

STUDENT HANDBOOK

Health Sciences – MSc

Department of Health Sciences
Carleton University
Ottawa, Ontario

Dear Student,

On behalf of the Department of Health Sciences, we are excited to welcome you to graduate studies at Carleton University.

Carleton's Master of Science in Health Sciences is a research-based thesis program. This program provides advanced disciplinary learning and hands-on, interdisciplinary research in health sciences in new, state-of-the-art facilities. Students develop a deep appreciation for, and understanding of, the complexities of interdisciplinary health problems and solutions.

This student handbook includes helpful information on the MSc program, courses, key contacts in the department, and Carleton University services. We encourage you to explore the links embedded in this document to broader Carleton policies and procedures.

We are confident that your graduate school experience will be an exciting time and we hope you will take advantage of the opportunities available to you.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to us.

With respect,



Martin Holcik
Departmental Chair



Paul Peters
Graduate Advisor



Claire MacArthur
Graduate Administrator

1 Table of Contents

1	TABLE OF CONTENTS	3
2	GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION	4
2.1	DEPARTMENT ORIENTATION (2020)	5
2.2	RESOURCES AND CONTACTS	5
2.3	COVID-19 INFORMATION	6
3	REQUIREMENTS AND REGULATIONS	7
3.1	PROGRAM SEQUENCE	7
3.1.1	M.Sc. IN HEALTH SCIENCES (5.0 CREDITS)	7
3.1.2	M.Sc. HEALTH SCIENCES WITH SPECIALIZATION IN DATA SCIENCE (5.5 CREDITS)	7
3.1.3	PROGRAM PROGRESSION AND MILESTONES	9
3.1.4	MSc TO PhD TRANSFER PROCESS	10
3.2	REGISTRATION AND TUITION	13
3.3	ELECTIVE COURSES	14
3.3.1	EXTERNAL COURSE REGISTRATION	14
3.3.2	DIRECTED STUDIES COURSE REGISTRATION	15
3.4	GRADUATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE	15
3.4.1	GRADUATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETINGS	16
3.4.2	FIRST GRADUATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING	16
3.4.3	SECOND GRADUATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING	16
3.4.4	THIRD GRADUATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING	17
3.4.5	FINAL GRADUATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING	18
3.5	FINAL DEPARTMENTAL SEMINAR	19
3.6	MSc THESIS	19
3.6.1	TIMELINE FOR THESIS SUBMISSION	19
3.6.2	TIMELINES IN SUMMARY	22
4	NAVIGATING YOUR GRADUATE DEGREE	24
4.1	CODE OF CONDUCT	24
4.2	DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SCIENCES STATEMENT ON ANTI-RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION	25
4.3	ACADEMIC INTEGRITY	26
4.4	ACADEMIC SUPPORT AND ACCOMMODATIONS	26
4.4.1	SUPPORT FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES	27
4.4.2	ACCOMMODATIONS	27
4.5	EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES IN HEALTH SCIENCES	28
4.6	SKILLS DEVELOPMENT FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS	28
4.7	CAREER SERVICES	29
4.8	STUDENT WELLNESS SERVICES	29
4.8.1	HEALTH SERVICES	29
4.8.2	COUNSELLING SERVICES	29
4.8.3	HEALTH PROMOTION	29
4.8.4	ATHLETICS AND RECREATION CENTRE	29

2 General Program Information

The objective of the thesis-based MSc program is to provide in-depth, advanced learning and hands-on health research experience in health sciences. This experiential approach is essential to meet the growing demand for post-graduate health related specialisations where students have gained diverse skills and broad perspectives. With a rapidly growing aging population and increasing rates of chronic disease, there is a significant societal demand for appropriately qualified personnel in health-related careers.

Our program seeks to train graduates to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to excel in health careers including health research and education, across public, private, and non-governmental health sectors. This can be achieved through the unique approach offered by the MSc program. Research and educational activities span academic disciplines. Students are from a variety of backgrounds, including biomedical sciences, health sciences, life sciences, psychological sciences, biostatistics and epidemiology, or related disciplines, will enrol in our programs.

Graduates of our program will have mastered hard and soft skills and credentials through various means including, but not limited to, published manuscripts, peer-reviewed conference abstracts and presentations, Teaching Assistantships, and marks obtained in the research seminar and potential elective courses.

