Graduate Student Welcome Guide

Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics
2019-2020 Academic Year
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Welcome to Western University and the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics.

We hope the following information will help to guide you smoothly through some important administrative details and prepare you for life as a graduate student on our campus. As always, if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact your administrative team.

Contact Information

Faculty Leaders

Dr. Saverio Stranges  
**Professor, Department Chair**  
Email: saverio.stranges@uwo.ca  
Phone: 519.661.2111 X86267

Dr. Piotr Wilk  
**Associate Professor, Graduate Chair**  
Email: pwilk3@uwo.ca  
Phone: 519.661.2111 X89109

Dr. Neil Klar  
**Associate Professor, Undergraduate Chair**  
Email: nklar@uwo.ca  
Phone: 519.661.2111 X86275

Administrative Staff

Angela DeCandido  
**Manager, Administration & Finance**  
Email: adecandi@uwo.ca  
Phone: 519.661.2111 X86255

Sarah Guerrero  
**Academic Programs Coordinator (APC)**  
Email: smccar5@uwo.ca  
Phone: 519.661.2111 X86263

Kim McCready  
**Communications & Student Outreach**  
Email: kmccrea7@uwo.ca  
Phone: 519.661.2111 X86270

General Inquiries

**Mailing Address:**

Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics  
Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry  
Western University  
Kresge Bldg., Rm. K201  
London, Ontario, Canada N6A 5C1

Email: epibio@uwo.ca  
Phone: 519.661.2111 X82162  
Fax: 519.661.3766
Important Information

Methods of Communication:

Website

Please refer to our website, The Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics, as your first source of information.

E-Mail

If you have not already done so, please activate your Western Identity by going to Western Technology Services Activating Your Western Identity page.

Your Western email address will always be used for departmental and central e-mail communications. Not checking your email is not a valid reason for missing a deadline or other important information.

The Western email setup guide for computers and mobile devices is available at Western Technology Services (WTS): Email. If you experience any technical difficulties, please access WTS: Helpdesk for assistance.

Please check your Western email daily for important information such as scholarship information, class information from course instructors, memos from the School of Graduate and Postgraduate Studies (SGPS), etc. If you have another email account that you tend to use regularly then you may wish to forward your Western email accordingly (see WTS: Account for instructions on forwarding your email messages to another email address).

Social Media

We are active on Facebook and Twitter (@westernuepibio). We also have a LinkedIn group for alumni, students and faculty that you are encouraged to join.

Home Address, Emergency Contacts, and Release of Information

If your address changes, please be sure to update both your Student Centre and myHR accounts. A change in one does not transfer to the other. Important documents are sent using both systems including income tax forms and cheques (if not set-up for direct deposit pay).

To update your current address, emergency contacts and Release of Information (ROI) form in Student Centre, please log in to Student Centre and click the links under the Personal Information heading.

To update your current address and emergency contacts in myHR please login to Human Resources, click on the Personal Details icon and then the Home Address and Emergency Contacts links in the left navigation column.
The Wire
Published by SGPS, The Wire is your one-stop online destination for upcoming deadlines, current events, innovative training, and more to help you navigate the many exciting opportunities available to you as a Western graduate student. Please visit their site and Subscribe to the blog's feed or set up feed access for your mobile device.

On Campus

Photo ID
If you have not already uploaded your photo to the Office of the Registrar and received your Western ONECard, instructions regarding how to obtain your photo ID (student card) are here: Western ONECard and Photo Standards.

Bus Pass
New Western Students
Your Western ONECard student card functions as your tap bus pass. If you experience issues with your card, however, please visit the Society of Graduate Students (SOGS) Office to pick up a paper bus pass until the issue with your card is resolved. Your card may not be active for up to 48 hours after you receive it.

Returning Western Students
If you have a Western ONECard from earlier than September 2016, you will need to pick up a paper bus pass from the SOGS office. They will announce bus pass availability on their website, including pick up times. You will need to be registered for the upcoming term before you can receive your bus pass. If you have any questions about the bus pass, please contact SOGS.

Don't know how to get around London and campus using LTC buses? Visit the LTC website: London Transit Commission.

