exam. This exam is a requirement for MSc students who wish to transfer from the MSc to the PhD program, in which case it is called transfer exam.

The qualifying/transfer exam is designed to provide standardized criteria for entrance into the Ph.D. program. The main component of the exam will be a written summary of the project that includes the background, rationale, hypothesis and methods of the project. Following submission of the written proposal, the student will be examined orally on the proposal by an examination committee composed of three examiners. This format will encourage students to read rigorously the scientific literature in their field(s) and to think creatively and critically about their project. It is expected that this format will improve the quality of our student projects and will ultimately improve the quality of our graduates. The transfer exam will make efficient use of the student’s time in our graduate program, and will allow students to complete their degree requirements in less time. The preparation of the written exam is the responsibility of the student. Failure to write the exam within the allotted time frame will exclude a student from transferring to or continuing in the Ph.D. program.

Assessment of the Exam

The exam is designed to assess whether the student will be able to complete the research, write and defend a Ph.D. thesis that meets the University standard. The student’s performance will be assessed on the following criteria:

- The understanding of basic principles, including (but not limited to) principles behind methodology and background to the biological system.
- The feasibility of the project and the approach chosen by the student. Accommodations will be made for the relative speed of various types of research.
- The clarity of communication during the oral presentation and the questioning.
- The adequacy of the introduction and the literature review.
- The logic of reasoning and ability to defend a scientific argument upon questioning.

Timing of the Exam

Direct entry PhD student

Students who enter the Ph.D. program directly (with a BSc or an MSc) must pass the qualifying exam within 5 terms of their initial registration, but can take the exam as early as in the 3rd term following registration. Students who fail the qualifying exam will be excluded from the PhD program, and can be transferred to the MSc program upon decision of the Qualifying Exam
Committee and the Graduate Chair.

**Students in the MSc program**

SGPS at the University of Western Ontario requires that students who enter the MSc program must switch to the Ph.D. program by the end of their 5th term. Students who do not switch in this time frame can only enter the Ph.D. program after earning an MSc. Therefore, those students who wish to transfer to the Ph.D. program in the Department of Biochemistry must write the Ph.D. qualifying exam before the end of their fifth term of registration in the MSc program. (Those applying to Medical or Dental programs may make special arrangements - contact the Graduate Chair). The following conditions will apply:

- MSc Students must write the qualifying exam before entry into the Ph.D. program.
- The student should notify the Graduate Chair at the latest within the first 2 weeks of their fifth term of registration in the MSc program of their intent to write the qualifying exam. The deadline is the preceding working day, if the 2nd week deadline falls on a holiday or weekend.
- The written Proposal is submitted:
  - March 1st for May transfer date;
  - July 1 for September transfer date;
  - November 1 for January transfer date
- Students in the MSc program may write the qualifying exam at any time prior to the official deadline outlined above. The timing of the exam should be discussed with the student’s Supervisor and Advisory committee. If the decision is made to take the exam before the fifth term, students must notify the Graduate Chair within the first 2 weeks of the term that they choose to complete the examination.

**Department Graduate Student Seminars**

All students will give a seminar or poster presentation annually.

1st, 3rd and 5th year students will present their work in poster format; 1st year students at a combined research day with the undergraduate 4483 students (normally in January); 3rd year students at the London Health Research Day (normally held in March).

All other students will give seminars organized in either the fall or winter terms.

The Department will schedule the presentations. Students who are scheduled for a seminar during a time they will be absent (at a meeting, for example) should contact the Graduate Chair/Associate Chair or Graduate Administrator to reschedule to another session.

Note that attendance at the presentations is mandatory for all graduate students, as detailed in the section entitled “Department of Biochemistry Requirements” on page 8.

**The School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies Course Requirements**

All courses added or dropped by the student must be approved by the Graduate Chair of the student's program and by the Graduate Chair of the department offering the course (if the course
is not from the student's program). Courses may not normally be added and dropped after the specified deadline dates.