The broad goals of the thesis-based MSc program fall under three themes: interdisciplinarity, research, and communication.

i) Interdisciplinarity: Students will be able to understand and discuss health issues and problems from multiple perspectives and disciplinary approaches. Students will be exposed to scientific literature and seminars to gain a broad view of complex health problems, evaluate the quality and impact of health sciences research across disciplines, and interpret findings from their own research in the context of their discipline and within a broader health science framework. These interdisciplinary activities will occur throughout the student's

program and students will develop a deep appreciation and understanding of the complexities of health problems and solutions.

ii) **Research:** Students will be able to conduct advanced research relevant to health sciences within an established protocol or project and make original contributions to existing research projects/programs to enhance their relevance and/or scope. Students will gain the skills required to troubleshoot and enhance research methods and protocols as needed to maximise the relevance, reliability, and impact of health-related research.

iii) **Communication:** Students will be able to effectively develop research proposals and protocols, summarise previous research activities with brevity and clarity, and present their, or others', research to audiences across health disciplines and to the lay public or external partners.

2.1 Department Orientation (2020)

When: TDB in September 2021

Where: Via Zoom

Orientation will be held via our Departmental Zoom account. You will have the opportunity to meet the other graduate students, the Graduate Administrator, and professors in the Department of Health Sciences.

New graduate students should consult the checklist for incoming students for important procedures that are required to accept your offer, activate email, pay tuition, and register with payroll (if required). This updated website can be found here: <https://gradstudents.carleton.ca/new-grad-students/>.

2.2 Resources and Contacts

The information contained within is accurate as of August 2020. However, the Department of Health Sciences reserves the right to correct any errors. If you have any questions about the program, first contact the graduate administrator, who will answer or direct your question to the appropriate person or resource.

Claire MacArthur – Graduate and Department Administrator

claire.macarthur@carleton.ca

Contact Claire for help with processes (e.g. registration, program/course questions). Any questions that Claire cannot answer, she will direct to the appropriate person or resource.

Dr. Paul Peters – Graduate Advisor

paul.peters@carleton.ca

Dr. Martin Holcik – Department Chair

martin.holcik@carleton.ca

2.3 COVID-19 Information

(current information as of June 2021)

In following the recommendations from Ottawa Public Health, the Department of Health Sciences is operating online, and staff are working remotely.

To prioritize safety, in line with public health information available at this time, **all scheduled graduate courses for the fall term will be delivered online.**

We remain hopeful that we will be able to keep our physical spaces partially open over the coming months and begin to offer some optional on-campus activities when it is safe to do so. In particular, graduate students who have program elements – notably research and theses – requiring specialized research facilities will be contacted when their lab or research space is ready to safely open and the protocols required for working in these spaces.

For assistance, please contact the office at HealthSciences@carleton.ca for Graduate students. We are also checking and responding to voicemail on (613) 520-4848 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. We are doing all we can to keep our community safe and to contribute to slowing the progression of COVID-19 in Ottawa and across the country.

For more information, please visit [Carleton's Coronavirus page](#) and the [Faculty of Graduate Studies Coronavirus FAQ page](#).

3 Requirements and Regulations

Like most research-based graduate programs, the Health Sciences MSc is a **full-time program** for six (6) continuous terms (two years). This includes the summer term after first (1st) and second (2nd) years. Students are expected to enrol in all courses full-time and to work with supervisors regularly regarding their research projects. In order to maintain a reasonable work-life balance, no more than 15 hours per week of outside work is strongly suggested. Your graduate program is expected to be your priority.

3.1 Program Sequence

3.1.1 M.Sc. in Health Sciences (5.0 credits)

Requirements:

1. 1.0 credit in:

[HLTH 5901](#) [0.5] Advanced Topics in Interdisciplinary Health Sciences

[HLTH 5902](#) [0.5] Seminars in Interdisciplinary Health Sciences for MSc

2. Completion of:

[HLTH 5905](#) [0.0] Final Research Seminar Presentation for MSc

3. 4.0 credits in:

[HLTH 5909](#) [4.0] MSc Thesis

4. GAC Meetings: Twice-yearly meetings with the thesis Graduate Advisory Committee, with students meeting a level of progress as determined by the Committee.

Total Credits

5.0

Note: the final research seminar presentation must be completed within one month of the thesis defence.

3.1.2 M.Sc. Health Sciences with Specialization in Data Science (5.5 credits)

Requirements:**1. 1.0 credit in:**

[HLTH 5901](#) [0.5] Advanced Topics in Interdisciplinary Health Sciences

[HLTH 5902](#) [0.5] Seminars in Interdisciplinary Health Sciences for MSc

2. Data Science

[DATA 5000](#) [0.5] Data Science Seminar

3. Completion of:

[HLTH 5905](#) [0.0] Final Research Seminar Presentation for MSc

4. 4.0 credits in:

[HLTH 5909](#) [4.0] MSc Thesis

5. GAC Meetings: Twice-yearly meetings with the thesis Graduate Advisory Committee, with students meeting a level of progress as determined by the Committee.

Total Credits

5.0

Note: the final research seminar presentation must be completed within one month of the thesis defence.