In the Kresge Building

Printing, Faxing, and Scanning
Printing services are provided in the John J. Koval Graduate Student Computing Lab, located on the first floor in K7. Please practice responsible printing etiquette by printing only when absolutely necessary. Please report a shortage of paper and/or toner in K7 to the Academic Programs Coordinator. The fax machine in K201 (main office) is reserved for program purposes only. If you require use of the fax machine for personal correspondence, please ask the main office for assistance. A scanning station is available at the Taylor Library (Natural Sciences Building).

Poster Printing
Throughout the program, you will have opportunities to present a poster on your thesis work. For information on poster templates and poster printing services, please visit: Poster Printing. Following your presentation, the department would gladly recycle your poster to display in the frames in the Kresge hallways.
Office Access

Year 1 MSc students will share flex space in K8, the room adjacent to the K7 lab. Desks are not assigned to any one particular student and we ask that you be considerate of the communal aspect of the space (e.g. quiet conversations, no group meetings, etc.). Quiet study space can also be booked through the Western Libraries.

You will be requesting the necessary keys required for room access during orientation. The Western Keys Office will contact you when your keys are ready for pick-up. Please do not wait to pick up your keys, as the request expires after 30 days.

After-hours (i.e. evenings, weekends, holidays) card access to the Kresge Building will be requested for you. This access is set to expire at the end of your program. Placing your Western ONECard on the keypad located at the front door of the Kresge Building will open the door for you after-hours. If you encounter difficulties with your access, please speak with the Academic Programs Coordinator.

Mail Boxes

Mail boxes (in alphabetical order, by first letter of surname) are located in the main office, Kresge K201. Please check on a weekly basis (at a minimum). The department will only notify you if you receive a cheque by mail. You may have academic or professional documents and items mailed to the department on your behalf, using the mailing address listed in our contact information, on page 4.

Departmental Library

If you wish to borrow any of our students’ MSc and PhD theses from the K116 conference room library, please visit the Academic Programs Coordinator to sign out the books. Please note, however, that most of our recent graduates’ theses are available through the online database: Scholarship@Western.

Room Booking

The department's conference room is located on the second floor in K116. The K116 Booking Calendar is available for viewing online (see link at top right corner of our department home page). Booking requests for K116 may be submitted online by filling out the form available at: K116 Room Booking Requests. For other room bookings (such as classrooms) please contact the Communications & Student Outreach Coordinator.

Kitchen Facilities in KB 111 and First Aid

The kitchen is equipped with a kettle, fridge, toaster oven, coffee maker, and microwave for your use. This kitchen is a shared facility so it is expected that everyone will do their part to ensure its cleanliness (soap, J-cloths, and paper towels are provided). Please clean any appliances or dishes/cutlery that you use. We also ask that you be considerate of the space in the fridge, by not storing food for longer than one week.

The First Aid Kit is also located in the kitchen. Contact information for the first aid representative for the department is located next to the First Aid Kit. Please ensure that when you use the first aid kit, that you let the office staff in K201 know so that supplies can be restocked.
For our International Students

International students will need to present their study permit in person to the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (SGPS) located in the International and Graduate Affairs Building, Room 1N07, in order to be **term activated**.

To be employed in Canada, you MUST have and maintain an eligible Social Insurance Number (SIN). For information on how to apply for a SIN please view the information available from the **International & Exchange Student Centre**.

For our Domestic Students

**Term activation** for domestic students occurs automatically about one month before the term begins.

For All Students

Students must be **term activated** to be able to log in and register for courses and to login to OWL to begin training modules. Please note that this means International Students may not be able to complete their registration and training until they have arrived on campus for the Fall Term.

If you have not already done so, you will be required to set up a Canadian bank account. The following link will provide you with the details to update the **Human Resources** system with your banking information for direct deposit: **Critical Information for New Employees**.
## Academic Sessional Dates

View Important Dates on the SGPS website at: [SGPS Regulations: General Information](#).