Deadline dates for adding or dropping a course will normally be calculated according to the table below. A course that has been dropped by the last date specified for adding a course shall be expunged from the records. A course that has been dropped after the last date specified for adding a course but before the last date specified for dropping a course without academic penalty shall be recorded as "WDN". A course that has not been dropped in accordance with the above regulations and that has not been completed satisfactorily by the student shall be recorded as "F", failures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weight of Course</th>
<th>Last Day to Add</th>
<th>Last Day to Drop</th>
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<tr>
<td>0.5, 1.0, or 2.0</td>
<td>One month from the official beginning of the term in which the course begins</td>
<td>Two months from the beginning of term in which the course begins</td>
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<tr>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>10 Business days</td>
<td>50% of the way through the course</td>
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**Auditing a Graduate Course**

The student must declare an intention to audit a graduate course by the enrolment deadline for the term, using the Graduate Course Audit Form. The student must have the instructor's signed approval to audit the course, as well as approval from the Supervisor (if applicable) and Graduate Chair. An Audit requires regular attendance and any other obligations as stated by the course instructor in the Comments/Expectations section of the Graduate Course Audit Form. If these requirements are not met, the audit will be removed from the student’s record at the instructor’s request.

After the enrolment deadline, a student may not make a change from auditing a course to taking it for credit, or vice versa, within a given term. A student may, in a subsequent term, enroll in a given course for credit that has previously been audited.

Graduate courses delivered online may not be audited without special permission from the program.

See the Graduate Administrator for the "Graduate Course Audit" form.

**Incomplete Courses**

When a student does not complete work for a one-term half course or a two-term full course by the grade submission deadline, a grade of INC appears on the transcript. The INC will be changed to a grade if the work is completed by the grade submission deadline for the term
following the one in which the INC was awarded. If a grade is not submitted by this deadline, the INC becomes a Failure.

A numerical grade submitted for an INC grade, or an F grade resulting from an INC, is final. The School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies will not consider a subsequent revision of either grade except on documented medical or compassionate grounds.

The INC grade does not apply to full courses that are longer than two terms (in these courses the interim grade of IPR stands until the student completes the course).

With the approval of their program and SGPS, students registered at Western may take courses at other Ontario universities under the Ontario Visiting Graduate Student program, without additional tuition. Courses taken under this agreement must be required for the student's degree program and must be taken for credit. For students in course based programs no more than two half- courses can be taken at another institution.

Program Course Requirements

Effective September 2013 Biochemistry Graduate courses will have a .25 credit weight. Graduate Students will also receive a .25 credit for participation in the Biochemistry Graduate Seminar Series.

Students in the MSc program must complete a total of 1 credit consisting of 0.25 credits for the seminar course + 3 other 0.25 credit courses. Courses should normally be from the 9000 level. These courses will normally be offered by the Biochemistry Department, but students can take courses outside of our program providing that they are relevant to their research (see below).

Students in the PhD program must complete a total of 1.5 credits consisting of 0.25 credits for the seminar course + 5 other 0.25 credit courses. Courses should normally be from the 9000 level. If a student has transferred from the MSc program they may include any courses taken while in the MSc.

Students can take courses outside our program with justification and approval by the Advisor/Advisory committee and the Graduate Chair. Students must take at least 1 Biochemistry graduate course (in addition to the seminar course) and may take other courses outside of Biochemistry. Requests for a substituted course should be made in writing (email) to the Graduate Administrator.

Students self-register in graduate courses and there are deadlines to be met. Students must be registered in Graduate courses (course numbers starting with “9”) before the end of the first month of the term (i.e. Sept. 30; Jan 31 or May 31). See The School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies Course Requirements on page 16.

The Graduate Administrator will register students in the Seminar course, and file the Pass/Fail grade when students have permission to write their thesis.