3.1.3 Program Progression and Milestones

Year	Date	MSc	MSc with transfer to PhD
Year 1	September	Commence program	Commence program
	by Oct 15	Thesis outline and committee info form	Thesis outline and committee info form
	by Jan 1	First GAC meeting + research progress report (7 days before meeting)	First GAC meeting + research progress report (7 days before meeting)
	by April 30	Departmental WIP seminar (requirement to complete HLTH 5902)	Departmental WIP seminar (requirement to complete HLTH 5902)
	by June 30	Second GAC meeting + annual report (7 days before meeting)	Second GAC meeting + annual report (7 days before meeting)
	within 18 months of starting MSc	n/a	Permission to transfer to PhD (held in conjunction with a third GAC meeting)
Year 2	within 18 – 24 months of starting MSc	n/a	MSc transfer to PhD exam
	by Jan 1	Third GAC meeting* + research progress report (7 days before second meeting) + permission to write thesis form	
	by June 30	Final GAC meeting (practice defence) + annual report (7 days before meeting)	
	One month before viva (final oral defence)	Final MSc thesis departmental seminar (requirement to complete HLTH 5905)	
	Within 24 months of starting program	Viva (final oral defence)	

* The above progression is for a September start-date. For progression tables for other start times, see information in the Forms, Documents, and Guidelines section of the Health Sciences website.

3.1.4 MSc to PhD Transfer Process

Permission to proceed with transfer from the MSc to PhD program should occur within 18 months of a student starting their MSc program. Permission is obtained in conjunction with what should be the student's 3rd GAC meeting, but not before (the first two GACs occur in year 1 of the MSc). This 3rd GAC meeting will essentially follow the same structure as the 3rd GAC meeting for PhD students, who also have a mid-program defence checkpoint to complete. (See description of mid-program PhD defence below*.)

For the MSc student seeking to transfer to the PhD, there are a few other factors that the GAC and Transfer Exam Committee need to consider. At the GAC meeting, the student, Supervisor, and GAC will discuss the student's intent to transfer and approve the student to seek permission to transfer (or suggest against this request).

The request to transfer should not be made simply because the MSc project needs more time to be completed. The transfer process will include a closed-door advanced assessment of the student's knowledge of their field of research and defence of their proposed PhD research. The proposed research should be an extension of the MSc research, not an entirely new research thesis.

The Supervisor and GAC will complete the *Health Sciences MSc to PhD Permission to Transfer Form*, which will be submitted to the department following the GAC meeting, along with all required additional documents as indicated in the instructions on the form. The Graduate Chair, or Departmental Chair (when the Graduate Chair is the student's supervisor) will review the request to transfer form and associated documents and approve or deny the request.

If the GAC and Graduate/Departmental Chair give permission for the student to commence the transfer process, then within 18-24 months (of starting the MSc) the student needs to complete a departmental seminar and a transfer exam.

The departmental seminar is a 1 hour (typically, 45 min talk + 15 min Q&A) presentation consisting of results to date and future directions. The seminar is advertised to members of the university beyond the Department and will be

attended by graduate students within the Department and the student's Graduate Advisory Committee.

3.1.4.1 Transfer Exam Process

A transfer exam will normally take place immediately following the departmental seminar.

- The transfer exam is an examination on what has been completed in the MSc thus far, highlighting:
 - Substantive new data/findings that may form the basis of at least one manuscript, and
 - A proposal of how this MSc project would be extended into a PhD project.
- Note, the transfer exam is not simply a GAC meeting – but rather an exam and is similar in structure to the *Mid-program Research Defence and Knowledge Examination* that PhD students must complete.
- **The composition of the Transfer Exam Committee will be made up of GAC members and two field experts not on the student's GAC.**
- The exam will be chaired by a faculty member of Health Sciences and the department can assist in finding an appropriate chair if necessary.

The process of the transfer exam is as follows:

- The student will submit a written summary of progress and proposal of the PhD research (~10 pages) to each Transfer Exam Committee member **one week prior** to the departmental seminar and transfer exam.
- Following the departmental seminar and question period, the student, Supervisor, Transfer Exam Committee members, and chair will remain for the exam.
- The Transfer Exam Committee will complete a report based on their assessment of the student, his/her ability to proceed and succeed in a PhD, and the suitability of the proposed research as a PhD thesis project (see *Health Sciences Transfer Exam Committee Report*). The student/Supervisor will submit this report, along with the summary of progress and proposed PhD research report to the Department of Health Sciences.

- The Graduate Chair, or Departmental Chair (when the Graduate Chair is the student's supervisor), will review the transfer exam committee's report and supporting documentation, and approve or deny the request to transfer.
- If approved, the transfer from MSc to PhD will be effective at the next registration date (e.g. September, January, or May).