**Other useful Calendars/Dates:** [Western Holiday Schedule](#); [Official Multi-faith Calendar](#).

### Key Dates (Fall Term) | Graduate Fall Term (A): 0.50 Credit Courses
---|---
Classes Begin Week Of | Thursday, September 5, 2019
Add Deadline | Monday, September 30, 2019
Drop Deadline (without appearing on transcript)* | Monday, September 30, 2019
Drop Deadline (without academic penalty)** | Thursday, October 31, 2019
Classes End | Thursday, December 5, 2019
Exam Week Starts (if applicable) | Monday, December 9, 2019
Total # of Teaching Weeks | 14

### Graduate Fall Term (Q): 0.25 Credit Courses
---|---
Classes Begin Week Of | Thursday, September 5, 2019
Add Deadline | Friday, September 13, 2019
Drop Deadline (without appearing on transcript)* | Friday, September 13, 2019
Drop Deadline (without academic penalty)** | End of the business day on which the 3rd class takes place
Classes End | Friday, October 18, 2019
Exam Week Starts (if applicable) | Monday, October 21, 2019
Total # of Teaching Weeks | 7

### Graduate Fall Term (R): 0.25 Credit Courses
---|---
Classes Begin Week Of | Monday, October 28, 2019
Add Deadline | Monday, November 4, 2019
Drop Deadline (without appearing on transcript)* | Monday, November 4, 2019
Drop Deadline (without academic penalty)** | End of the business day on which the 3rd class takes place
Classes End | Thursday, December 5, 2019
Exam Week Starts (if applicable) | Monday, December 9, 2019
Total # of Teaching Weeks | 7

### Important Dates:
---|---
Thanksgiving Monday | October 14, 2019
Fall Reading Break (Undergraduate Only) | November 4 -10, 2019

### Notes:
- * Students who drop a course after this date but before the Drop Deadline (without academic penalty) date will receive a WDN (Withdrawn) on their transcript.
- ** Students who drop after this date will receive an F (Fail) on their transcript. 50% of a 6 week quarter course is defined as the end of the business day on which the 3rd class takes place.
- *** If this deadline occurs on a Saturday, Sunday or Statutory Holiday it will be extended to the next business day.
## Key Dates (Winter Term)

### Graduate Winter Term (B): 0.50 Credit Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classes Begin Week of (Monday)</td>
<td>Monday, January 6, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add Deadline</td>
<td>Tuesday, January 14, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drop Deadline (without appearing on transcript)*</td>
<td>Tuesday, January 14, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drop Deadline (without academic penalty)**</td>
<td>Saturday, March 7, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classes End Week of (Friday)</td>
<td>Thursday, April 9, 2020 (April 10 is Good Friday)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam Week Starts (if applicable)</td>
<td>Saturday, April 11, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total # of Teaching Weeks</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Graduate Winter Term (S): 0.25 Credit Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classes Begin Week of (Monday)</td>
<td>Monday, January 6, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add Deadline</td>
<td>Friday, January 10, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drop Deadline (without appearing on transcript)*</td>
<td>Friday, January 10, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drop Deadline (without academic penalty)**</td>
<td>End of the business day on which the 3rd class takes place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classes End Week of (Friday)</td>
<td>Friday, February 14, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam Week (if applicable)</td>
<td>February 18-21 (February 17 is Family Day, note this is also Reading Week for Undergraduate Students)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total # of Teaching Weeks</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Graduate Winter Term (T): 0.25 Credit Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classes Begin Week of (Monday)</td>
<td>Monday, February 24, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add Deadline</td>
<td>Friday, February 28, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drop Deadline (without appearing on transcript)*</td>
<td>Friday, February 28, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drop Deadline (without academic penalty)**</td>
<td>End of the business day on which the 3rd class takes place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classes End Week of (Friday)</td>
<td>Thursday, April 9, 2020 (April 10 is Good Friday)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam Week Starts (if applicable)</td>
<td>Saturday, April 11, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total # of Teaching Weeks</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Important Dates:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family Day</td>
<td>Monday, February 17, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring Reading Break (Undergraduate Only)</td>
<td>February 17-21, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Friday</td>
<td>Friday, April 10, 2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Notes:

* Students who drop a course after this date but before the Drop Deadline (without academic penalty) date will receive a WDN (Withdrawn) on their transcript.

** Students who drop after this date will receive an F (Fail) on their transcript. 50% of a 6 week quarter course is defined as the end of the business day on which the 3rd class takes place.

*** If this deadline occurs on a Saturday, Sunday or Statutory Holiday it will be extended to the next business day.
Key Dates (Summer Term)

Graduate Summer Term (U): 0.25 Credit Courses

Official course schedule dates to be confirmed at a later time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Important Dates:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Victoria Day</td>
<td>May 18, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring Convocation</td>
<td>May 22, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada Day</td>
<td>July 1, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic Holiday</td>
<td>August 3, 2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Course Information

Up-to-date course information is available online. Please review the following pages from our website.