Graduate Students required to take a senior undergraduate level course (course numbers start with “4”) must register during the normal undergraduate add/drop period (roughly Sept. 15 and Jan. 18 - see Graduate Administrator for exact dates). Students must complete a special form
(available from the Graduate Administrator) and will not be charged additional fees for the course if it is required for their program. If the course is not required, the University will charge the student additional fees for the course.

Students wishing to take “Extra” courses, not needed for their degree will be charged the per course rate, in addition to their tuition.

For an up-to-date list of courses offered by the Biochemistry program please see the website. Please note Graduate courses are normally offered on alternate years.

Advisory Committee Meetings and Reports

The first committee meeting is especially important for MSc and direct-entry PhD students and is outlined in detail below. Students and their supervisor are responsible for recruiting Advisory Committee members. All students are responsible for composing a 3 to 4 page report, not to exceed 8,000 characters that:

1. Introduces the thesis project emphasizing the key hypothesis to be tested.
2. Describes relevant background literature.This should constitute one-third to one-half of the report (about 1.5 pages).
3. Describes and evaluates procedures being used in the studies.
4. Where possible presents relevant results.
5. Indicates the research directions.

Timing

The First Year Meeting should be held, at the latest, within one month of completing the third term. To provide the Supervisory committee sufficient time to review the report, the student should submit the report to committee members at least one week before the scheduled meeting of the Supervisory committee. The student is responsible for setting up the committee meeting.

Evaluation

The report will be evaluated by the student's Supervisory committee. No formal grade will be assigned. The student will be expected to answer questions relevant to the report. A short summary of the strengths and weaknesses of the proposal should be provided to the student by each committee member. These summaries and a copy of the report will be kept in the student’s file. If the Supervisory committee believes the report to be unacceptable the student should be clearly informed that significant improvement would be necessary for the qualifying exam and the principal supervisor should guide the student in upgrading the report to an acceptable level.

Relationship to the Qualifying Exam

The written first-year report is not meant to replace the qualifying exam but to aid the student in his/her preparation. The scope of the report is significantly less than the qualifying exam but after appropriate updating and revising, much of the report could be included as part of the
Second and Subsequent Advisory Committee Meetings

Advisory committee meetings must be held at least annually, and can be held more frequently if research progress warrants it, for example, if there is a change in research direction, or challenges are encountered such that timely completion of the graduate degree is in jeopardy. Annual reports provide an opportunity for the student to summarize research progress and help the advisory committee members to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, and possible alternatives to the research plan. A report should be provided to the committee at each annual meeting. As the committee becomes more familiar with the project, the report can focus to a greater degree on progress rather than background.

Thesis Information

For the most up-to-date information guide please see the SGPS web site: http://grad.uwo.ca/current_students/thesis/index.html

Timing

Thesis exams can be held at any time during the term. Students wishing to avoid paying tuition or who want to receive a refund should check the SGPS website for: submission timelines and Thesis Defense Only status; The Office of the Register’s website for information on refund schedules. SGPS allows no more than two weeks to make corrections. Students must ensure they check final submission deadline dates on the sites noted above.

If completing by the end of a term is not a priority tuition can be prorated by the fees office (see registrar’s web site, http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/student_finances/fees_refunds/index.html

When the thesis is thought to meet recognized scholarly standards for the discipline and degree and is ready for examination, the Faculty supervisor takes the following steps:

For MSc Students

1. The supervisor submits the “Proposed Departmental and University Examiners” form (Appendix B) to the Graduate Administrator at least 6 weeks before the exam date. This form can be found on the biochemistry website

   http://www.schulich.uwo.ca/biochem/about_us/administrative_forms.html

2. Upon return of the approved “Proposed Departmental and University Examiners” form the supervisor contacts examiners for willingness and date/time availability.