Expectation for the content of the exam:

- The transfer exam is an assessment of what has been completed in the MSc thus far and the suitability of the candidate to complete PhD. The exam will follow the structure of the Mid-program Research Defence and Knowledge Examination that PhD students must complete.
- The student should continue to show substantial progress in their research activities and ability to solve problems using the scientific method;
- The student should have a clear plan of future research that will guide the remainder of the original PhD research (including potential pitfalls and strategies to mitigate these);
- The student should have made substantial progress towards the composition of a manuscript;
- The student should demonstrate a commanding grasp of relevant data analysis, how their data support or refute their hypotheses and findings in current literature, and how these data go towards filling knowledge gaps in their field;
- The oral presentation should be clear, and the student should answer questions appropriately.

Expectations of the examiners:

- Each examiner will be given an opportunity to ask questions pertinent to the student's research. There will be two rounds of questions of 15-20 minute blocks for each examiner. The supervisor does not ask questions but is permitted to make comments at the end if they wish to do so.

Assuming the student is successful in the transfer exam, from that point on they would follow the PhD program path, which means having, at minimum, yearly GAC meetings, an approval to write up the thesis meeting, a final GAC

meeting, final research presentation, defence (viva), and complete the grant proposal and ethics course (HLTH6903).

3.1.4.2 Application to PhD

Following a successful transfer exam, the student will need to apply to the PhD program by relevant admission deadlines. In some cases, students will be asked to apply to the PhD program *before* the transfer exam in order to meet the application deadline.

It is the responsibility of the student to pay the PhD application fee and meet the admission requirements as stated on the Health Sciences website. An exception will be made for transfer applicants, who will only be required to submit one reference letter from their supervisor.

3.2 Registration and Tuition

Registration occurs through Carleton Central (<http://central.carleton.ca/>) using your student ID and password. Registration for returning and new graduate students will open as of July 3, 2020 ([more information](#)). You must register for both the Fall and Winter Terms of 2020-2021. Summer Term registration will be available at the end of March 2021.

You will not be able to register for classes until the conditions have been removed from your offer of admission. Often the condition is to have an official transcript of your undergraduate degree sent to the Carleton University's Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs (FGPA). For those who have graduated this spring from Carleton University, your official transcript will be uploaded by FGPA once Senate confers the degree. International students must be sure to contact WES Canada (www.wes.org/ca) to request an Academic Credential Evaluation sent to FGPA. All others must request official transcript from their previous academic institution.

You can find your tuition fees here: <https://carleton.ca/studentaccounts/tuition-fees/>. Once you have finalised your course selection, you will be able to access your tuition on Carleton Central. Once you choose your courses and register in them, while in Carleton Central, you can jump to Student Accounts and click on calculate amount to pay. Scholarship funding can be used as partial payment,

but you will need to make fee payment arrangements for the remainder of the balance.

3.3 Elective Courses

Students in the thesis-based MSc program are eligible to enroll in electives in Health Sciences, other departments, and at other universities, although these are not required for completion of the degree program. In addition, you must consult with your primary supervisor before registering for any courses and ensure that these courses are relevant to your degree progression.

3.3.1 External Course Registration

Registration in courses in other departments at Carleton University or at other universities is not guaranteed and requires that you complete external requirements as well as ensuring that you can transfer credit into our program. Thus, you need to start the planning for electives well in advance, as there may be a formal application process.

At Carleton University, registration in elective courses in other departments depends on a variety of factors including available space in the course and your ability to satisfactorily demonstrate to the course instructor (and/or program administrator) that you have the required prerequisites and/or knowledge.

The process of approval of Carleton University elective courses that are external to the Department of Health Sciences are as follows:

- Be sure you meet the prerequisites for the course, and that the course is not restricted (i.e. you may need to inquire with the program administrator).
- Contact the course instructor to introduce yourself and to ask permission to register in the course. At this time, you may also ask for the course syllabus (which you will need for approval on our end).
- Complete the “External to department elective approval form” (found here: <https://carleton.ca/healthsciences/health-sciences/graduate/forms-guidelines-and-documents/>).
- Email the completed form, and course syllabus, to Dr. Paul Peters for approval (cc Claire MacArthur)

- Once approved, you may register for the course via Carleton Central.
- You may require an override request, in which case it's best to contact the program administrator who oversees the course of interest.

Please keep in mind that departments generally ensure that their own students have registered first before allowing other students to register. Enrolment limits for graduate classes are often related to the class format. For example, the student experience is diminished if a seminar and discussion-based class exceeds 25-30 students.

You *may* be able to take a course at the University of Ottawa or another university (e.g. in the summer or by distance education options, if available). However, the process for making these requests takes time and requires signatures from both institutions so plan early. You may speak with the graduate administrator to discuss these options and go over the processes.

3.3.2 Directed Studies Course Registration

If the Directed Studies course is not completed within the 1-term allotted, the student will be given an ["IP" designation](#) for this course.

3.4 Graduate Advisory Committee

Each student will have a Graduate Advisory Committee (GAC) that will be chosen by the supervisor, in consultation with the student within the first 6 weeks of the student entering the program. **The GAC will be composed of the student's supervisor and two additional faculty members (either internal or external to the department).** The committee members may have specific expertise in the student's area of research, or with a specific technique/analysis procedure, or expertise outside the specific area that is deemed of benefit for the student's project.