- **Course Schedule** - Our graduate course schedule, including a syllabus for each course, is generally posted at least two weeks before the start of each term
- **Course Requirements**
- **Course Description**

Course Registration

Please review course requirements and register for your **Fall Term required courses** at your earliest convenience. Your elective courses should be selected in discussion with your supervisor(s). During orientation there will be time set aside to address any questions or issues you may experience with this process.

Registration Instructions

Please begin by logging into **Student Center** (student.uwo.ca).

1. On the right, under “Enrollment Dates”, click “Details”
2. Select the “Add” tab

3. Click “search” to search for classes
4. Search by Subject (EPIDEMIO or BIOSTATS).
5. Click “search”

6. The available classes will be shown. Click the down arrow to display more information.
7. Check the class details, and click “select class”
8. Click “Next”

9. Proceed to the next step (note you are not yet enrolled in the class until you have completed the process; click “Proceed to Step 2 of 3”).
10. Finalize enrollment in the course, click “Finish Enrolling”. You may continue to add courses after you have selected “Finished Enrolling”.

11. If you have successfully added classes, under the Status heading you will see a green checkmark.

12. To begin the process again and add another class, click “Add Another Class”.

13. To view the courses you’ve enrolled in, click “My Class Schedule”.
Milestones

A milestone is a learning activity that must be successfully completed in order to fulfill the requirements of the graduate degree. If grades are assigned, they do not contribute to the student’s academic average.

Graduate students in our program are responsible for completing the following two milestones:

1. **Research Seminar Milestone.** All first-year graduate students are required to attend the weekly departmental Seminar Series in the first two terms of registration (fall and winter). This seminar series milestone will appear on the transcript as complete or incomplete, based on student participation (at least 80% attendance is required). Students who miss more than 20% of seminars in the first year will have to complete the missed seminars in their second year. The Seminar Series Schedule is available online and are listed on our Events page.

2. **Introduction to Basic Medical Sciences Milestone.** This milestone is administered by Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs at Schulich Medicine & Dentistry. It includes Research Ethics, Human Ethics and Animal Ethics. It is modular-based training to provide insight as to what is ahead in your graduate degree. All materials will be by video, and available in OWL, including the quizzes. Students will have three weeks to complete the quizzes in September. Information regarding this milestone will be communicated to students by Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs at Schulich Medicine & Dentistry.
Required Training

All required training modules must be completed successfully. The department reserves the right to withhold payments from students who are not compliant with mandatory training requirements. We request that all training requirements are met by the end of September, and we encourage you to complete them prior to or during department orientation.

Academic Integrity Module

All graduate students are required to complete the Academic Integrity Module run by SGPS in order to continue into the second term of the program. This is outlined in section 4.11 of the [Graduate Student Regulations](#).

Eligible students can access the module in the [Graduate Student Web Services Portal](#). Instructions regarding access and how to complete the quiz will be emailed to students no later than the first week of their first term.

A Statement of Professional Conduct will be provided to you to sign as part of your orientation information package. Further information on scholastic offences will also be provided during department orientation events.

Human Resources/Employee Modules

All students are required to complete the following online training modules using OWL, no later than September 30, 2019:

- WHMIS (Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System)
- Health and Safety Awareness Training (Worker)
- Safe Campus Community
- Accessibility in Service or Accessibility in Teaching

Register for an Employee Training Module

You must have an employment record established on My Human Resources. For more information regarding your Human Resources login, please see the web page: [Who Can Access Training](#).

Access the Training Modules:

- On the [Required Training](#) web page, click on the course title to expand the section.
- Look for the title Course Link and follow instructions.
- In OWL, login using the same User ID and password that you use to login to My Human Resources.
- Click on “Yes, please add me” to join the course worksite.
- Go to the Instructions or Start page to begin

Need Help?

A [Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)](#) page is available.
Funding Information

Please carefully review the following funding information. **Please prepare any questions and inquiries to be raised during the group lab session for inquires at Orientation.**

Funding arrangements vary widely by student. Your specific funding commitment was detailed in the departmental offer letter you received and approved at the time of admission. Please discuss the details of your specific funding package with your supervisor in September.