3. A completed “Master’s Thesis Examination Request Form” (Appendix C) is submitted at least 5 weeks before the exam date. Form is available at:

   http://grad.uwo.ca/current_students/thesis/forms.html
4. The MSc thesis is submitted electronically at least 4 weeks before the exam date. For thesis guidelines, see The School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies website:

http://grad.uwo.ca/current_students/thesis/index.html

For PhD Students

1. The supervisor submits the “Proposed Departmental and University Examiners” form (Appendix B) to the Graduate Administrator at least 8 weeks before the exam date. This form can be found on the biochemistry website at:

http://www.schulich.uwo.ca/biochem/about_us/administrative_forms.html.

2. Upon return of the approved “Proposed Department and University Examiners” form the supervisor contracts examiners for willingness and date/time availability.

3. A completed “Doctoral Thesis Examination Request Form” (Appendix D) is submitted at least 7 weeks before the exam date to the Graduate Administrator. Form is available at:

http://grad.uwo.ca/current_students/thesis/forms.html

4. PhD candidates must submit their thesis electronically at least 6 weeks before the exam date. For thesis guidelines see The School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies website:

http://grad.uwo.ca/current_students/thesis/index.html

5. Arrangements for the exam: the External Examiner must arrange for their own travel and accommodation for the examination. The External Examiner will submit their expenses to SGPS and the first $500 will be covered. Any expenses above $500 are the responsibility of the Supervisor except in the case where the External Examiner is giving a seminar (Menten etc.). If the external examiner will not be travelling to Western (i.e. attending remotely), arrangements must be made so that the external examiner can hear and view the candidates public lecture and participate in the exam. SGPS guidelines for this can be found in section 8.4.1, subsection 8.4.1.1, on the following web page:

https://grad.uwo.ca/administration/regulations/8.html

The Schulich technical support personnel can help to set up cameras and microphone in MSB 384; participation in the exam can usually be done with a laptop, although a backup plan (using a phone, for example) should also be made.

6. The Department does not have a specific recommended reference style. We suggest you use the style of a journal you submit to on a regular basis. SGPS does have other specific requirements such as the spine title being less than 60 characters, including spaces. A spine title must be included if your full title is more than 60 characters including spaces.

**Thesis Defense Only**

If you have completed all degree requirements (including thesis submission by the appropriate deadline) but have not defended your thesis prior to the end of the current term, you are eligible to continue your registration into the next term in Thesis Defense Only (TDO) status. This additional term makes the completion of your thesis possible while not requiring you to pay full tuition fees (ancillary fees still apply, and UHIP where applicable). This status may apply for a maximum of one term.
In order to be considered for TDO, Doctoral and Masters students must submit their thesis for examination, by the deadline set by The School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (http://grad.uwo.ca/current_students/thesis/timelines.html). The specific deadline date used by SGPS is “Final Date for Candidate to Submit Thesis for Examination to SGPS”. TDO will be granted to those students who have not been able to secure an examination board and/or examination date that falls before the end of the term.

Students who meet all TDO criteria do not need to apply for a change of status; SGPS will contact these students and their Graduate Program individually.

**Miscellaneous Items**

**Awards**

Each year students (who are eligible) should apply for external awards (CIHR, NSERC, OGS, QEII, etc.). Exact deadlines change yearly, however an idea of the timing is listed below. Check with the Graduate Administrator to see if the Department has any internal deadlines.

CIHR deadlines and the application process for PhD awards can be found on their web site (http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/193.html).

NSERC PhD applications are submitted through the Department, and then The School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. The School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies forwards information to the Departments. Normally this award is applied for in the early Fall (late Sept. or early Oct.).

OGS/QEII online application through the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (usually has a February 1 deadline). You must be a current student, or have submitted a graduate application to apply for these awards.

The harmonized CIHR/NSERC MSc competition is applied for through a link from the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. The deadline will usually be in early January.