Within the first 6 weeks of classes, the student, in consultation with the supervisor, will complete the *Thesis Outline and Graduate Committee Information Form* that lists each proposed committee member and their expertise, and that describes, in brief (<500 words) the MSc or PhD project outline. This document, and the proposed composition of the GAC, must be

approved and signed off by the Graduate Advisor. Updated forms are posted on the Health Sciences website under *Forms, Guidelines, and Documents*.

3.4.1 Graduate Advisory Committee Meetings

The GAC will meet according the schedule in Section 3.1.3 to assess the student's progress, provide expert feedback on the project direction and results (including assist with troubleshooting, if required), and assess the communication skills of the student via a written report and oral presentation.

For each GAC meeting, the student will be required to provide a written Summary of Progress Report (~10 pages, including tables and figures) to each committee member *one week prior to the committee meeting*, and orally present thesis progress at the committee meeting (typically a 20 minute presentation followed by a question period, to test the competency of the student).

The GAC will evaluate the student and provide recommendations using a standard GAC Report rubric developed by the department. This evaluation must be signed off by all committee members and the student's written report must be handed in to the Graduate Administrator for review and filing following the committee meeting. The student must also attach an up-to-date Curriculum Vitae with this report when submitting to the Graduate Administrator.

3.4.2 First Graduate Advisory Committee Meeting

Topic: Proposal Meeting

Milestones: The focus of this GAC meeting will be evaluation of the student's written research proposal (including background rationale, hypothesis/research questions, proposed methodology and data analysis plan). This proposal will usually be written in consultation with the supervisor. Results/data are not required for this meeting but can be included if the student has made such progress in their project.

Deliverables: Summary of Progress Report, presentation, GAC Report, CV

3.4.3 Second Graduate Advisory Committee Meeting

Topic: Methods and Research Progress Meeting

Milestones: The focus of this GAC meeting will be evaluation of the student's research to date and acquisition of specific and general research knowledge. The student must have an understanding of basic research principles and methodologies within their field and knowledge of the literature. The student must demonstrate that their hypotheses are supported by a sound experimental plan and potentially novel avenues of inquiry, and that data produced can be integrated in the framework of current literature.

Deliverables: Summary of Progress Report, presentation, GAC Report, CV

3.4.4 Third Graduate Advisory Committee Meeting

Students will complete either a *Permission to Write Thesis* or a *Permission to Transfer* meeting. (See section 3.1.4 for information on transfer.)

3.4.4.1 Permission to Write Thesis

Topic: Permission to Write Thesis

Milestones: The focus of this GAC meeting will be evaluation of the student's research progress and acquisition of disciplinary knowledge. The student must have made substantial progress in their research activities and demonstrate an understanding of major concepts and basic principles in their field of research, and is familiar with the literature, including latest advances and controversies.

The oral presentation should be clear, and the student should answer questions appropriately. Should the student fail to obtain permission from the GAC to proceed with writing their MSc thesis, they will need to revisit their research in conjunction with the determination of the committee and re-present at a later time to be determined between the supervisor, the student, and the committee.

Deliverables: Summary of Progress Report, presentation, GAC Report, Permission to Write Thesis Form, CV

3.4.4.2 Permission to Transfer to PhD

Topic: Permission to Transfer

Milestones: This 3rd GAC meeting will essentially follow the same structure as the 3rd GAC meeting for PhD students, who also have a mid-program defence

checkpoint to complete. (See description of mid-program PhD defence below*.) For the MSc student seeking to transfer to the PhD, there are a few other factors that the GAC and Transfer Exam Committee need to consider. At the GAC meeting, the student, Supervisor, and GAC will discuss the student's intent to transfer and approve the student to seek permission to transfer (or suggest against this request). The Supervisor and GAC will complete the *Health Sciences MSc to PhD Permission to Transfer Form*, which will be submitted to the department following the GAC meeting, along with all required additional documents as indicated in the instructions on the form. The Graduate Chair, or Departmental Chair (when the Graduate Chair is the student's supervisor) will review the request to transfer form and associated documents and approve or deny the request.

Deliverables: Summary of Progress Report, presentation, GAC Report, Permission to Write Transfer Form, CV

3.4.5 Final Graduate Advisory Committee Meeting

Topic: Final GAC meeting and practice defence (if not transferred to PhD)

Milestones: The focus of this GAC meeting will be to review as a GAC the final product from the students MSc thesis. The student should have completed all research activities and be in the final stages of editing the thesis document. The draft MSc thesis document should have been circulated to the GAC and been approved by the supervisor. Should the GAC determine that the MSc research as it is presented is insufficient, they may ask the student to alter any aspect of the thesis, return to additional research, and to delay the final departmental seminar presentation.