The information below is intended to provide a snapshot of the types of funding you may receive, as well as the mechanisms by which these funds are administered.

Key link: [Funding & Fees](#)

### Types of Funding Received Through Your Student Centre

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>WGRS</strong></th>
<th><strong>Western Graduate Research Scholarship (WGRS)</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eligibility Criteria:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Full-time registration status with cumulative average of ≥ 78%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Up to 6 terms for MSc students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Up to 12 terms for PhD students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Up to 15 terms for MSc to PhD transfer students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Timing:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Three equal installments at the beginning of each term (Sep/Jan/May)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Amount per Term:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• MSc Domestic: $1,000 per term</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• MSc International: $3,600 per term</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• PhD Domestic: $2,333 per term</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• PhD International: $1,500 per term</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Notes:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• WGRS will be removed for external award winners of ≥ $40,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• WGRS is not awarded to self-funded or sponsored students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• WGRS only covers partial tuition and fees; you must pay the balance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Department Donor Awards</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Dr. Carol Buck Graduate Scholarship in Epidemiology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Dr. Jim Robertson Award in Epidemiology and Biostatistics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <a href="#">Donor Award Search</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Timing:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• One lump sum payment in Fall (Buck) and Winter (Robertson)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### External Scholarships (e.g. NSERC, CIHR, OGS, QEII)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>External Scholarship Funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eligibility Criteria:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Will vary by competition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Timing:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Three equal installments at the beginning of each term (Sep/Jan/May)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Amount per Term:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Range of $15,000-$17,500 per year for MSc students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Range of $15,000-$40,000 per year for PhD students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Notes:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Award funding will be applied to your tuition and fees balance first; if a credit exists on your account, a refund will be issued via direct deposit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Important to Note!** You must have automatic bank deposit (EFT) set up through your Western ‘My HR’ to receive any funds through your Student Centre. Otherwise, you will not have quick access to these funds.

After full tuition and fees has been paid, any dollar amount listed in your Student Centre with a ‘-‘ sign in front of it, means you will receive that amount via EFT.

**The first payment process for each new term will always run the Tuesday of the second FULL week of the term and on every Tuesday evening after that. Students will receive their funds via EFT within 3 days.**

### Types of Funding Received Through ‘MyHR’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grad Stipends</th>
<th>Graduate Research Assistantship (GRA)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>GRA Stipends</strong></td>
<td>A GRA stipend is monthly compensation from a supervisor’s research grant for thesis or thesis related activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Graduate Research Assistantship (GRA)</strong></td>
<td>There is no minimum GRA stipend amount for MSc students (i.e. can be $0) whereas for PhD students, the minimum is $13,000 per year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GRA stipends, if applicable, are issued by direct deposit on the second last business day of the month.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To set-up direct deposit:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• login to myHR.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• click on the &quot;Pay&quot; icon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• select &quot;Direct Deposit Account&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Studentships/Fellowships

Studentships/fellowships are secured from sources other than provincial or national scholarship programs (e.g. foundations, research networks, or the Lawson Health Research Institute).

If you receive a studentship or fellowship, it is extremely important to notify the Academic Programs Coordinator immediately for proper processing.

### GSA

**Graduate Student Assistantship (GSA)**

GSAs are offered to students on an ‘ad hoc’ basis by supervisors who require additional research assistance. GSA duties should be unrelated to a student’s thesis and should generally not exceed 10 hours per week.

### GTA

**Graduate Teaching Assistantship (GTA)**

Graduate Teaching Assistants assist undergraduate and/or graduate course instructors with a variety of duties, including, but not limited to, leading labs and tutorials, meeting with students, and marking. GTAs are unionized staff at Western.

The departmental process for assigning GTAs will be discussed at orientation however please note the following:

- We have a limited number of GTA positions to assign
- Students who have previously held a GTA position are considered first
- Preferably, a GTA has taken, and performed well, in the assigned course(s)

GTA assignments are made by the Graduate Chair, in consultation with the course instructor. Students’ GRA stipend, if applicable, may decrease in the term in which they hold a GTA appointment. For this reason, students should speak with their supervisor(s) about the possible implications to their funding PRIOR to accepting a GTA position.