There are Fellowships (Nellie Farthing Fellowship, Madge & Charles Macklin Fellowship) etc. which students may apply for. The Department will send out notices for these awards. Application deadlines are subject to change but usually are in April of each year.
Contact Information

Biochemistry Graduate Administrator
Barb Green
Medical Sciences Rm 342, Email: blgreen@uwo.ca;
Telephone: 661-3074, Ext. 86850

Biochemistry Graduate Chair
Dr. Brian Shilton
Medical Sciences Rm 332
Email: bshilton@uwo.ca

Biochemistry Graduate Associate Chair
Dr. Gary Shaw
Medical Sciences Rm 306
Email: gshaw1@uwo.ca

The School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies
Room 1N07 International and Graduate Affairs Building
Web site: http://grad.uwo.ca/

Vice-Provost
Dr. Linda Miller

Associate Vice-Provost (Biosciences)
Dr. Peter Simpson

Biochemistry Program Contact
Shelley Koster; Email: skoster@uwo.ca
Telephone: 661-2102, Ext. 83930

Thesis Co-ordinator
Krystyna Locke; Email: klocke2@uwo.ca
Telephone: 661-2102, Ext. 83914

Awards Co-ordinator
Paula Menzies; Email: pmenzies@uwo.ca
Telephone: 661-2102, Ext. 84615

Assistant Dean, Graduate Studies
Schulich Medicine & Dentistry
Dr. Susanne Schmid;
Email: Susanne.Schmid@schulich.uwo.ca

Society of Graduate Studies
University Community Centre
Room 260
Web site: https://sogs.ca/

Office of the Registrar
Room 1120 Western Student Services Building
Web site: http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/index.html

Campus Recreation
Western Student Recreation Centre
Telephone: 661-3090
<table>
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<tr>
<td>Computer Store and Services</td>
<td>Lower level University Community Centre in Rm 36B</td>
<td>Telephone: 661-3520; Fax: 661-3989</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Web Site: <a href="http://www.uwo.ca/ccstore/">http://www.uwo.ca/ccstore/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>ITS Help Desk</td>
<td>Main Floor Support Services Building (SSB)</td>
<td>Telephone: 661-3800, Ext. 83800</td>
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<td>Web Site <a href="https://wts.uwo.ca/get_help/index.html">https://wts.uwo.ca/get_help/index.html</a></td>
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<td>Schulich School of Medicine and Dentistry Information Services (IS)</td>
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<td>Help Desk: Ext. 81377 Web Site <a href="http://www.schulich.uwo.ca/IS/">http://www.schulich.uwo.ca/IS/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Health Services</td>
<td>Room 11, Lower level, University Community Centre</td>
<td>Telephone: 661-3030, Ext. 83030</td>
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<td>Web Site: <a href="http://www.shs.uwo.ca/">http://www.shs.uwo.ca/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Office of the Ombudsperson</td>
<td>Room 251 University Community Centre</td>
<td>Monday - Friday: 8:30 am - 4:30 pm</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Telephone: 661-3573; Fax: 661-3924</td>
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<td>Web Site: <a href="http://www.uwo.ca/ombuds/">http://www.uwo.ca/ombuds/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Development Centre Services for Students With Disabilities</td>
<td>Room 210 University Community Centre</td>
<td>Telephone: 661-3031 or 661-3559</td>
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<td>Fax: 661-3949</td>
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<td>Web Site: <a href="http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/">http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>International Student Advising The International and Exchange Student Centre</td>
<td>Room 2120, Western Student Services Building</td>
<td>Phone: 519-661-2111 ext. 85908</td>
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<td>Parking</td>
<td>Rm. 4150 Support Services Building (SSB)</td>
<td>Telephone: 661-3973; Fax: 850-2330</td>
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2017-2018 Departmental Graduate Student Representatives

Department: Karen Dunkerley
Graduate Studies: Dan Giguere
Undergraduate: Thomas Hamilton
Area, Safety & Equipment: Vacant
Visiting Speaker: Jeremy Lant
SOGS: 3 official
Gabe Onea
Nadun Karunatilleke
Proctoring: Matt Berg
Social Committee: Aren Marshall
Ryan Cochrane
Outreach: Vacant
Graduate Endowment Fund: Vacant
Menten Memorial Lecture Committee: Jeremy Lant
Schulich School of Medicine Dentistry: Allison Dilliott