The oral presentation will be a preview of the departmental seminar, should be clear, and the student should answer questions appropriately. Should the student not present adequately, the GAC may decide to delay the final departmental seminar.

Deliverables: Summary of Progress Report, Practice Seminar Presentation, Final GAC Report (1 week prior to meeting), CV

3.5 Final Departmental Seminar

Each graduate student must give a final oral seminar of their thesis project within one month of their oral examination (this can also happen before if approved by the GAC). This departmental seminar will be open to the public and the broader University committee.

The 1-hour seminar will consist of a 45-minute presentation followed by a 15-minute question period. Students will be evaluated on this presentation by full-time faculty, including the GAC, using the departmental presentation evaluation form.

If this presentation is successful, the student's supervisor will give a final letter grade for HLTH 5905 - *Final Research Seminar Presentation for MSc*.

3.6 MSc Thesis

Each graduate student will have to write their thesis and give an oral defence according to the guidelines established by the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs (FGPA). For detailed guidelines on writing, reviewing, and submitting an MSc thesis, please refer to the Graduate Calendar Regulations.

<https://calendar.carleton.ca/grad/gradregulations/>

3.6.1 Timeline for Thesis Submission

This note is intended to provide some guidance for MSc in Health Sciences students who are close to completing a thesis and scheduling a defence. It can be several months between when you submit the first complete draft of your thesis to your supervisor (and committee members) and the actual defence date and submission of the final version of your thesis after the defence.

Sometimes students tend to underestimate the length of time needed for the final steps in the thesis process. To assist you making plans, we have outlined these steps below and suggested the time usually needed for each of them.

3.6.2 Preparing your thesis

Producing an MSc in Health Sciences thesis that meets the high standards of the examining committee is a challenging (and rewarding) process that

normally requires multiple rounds of revisions. You should allow your supervisor and committee members sufficient time to comment on at least one draft of your thesis, and for you to revise the draft substantially based on these comments.

Before submitting a draft of the entire thesis, students will usually submit individual chapters of the thesis for comments by the supervisor and GAC members, and then revise them based on those comments. Students should allow time for the supervisor and committee members to review any revised drafts. *Multiple rounds of revisions are not unusual.*

3.6.3 Planning the defence

In addition to completing the thesis, students must carefully work out a plan with the supervisor in order to make sure they can schedule your defence, submit the defence copy of the thesis, and submit the final thesis copy by the end of the program. Discuss with the supervisor and committee members about whom to have as the internal & external examiners.

Once the internal & external examiners and the date has been confirmed, please submit the form "Submission of MSc in Health Sciences Thesis for Defence," at least 4 weeks before the proposed defence date.

When the supervisor has approved the student's examinable copy, they will inform the Graduate Administrator, who will then enable the online system so the student can upload the examinable copy. The student will then upload the examinable copy in Carleton Central. For any exam board members are external to Carleton, the examinable copy must be sent in PDF format by the Graduate Administrator. If any examiners would prefer a physical copy, it is the responsibility of the student to provide this.

Please note that you will also need to plan & schedule your Final Research Seminar (HLTH 5905) one month prior to your defence date.

3.6.3.1 Constitution of the Examination Board

The masters defence examination board must be comprised of:

- Thesis supervisor (or co-supervisors).
- One additional member from the student's home unit or program. This includes cross-appointed and adjunct professors.

- One member who is from outside the student's home unit or program.
- Department Chair (or delegate who serves as chair of the exam board).
- Dean of the Faculty of Science (ex officio).
- Dean of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs (ex officio).

Please note that the examination board must include someone who was not part of the student's GAC. This can be internal (within our dept) or external (within the Carleton community or beyond). The composition of the exam board is determined by FGPA regulations – [See their website for details](#).

3.6.3.2 Assigning a chair for the Examination Board

Once the internal & external examiners, and the defence date/time has been confirmed, please submit the form "Submission of MSc in Health Sciences Thesis for Defence," at least 4 weeks before the proposed defence date. Upon receipt of the completed form, the graduate administrator will contact all HLTH faculty to seek a chair for the defence examination board.

3.6.4 Submitting the examinable thesis

The defence copy of the thesis must be uploaded to Carleton Central at least 3 weeks before the defence. Thesis preparation information can be found on the Graduate Studies website at <http://www1.carleton.ca/fgpa/thesis/>. Please do not include acknowledgements in the defence copy – this page should be left blank and acknowledgements added in the final deposit only.

In most cases, an electronic copy of your thesis will be acceptable to the examination committee (the supervisor, the committee member, the internal & external examiners, and the defence chair).