---

**Preparing for Scholarship Competitions**

SGPS hosts a variety of scholarship-specific seminars and workshops designed to assist students prepare strong applications. Please watch for announcements from the Academic Programs Coordinator or via "The Wire" regarding these sessions. Students are strongly encouraged to attend any workshops covering the scholarships for which they plan to apply.

**Mercury Graduate Funding Portal**

"Mercury" is the tool used to communicate funding plans to graduate students at Western. Each student will receive a preliminary funding plan in August/September, based on their departmental offer of admission. Supervisors and students will be required to electronically acknowledge receipt of the plan. As funding plans change (e.g. if a student is awarded an external scholarship, GTA, or fellowship), a revised funding plan will be generated and circulated within Mercury to the student and his/her supervisor(s).
Looking Ahead to Year 2 and Beyond

Program Information

Our program information is available online for both current Master’s and Doctoral students. The website includes details about progression, registration, changes of status, appeals, thesis requirements, and supervision.

Acceptable Progression

The Departmental Graduate Affairs Committee may require a student to withdraw from the program if he or she is not making adequate progress. This progress includes:

- Following the recommended time line
- Regularly meeting with the thesis supervisor and maintaining a continued effort on the thesis research
- Maintaining a cumulative average of at least 70% calculated each term over all courses taken for credit, with no grade less than 60%

Review of Student Progress

The primary purpose of the annual review of student progress is to identify departures from the normal time line so that appropriate actions can be taken as soon as possible. It is the student's responsibility to initiate the process, and timely compliance is itself a formal progression requirement.

Review of student progress is a 2-step process whereby the student: (1) completes Part A of the form and (2) schedules an in-person meeting with his/her supervisor(s) to complete Part B. The form is then signed by both the student and supervisor(s) and submitted by the deadline to the Academic Programs Coordinator. Copies should be kept by both the supervisor(s) and the student. Supervisor, and if applicable, co-supervisor signatures, are required on the form.

Master’s Candidates

Master’s to Doctoral Transfer

Master’s degree students may apply to transfer from the Master’s to the Doctoral degree within the same program, without completion of the Master’s degree. An application to transfer will be assessed based on the applicant ranking in the 50% percentile of the cohort (in core courses with only MSc students ranked), a letter of support from the supervisor(s) to the Graduate Affairs Committee (GAC), and a completed application form. There is no guarantee that all eligible applicants will be accepted; the GAC will make decisions on case-by-case basis. Students are encouraged to consult with the Academic Programs Coordinator before applying. Transfers from the Master’s to the Doctoral program must take place before the sixth term of Master’s registration.

The Vice-Provost (Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies) will consider such requests on the recommendation of the program.
Master’s Candidate Thesis Timeline Samples

Please note this chart is for demonstrative purposes only, as the official timeline charts for 2020-21 and beyond have not yet been produced or released by SPGS. You can find the most recent updates online at [Thesis Timelines](#).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Final Date for Program to Submit Examination Request to SGPS</th>
<th>Final Date for Candidate to Submit Thesis for Examination to SGPS</th>
<th>Final Date for Final Examination</th>
<th>Final Date for Final Submission of the Thesis</th>
<th>Notes</th>
<th>Convocation Eligibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November 19, 2019</td>
<td>November 26, 2018</td>
<td>December 17, 2019</td>
<td>December 24, 2019</td>
<td>Last term of registration is Fall 2019</td>
<td>Award Degree in Absentia, February 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 26, 2020</td>
<td>April 2, 2020</td>
<td>April 23, 2020</td>
<td>April 30, 2020</td>
<td>Last term of registration is Winter 2020</td>
<td>Eligible for Spring Convocation 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 28, 2020</td>
<td>August 4, 2020</td>
<td>August 24, 2020</td>
<td>August 31, 2020</td>
<td>Last term of registration is Summer 2020</td>
<td>Eligible for Fall Convocation 2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*If this date falls on a weekend or holiday, the submission will be reviewed on the next business day.
Master’s Thesis Examination Timeline Chart

**PREPARE TO SUBMIT FORM**
- 5 Weeks Before
- Download and submit completed form with your supervisor(s) from the department on their website.
- The APC will return an email notifying you that you have been assigned the appropriate academic standing examination (ACE) and submit the form to the Academic Studies Board (ACB) via email.