Biochemistry Graduate Student Association

Co-Chairs
Karen Dunkerley
Matthew Maitland
Treasurer
Matthew Berg
Scholarships
Jacqueline Dron
Communications
Matthew Maitland
Careers/Professional Development
Aisha Freeman
Date of Meeting: 
Name of Student: 

Date of Initial Registration Expected Date of Completion:  
in Program: 

Title of Research Topic: 

Was a written summary/proposal by the student given to the committee? Yes  
(Please submit an electronic copy of summary/proposal to Barb Green)  
No, why not: 

**PROGRESS TOWARDS DEGREE – please elaborate**  

Familiarity with Subject of Research:  
Satisfactory  Not Satisfactory  
5 4 3 2 1  

Comments for rating (both Satisfactory and Unsatisfactory). **This section is mandatory.**

Progress in Research:  
Satisfactory  Not Satisfactory  
5 4 3 2 1  

Comments for rating (both Satisfactory and Unsatisfactory). **This section is mandatory.**

**NOTE:** If a box is checked NOT Satisfactory, the committee must provide constructive comments to help resolve the issue. NOT SATISFACTORY can result from (but not limited to) poor attendance, lack of effort from the student, or failure to review relevant literature. If a box is checked NOT SATISFACTORY, a follow-up committee meeting should be organized within 3 months to address any concerns. If there are two consecutive NOT SATISFACTORY reports in any category, the student’s participation in the graduate program will be reviewed in consultation with the student’s supervisor, advisory committee, and grad chair.
Course Work:

Does student intend to go onto a Ph.D.?

Is the student maintaining a reasonable timetable for completion of (present) degree?

General Evaluation/Comments (should include foreseeable problem areas)

If applicable, has permission to start writing thesis:

Supervisor and student have discussed research expectations if the student accepts a TA position.

Signatures (entering a name will constitute a signature) (to be done upon completion of form):

Upon entering my name on this form, I acknowledge reading the completed form.

Student

Advisory Committee Members

Supervisor

Co/Joint Supervisor

Date of Signing

NOTE: This form will be completed by the student's advisory committee as a group, or, individual forms will be completed by each committee member upon request (of the latter) by at least one committee member.

Revised: 02/2015
Title of Research: __

Advisory Committee Members: __

Proposed Exam Date: ____

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<th>No.</th>
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Department Use Only:

Date Received   Date Approved   Date Returned to Advisor
### MASTERS THESIS EXAMINATION REQUEST FORM

**SGPS USE ONLY – REQUEST FORM APPROVAL**

Date | Approved by
--- | ---
Thesis Submission Date | 

#### CANDIDATE DETAILS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email</th>
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<tr>
<td>(Last Name, First Name)</td>
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<td>Student Number</td>
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#### SUPERVISORY DETAILS

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<tr>
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<td>(Last Name, First Name)</td>
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<td>- select one -</td>
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<tr>
<td>Additional Supervisor Name (if applicable, include co/joint)</td>
<td>Email</td>
<td>Role - select one -</td>
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#### THESIS EXAMINATION DETAILS

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<tr>
<th>Public Lecture Date</th>
<th>Start Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Examination Date</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program Examiner 1</td>
<td>Email</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Last Name, First Name)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program Examiner 2</td>
<td>Email</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>University Examiner</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Last Name, First Name)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chair of Examination</td>
<td>Email</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Last Name, First Name)</td>
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- Is an examiner participating remotely? □ Yes □ No
- Which examiner is participating remotely? -
- Primary remote method: (Include contact information e.g. Skype ID)
- Backup remote method: (Include contact information e.g. Phone Number)
- Is an open defense requested? □ Yes □ No
- Does the thesis examination require a confidentiality agreement? □ Yes □ No

#### APPROVALS

**Candidate:** In my judgment my thesis is ready for examination. I am aware of the implications of electronic publication.