3.6.5 MSc Thesis Defence Process

The general process for the oral defence is as follows:

- Defence chair (2-3 min): In-camera introductions & procedures
- Student (15-20 min): Presentation of thesis research
- Examiners (30-60 min): Questions (ordered: external, GAC, supervisor)
- Examiners (15 min): Deliberation (in-camera)
- All: Congratulations & discussion

For detailed instructions on thesis exam procedures, refer to the [Thesis Examination Policy](#) from FGPA. The exam chair will be responsible for guiding this process and ensuring final forms are submitted.

3.6.6 Submitting the final thesis

After your defence, you may be asked to do further revisions before uploading your final copy to Carleton Central. This can take as short as several hours to as long as a few days or more, depending on the extent of revisions you will be asked to do. The deposit of final thesis copy must be received before the close of registration for the next term in order to be recommended for Graduation.

We no longer have hard copies printed for the libraries or the department. If you would like copies printed and bound like the department copies (red with gold lettering), personal copies (for yourself and your supervisor) may be dropped off directly to Graphics. Supervisor and student copies are copied and bound at the student's expense.

3.6.7 Timelines in Summary

- At the **beginning of the last term**, students must start to make plans to complete the thesis & schedule the defence (please see Graduate Calendar for specific due date in each term for submitting your final thesis copy).
- During the **last term** of the MSc, students will have to apply to graduate through Carleton Central. Candidates may have their degrees certified in February each year; they must apply by December 1. Students expecting to graduate at the Spring Convocation must apply for graduation in the Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs office by April 1. Those expecting to graduate at the Fall Convocation must apply by September 1.
- **2-3 months** before the proposed defence date - discuss with the supervisor and committee members about whom to have as an external examiner
- **4 weeks** before the proposed defence date - submit the MSc in Health Sciences Thesis for Defence form. The department will help assign a defence chair, make the room reservation (or Zoom booking), and provide the necessary paperwork & instructors to defence examination board members.

- 3 weeks before the defence date - upload the defence copy / examinable copy of the thesis (in Carleton Central).
- 1 week after defence (sometimes longer) - Once the student has successfully defended the thesis, the revisions (if applicable) must be made, and the final copy must be uploaded into Carleton Central.

4 Navigating Your Graduate Degree

4.1 Code of Conduct

The Department of Health Sciences seeks to foster the development of an inclusive and transformational culture where individual distinctiveness and a sense of belonging for every member drive excellence in research, teaching, learning and working. Such a culture facilitates cross-cultural and interdisciplinary collaboration, local and global engagement, as well as an environment of innovative intellectual inquiry where all can fulfil their potential.

Inclusive and transformational culture requires an environment free from discrimination, harassment and sexual violence where Indigenous ways of knowing and learning may inform our systems and practices, and where equitable access to services and opportunities guides all Departmental action. It is expected that you will conduct yourself in a professional manner. This includes how you communicate with your Professors, Instructors, external partners, and each other.

We respect personal gender pronouns and will refer to you in whatever way you would like to be identified (e.g. she/her/hers, he/him/his, they/them/theirs). Additionally, if you prefer to be addressed by Ms./Mrs./Mr. Last name, or a first name other than what is on the class list (e.g.: Liz instead of Elizabeth), please let your Professors, Instructors and peers know.

For more information, please refer to the Department of Equity and Inclusive Communities (EIC): <https://carleton.ca/equity/>.

- [Equity and Inclusion Promotion](#)
- [Sexual Violence Prevention & Survivor Support](#)
- [Discrimination, Harassment and Disability Accommodation Response](#)

4.2 Department of Health Sciences Statement on Anti-Racism and Discrimination

The Department of Health Sciences at Carleton University, Canada, stands in solidarity with members of Black, Indigenous and other racialized minorities calling for justice against historic and ongoing state-sponsored violence.

We are committed to educating ourselves and fighting oppression and discrimination while providing a space free of prejudice for our students and all members of the community. We will work to address racism, racist violence, and discrimination through ongoing conversations and awareness-building.

Addressing the issues of racism and inequality will require significant commitments and ongoing efforts by many organizations....and by each of us as individuals. We are dedicated to working with our community to develop solutions that ultimately help bring an end to these longstanding injustices.

To this end we affirm:

- To recognize that racism and discrimination is a public health crisis and publicly affirm our identity as an anti-racist academic department;
- To explicitly identify, discuss and challenge issues of race and the impact(s) they have on our organization, its systems, and its people;
- To also challenge ourselves to understand and correct any inequities we may discover;
- To ensure our anti-racism commitment is reflected in all teaching, supervision and advising in the department; and,
- To implement strategies that dismantle racism and discrimination within all aspects of our department, university, and society.

To provide action to our statement, we will:

- Initiate a task force as soon as possible to examine departmental practices;
- Solicit feedback from students, faculty, and staff on challenges and strengths of our current practices (e.g. in recruitment, retention, and recognition);

- Provide representation with the Faculty and University on their strategic initiatives;
- Develop, by the end of 2020, a strategic plan for how our unit will meaningfully address systemic racism and increase equity, diversity, and inclusion over the next 1, 5, and 10 years.