**INTENT TO SUBMIT FORM**
- 6-8 Weeks Before
- Submit the Intent to Submit form to the Examination Coordinator (ACE) via email.
- The APC will return an email notifying you that you have been assigned the appropriate academic standing examination (ACE) and submit the form to the Academic Studies Board (ACB) via email.

**EXAM SUBMISSION TO SGPS**
- 4 Weeks Before
- The APC will book an examination date with the Academic Studies Board (SGPS) via email.
- The APC will return an email notifying you that you have been assigned the appropriate academic standing examination (ACE) and submit the form to the Academic Studies Board (ACB) via email.

**THESES APPROVED FOR EXAM DATE**
- 1 Week Before
- Submit the preliminary draft of your thesis to SGPS via their website.
- Submit the notification to the student and the supervisor(s) of the approval of the examination date.

**THESES EXAMINATION DATE**
- Thesis Day
- Include up to 2 hours with examiners.
- You must bring the copy of your certificate to the examination.
- SGPS sends notification to the student and the supervisor(s) of the approval of the examination date.

**MINOR THESIS REVISIONS**
- 7 Weeks After
- Thesis revisions should take no longer than 2 weeks.
- Minor thesis submissions are due 2 weeks prior to the date of the final submission.

**FINAL THESIS SUBMISSION**
- 5 Weeks Before
- Submit the signed Certificate of Completion to SGPS.
- Submit an email notification to the APC.
- Submit all final revisions via SGPS website.
- Confirmation email will be sent by SGPS.
Doctoral Candidates

Comprehensive Exams

All doctoral candidates are required to write a comprehensive examination after completion of the core courses in epidemiology and biostatistics. The exam is written in the fourth term, provided that Year 1 course work has been successfully completed. Details are available on the Comprehensive Exam information page.

Thesis Proposal Requirement

All doctoral candidates must successfully defend a thesis proposal before proceeding with their thesis research. The thesis proposal requirement is fulfilled after a successful examination of the proposal, usually between the sixth and eighth term, and the completion of a thesis proposal public lecture which is to occur within 4 months of the proposal defense.

Additional details are available on the Thesis Proposal Requirements page.

Doctoral Candidate Thesis Timeline Samples

Please note this chart is for demonstrative purposes only, as the official timeline charts for 2020-21 and beyond have not yet been produced or released by SPGS. You can find the most recent updates online at Thesis Timelines.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Final Date for Program to Submit Examination Request to SGPS</th>
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<th>Final Date for Final Submission of the Thesis</th>
<th>Notes</th>
<th>Convocation Eligibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November 5, 2019</td>
<td>November 12, 2019</td>
<td>December 24, 2019</td>
<td>Last term of registration is Fall 2019</td>
<td>Award Degree in Absentia, February 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 12, 2020</td>
<td>March 19, 2020</td>
<td>April 30, 2020</td>
<td>Last term of registration is Winter 2020</td>
<td>Eligible for Spring Convocation 2020</td>
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<td>July 13, 2020</td>
<td>July 20, 2020</td>
<td>August 31, 2020</td>
<td>Last term of registration is Summer 2020</td>
<td>Eligible for Fall Convocation 2020</td>
</tr>
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*If this date falls on a weekend or holiday, the submission will be reviewed on the next business day.
Doctoral Thesis Examination Timeline Chart

- **8-12 Weeks Before**: Find a 2-week range of dates when all have availability to attend the examination.
- **7 Weeks Before**: Obtain provisional consent from the potential supervisor(s) and submit an email to the Research Board of the faculty.
- **6 Weeks Before**: Submit the intent to the School of Graduate Studies Coordinator via email.
- **5 Weeks Before**: Complete the form to the Academic Program Coordinator.
- **4 Weeks Before**: The APC will confirm the dates via email to the student.
- **3 Weeks Before**: Submit the preliminary thesis to SGPS via their website.
- **2 Weeks Before**: SGPS will advertise the public lecture and examiners.
- **1 Week Before**: The student will go to the examination.
- **On Thes Day**: You must bring the copy of your certificate to the exam.
- **2 Weeks After**: Submit revised thesis via SGPS website.
- **Completion**: Submit signed Completion Form to APC.
- **Final Thesis Submission**: Confirmation of data is the final submission date and is the basis of final examinations.
- **Minor Thesis Revisions**: Minor thesis revisions should take no longer than 2 weeks after submission.
- **Thesis Date**: Thesis examination date is the hour public lecture begins.
- **Exam Date**: Submission of student examinations.
- **The Final Examination**: Once data is confirmed, the form is filled in by the APC.
- **Thesis Approved**: Requires submission of thesis for review by the APC.
- **Thesis Examination Date**: Days before.
- **Thesis Examination Date**: Before.
- **Minor Thesis Revisions**: Before.
- **Thesis Date**: Before.
- **Final Thesis Submission**: Before.
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Completion Checklist and Post-Degree Employment