Signature of Candidate | Date
--- | ---
I will request a delay of publication should my thesis be accepted. □ Yes □ No If yes, proposed date of release: ____________

**Graduate Assistant:** The candidate has completed all non-thesis degree requirements (including collaborative requirements if relevant) as reflected on the candidate’s academic record. The proposed Examiners hold the necessary membership levels.

Signature of Graduate Assistant | Date
--- | ---

**Supervisor:** In my judgment the thesis meets recognized scholarly standards for the degree and is therefore ready for Examination.

Signature of Supervisor | Date
--- | ---
□ Yes □ No (If No, please attach written reasons)

Signature of Additional Supervisor (if applicable) | Date
--- | ---
□ Yes □ No (If No, please attach written reasons)

**Graduate Chair:** Provisional consent has been obtained from all proposed Examiners. I am not aware of any potential conflict of interest that the proposed Examiners have with the Candidate and/or Supervisor. If the Supervisor(s) has judged the thesis not ready for examination, I have provided the candidate with a copy of the written reasons for withholding approval.

Signature of Graduate Chair | Date
# DOCTORAL THESIS EXAMINATION REQUEST FORM

## CANDIDATE DETAILS
- **Name**
  - (Last Name, First Name)
- **Email**
- **Student Number**
- **Graduate Program**

## SUPERVISORY DETAILS
- **Supervisor Name**
  - (Last Name, First Name)
- **Email**
- **Role** - select one -
- **Additional Supervisor Name**
  - (if applicable, include co/joint)
- **Email**
- **Role** - select one -

## THESIS EXAMINATION DETAILS
- **Public Lecture Date**
- **Start Time**
- **Location**
- **Examination Date**
- **Start Time**
- **Location**
- **Program Examiner 1**
  - (Last Name, First Name)
- **Email**
- **Program Examiner 2**
  - (Last Name, First Name)
- **Email**
- **University Examiner**
  - (Last Name, First Name)
- **Email**
- **External Examiner**
  - (Last Name, First Name)
- **Email**
- **External Examiner Institution**
- **Phone Number**

- **Is an examiner participating remotely?**
  - □ Yes  ✔️ No
  - Which examiner is participating remotely? -

  **Primary remote method:**
  - (Include contact information e.g. Skype ID)

  **Backup remote method:**
  - (Include contact information e.g. Phone Number)

- **Is an open defense requested?**
  - The student and graduate program, by mutual agreement, request that the defense be open to the university community (faculty, academic colleagues, and students)
  - □ Yes  ✔️ No

- **Does the thesis examination require a confidentiality agreement?**
  - Please attach copies of the agreement signed by the Examiners
  - □ Yes  ✔️ No

## APPROVALS

### Candidate:
In my judgment my thesis is ready for examination. I am aware of the implications of electronic publication.

- **Signature of Candidate**
- **Date**

  I will request a delay of publication should my thesis be accepted.
  - □ Yes  □ No  If yes, proposed date of release: 

### Graduate Assistant:
The candidate has completed all non-thesis degree requirements (including collaborative requirements if relevant) as reflected on the candidate’s academic record. The proposed Examiners hold the necessary membership levels.

- **Signature of Graduate Assistant**
- **Date**

### Supervisor:
In my judgment the thesis meets recognized scholarly standards for the degree and is therefore ready for Examination.

- **Signature of Supervisor**
- **Date**

  □ Yes  □ No (If No, please attach written reasons)

### Additional Supervisor (if applicable):

- **Signature of Additional Supervisor (if applicable)**
- **Date**

  □ Yes  □ No (If No, please attach written reasons)

### Graduate Chair:
Provisional consent has been obtained from all proposed Examiners. I am not aware of any potential conflict of interest that the proposed Examiners have with the Candidate and/or Supervisor. If the Supervisor(s) has judged the thesis not ready for examination, I have provided the candidate with a copy of the written reasons for withholding approval.

- **Signature of Graduate Chair**
- **Date**