4.3 Academic Integrity

Carleton University details its academic integrity policies and associated documents at the following site: <https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity/>.

All work, including the research, preparation, and writing of the deliverables in this program, is to be that of the individual student, acting alone (except in the case of explicitly assigned group-work or the collaborative research project), and original to the course. You cannot submit, in whole or in part, works prepared for another class or purpose.

For example, plagiarism (“presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one's own”) will not be tolerated. All ideas, or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, or concepts, *must* include proper citation or reference to the original source. Submitted deliverables will be checked for originality.

The Department of Health Sciences and the Faculty of Science have a zero-tolerance policy for plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct. Academic offences will be reported to the Graduate Advisor and the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs and may result in failure in the course or removal from the program.

4.4 Academic Support and Accommodations

As a Carleton student, you'll have access to a variety of Student Support Services to assist you during your time at Carleton both in academic, and non-academic matters. At Carleton, we are committed to enhancing your student

experience and to creating an environment that contributes to your success during your time at Carleton and after graduation.

For more information see:

- <https://carleton.ca/academics/support/>
- <https://carleton.ca/accessibility/student-support-services/>

4.4.1 Support for Graduate Students with disabilities

All students with disabilities taking courses at Carleton University are eligible for academic accommodations and support services through the Paul Menton Centre: <https://carleton.ca/pmc/>.

The Paul Menton Centre provides Assessment of Functional Impairment (AFI), pre-screening for suspected Learning Disability or ADHD, Attendant Services Program (a unique 24-7, 365-days-a-year program to provide services to students with severe disabilities), learning strategy assistant and peer tutoring, learning strategy support, disability counselling, mentor volunteer program (MVP) and accommodation appeal process.

4.4.2 Accommodations

We strongly encourage you to set up your accommodations as soon as possible.

- Attend your first classes to obtain course outlines (or check if they are posted on CU Learn)
- Request your Letters of Accommodation (LoAs):

Online: through the myPMC portal, login or find the “how-to” video here:

<https://carleton.ca/pmc/students/mypmc/>

In Person book an appointment with your coordinator by calling the PMC front desk at 613-520-6608

4.5 Equipment and Facilities in Health Sciences

The Health Sciences building houses faculty and administrative offices, state of the art labs and research space, secure computing data labs, and dedicated workspace for graduate students.

The Health Sciences Building is located at 1215 Colonel By Drive.



4.6 Skills Development for Graduate Students

Carleton University offers graduate professional development through Grad Link, a hub for events and opportunities related to professional development, research, and student life, both on and off campus.

<https://carleton.ca/gradpd/grad-link/>

4.7 Career Services

Career Services at Carleton University offers a number of opportunities for career and networking events, job search supports, training sessions on preparing for interviews, resume and cover letter writing, and much more.

<https://carleton.ca/career/>

4.8 Student Wellness Services

4.8.1 Health Services

Our team of medical professionals including family physicians and registered nurses provide outpatient medical services and serve as primary care providers at Health and Counselling Services. Appointments are available in-person or via virtual care.

<https://carleton.ca/health/hours-appointments/>

4.8.2 Counselling Services

Confidential personal counselling services are available for current Carleton University students. These are accessible to students who are off-campus via virtual care.

<https://carleton.ca/health/counselling-services/>

4.8.3 Health Promotion

Our goal is to empower students during various stages of change for healthy living and academic success by offering resources, workshops and activities that cover student health and wellness.

<https://carleton.ca/health/health-promotion/>

4.8.4 Athletics and Recreation Centre

As a Carleton student you have access to fitness and recreational programming such as the pool, the fitness centre, and a variety of fitness programs.

<https://athletics.carleton.ca>

4.9 Health Sciences Graduate Student Association

The Health Sciences Graduate Student Association (HSGSA) is a student run organization and member of the greater Graduate Student Association (GSA) at Carleton. The HSGSA was founded in 2018 and has since aimed to build a cohesive department for any health sciences affiliated graduate student (HSTP, Masters, PhD). The HSGSA runs informational seminars on things like grant writing and navigating the Health Sciences graduate calendar, as well as events like holiday parties, trivia nights, and more. To get involved, please don't hesitate to reach out via email or Twitter ([@CarletonHSGSA](https://twitter.com/CarletonHSGSA)).

Other Student Clubs and Societies:

- [Carleton's Graduate Student Association](#)
- [Let's Talk Science](#) (events.letstalkscience@gmail.com)
- [Carleton Science Student Society](#)
 - All students in the Faculty of Science are automatically members (executives@sciencesociety.ca)
 - Office: 3412 Herzberg Laboratories
- [Carleton University Women in Science and Engineering \(CU-WISE\)](#). (wise@carleton.ca)
 - Office: 5270 Herzberg Laboratories
- [Student Mental Health and Engagement Committee](#)