All students who have received confirmation of completion from the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies are asked to submit a signed copy of the Completion Checklist form (available online).

This checklist summarizes the various loose ends a student is expected to wrap up before leaving the university. It also contains very important information requests for post-graduation contact and success.

We are very happy to stay in touch with all of our alumni and invite graduating students to provide a forwarding email address to the department and to join our Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics Alumni, Student, and Faculty Group, on LinkedIn.

The department maintains a list of post-degree employment resources including links to many relevant job posting boards on our website. Employment opportunities are also shared on the LinkedIn group page.
## New Student Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Completed</th>
<th>Step</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐</td>
<td>1. <strong>Ensure you have access to your @uwo.ca email account.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐</td>
<td>2. <strong>Review this Welcome Guide and your Orientation Calendar.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐</td>
<td>3. <strong>Upload your photo and pick-up your Western ONE card.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐</td>
<td>4. <strong>Register for your Fall Term courses.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐</td>
<td>5. <strong>Complete the Required Training modules</strong>&lt;br&gt;Complete through Western HR/OWL&lt;br&gt;• Health and Safety Awareness (Worker)&lt;br&gt;• WHMIS&lt;br&gt;• Safe Campus Community&lt;br&gt;• Accessibility in Service&lt;br&gt;Instructions will be sent in email from Western Grad Studies (SGPS)&lt;br&gt;• Academic Integrity&lt;br&gt;Instructions will be sent in email from Schulich Grad Studies&lt;br&gt;• Introduction to Basic Medical Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐</td>
<td>6. <strong>Review the funding information (for discussion at orientation).</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐</td>
<td>7. <strong>Subscribe to The Wire for timely information from SGPS.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐</td>
<td>8. <strong>Enter your direct deposit information in my HR.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐</td>
<td>9. <strong>Update your address, and emergency contacts in my HR.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐</td>
<td>10. <strong>Update your address and emergency contacts in Student Centre.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐</td>
<td>11. <strong>Update your Release of Information in Student Centre (optional).</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐</td>
<td>12. <strong>Prepare a list of any questions you may have for Orientation</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Student Life

Familiarize yourself with our beautiful campus by checking out Western University’s Campus Maps. Venture out and explore what our campus has to offer.

For an overview of activities and attractions the city of London has to offer, please visit Tourism London and City of London.

Western University and London, Ontario Resources

- Thriving in Graduate School
- SGPS: Life & Community
- The Society of Graduate Students
- International & Exchange Student Centre
- TA Union and Regulations
- Health and Wellness
- Cycling – Sustainability
- London Transit
- Greyhound Canada
- Via Rail
- SOGS Health Plan
- Supplementary Health Coverage for Graduate Students
- Equity and Human Rights
- Graduate Education Council
- Disability Services
- Indigenous Services
- SOGS Pride
- London Free Press
- The Londoner
- CJBK
- Ontario Doctor Directory, London
- Museum London
- Grand Theatre
- London Children’s Museum
- Storybook Gardens

New: As of July 1, 2019, Western University is smoke-free.

The move to a healthier, cleaner environment for those who study, live, work and visit our university was a three-step plan. The first step (January 1, 2018) created a 10-meter smoke-free space around all buildings. Step two, limiting smoking to designated areas only, went into effect July 1, 2018.

Western's new smoke-free policy, now in effect, recognizes and provides exemptions for traditional cultural or spiritual practices by Indigenous members of the Western community. Aside from identified exemptions, the policy includes all forms of smoking, vaping and tobacco use.

- Read Western's Policy on Smoking, Vaping & Tobacco Use
- View a map showing where people may go to smoke
- Want to quit smoking?