

STUDENT HANDBOOK

Health Sciences – PhD

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

This student handbook includes helpful information on the PhD 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



Edana Cassol
Graduate Chair



Claire MacArthur
Graduate Administrator

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2 General Program Information

The objective of this PhD program is to provide in-depth, advanced learning and hands-on 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 PhD program. Research and educational activities span academic disciplines. Students who come from a variety of backgrounds, including biomedical sciences, health sciences, life sciences, psychological sciences, biostatistics and epidemiology, or related disciplines, will enroll 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, ethics and proposal seminar, and any elective courses. The broad goals of the PhD program fall under the three themes below.

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 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 using new and established methods and approaches to make original contributions to new and 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.

Students will also have opportunities to develop their communication skills and implement knowledge translation strategies to engage with the scientific community, relevant

stakeholders, and the lay public. Further, they will gain insight into the processes surrounding research grant proposal development and evaluation.

2.1 Department Orientation (Fall 2025)

When: Tuesday, September 2 @ 11:15 am - 1:00 pm

Where: Second floor boardroom (2308 Health Sciences Building (HS))

Orientation will be held in person. You will have the opportunity to meet the other graduate students, the Graduate Administrator and Chair as well as other 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 July 2025. 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 Departmental Administrator

clairemacarthur@cunet.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. Edana Cassol – Graduate Chair

edana.cassol@carleton.ca

Dr. Martin Holcik – Department Chair

martin.holcik@carleton.ca

3 Requirements and Regulations

Like most research-based graduate programs, the Health Sciences PhD is a **full-time program** for twelve (12) continuous terms (four years), including all summer terms, although some projects may extend to fifteen (15) terms (five years). To maintain a reasonable work-life balance, it is strongly suggested not to engage in outside work more than 15 hours per week.

3.1 Program Sequence

Required Courses for PhD in Health Sciences

1. 1.0 credits in:

HLTH 5903 [0.5] Current Topics in Interdisciplinary Health Sciences

HLTH 6903 [0.5] Grants Proposal and Ethics¹

2. 0.5 credits in:

HLTH 6902 [0.5] Seminars in Interdisciplinary Health Sciences

OR

XXXX [0.5] Elective, approved by Faculty Supervisor and Graduate Advisor²

3. Completion of:

HLTH 6904 [0.0] Mid-Program Defence³

HLTH 6905 [0.0] Final Research Seminar Presentation⁴

HLTH 6906 [0.0] Research Seminar Presentation for PhD⁵

HLTH 6909 [0.0] PhD Thesis⁶

4. GAC Meetings: Twice-yearly meetings with the Graduate Advisory Committee, with students reaching a level of satisfaction as determined by the committee.

Total Credits

1.5

Notes:

1. This course is only offered every two years. We strongly encourage you to take this course within the first two years of your program.
2. If you decide to take an elective, the course should be selected in consultation with your supervisor. This course should help develop disciplinary knowledge to support the success of your research projects.
3. If the student fails to satisfy the requirements of HLTH 6904 then they will be withdrawn from the program.
4. The final research seminar presentation must be completed within one month of the thesis defence.
5. The Research Seminar Presentation must occur before the completion of your second term in the program. For students who start in September, this presentation will take place at the Health Sciences Research Day (in April). For those who start in the Winter or Summer terms, the student needs to organize a time

for this presentation in consultation with their supervisor and with the support of the Graduate Administrator.

6. You must be registered in the PhD thesis course for all continuous terms of your program.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS AND INFORMATION

HLTH 5903 [0.5 credit]

Current Topics in Interdisciplinary Health Sciences

Exploration of current health challenges and opportunities, and the role of interdisciplinary approaches to understand health and disease. Development of skills required for communication, collaboration, literature appraisal. Includes student, faculty, and invited seminar speakers.

Precludes additional credit for HLTH 5401, HLTH 5901.

Prerequisite(s): Permission of the Department of Health Sciences.

HLTH 6902 [0.5 credit]

Seminars in Interdisciplinary Health Sciences

Development of scientific communication skills through attendance at interdisciplinary seminars. Topics have specific or broad relevance to health sciences. Graded SAT/UNS.

Important note for this course:

Each student is required to attend 8 seminars across the first two academic terms of their program. To document your attendance, you must submit the Seminar Course Attendance Record to the graduate administrator (Claire) within two weeks of the event. This form can be found at <https://carleton.ca/healthsciences/current-students/forms-guidelines-and-documents/>. Students must register for this course for two consecutive terms. Each term is associated with the same course number but a different course section. If you are unsure, please ask Claire which section you should be registered in.

HLTH 6903 [0.5 credit]

Grant Proposals and Ethics

Advanced course in writing successful grant proposals in Tri-Council (CIHR, NSERC, SSHRC) formats. Ethics associated with conducting health sciences research, including the preparation of ethics proposals for human and animal studies in health sciences research.

HLTH 6904 [0.0 credit]

Mid-Program Defence

Departmental seminar and Graduate Advisory Committee meeting on PhD research including results to date and future research aims and directions, and on field-specific knowledge.

HLTH 6906 [0.0 credit]

Research Seminar Presentation for PhD

Seminar of PhD thesis research. Seminar presentation should occur within the first two terms of the PhD, and prior to enrolment in the second year.

Important note for this course:

Every student is required to present a departmental seminar by the end of the second term to complete the credit (20-minute presentation with 10 minutes of questions). For students who start in September, this presentation will take place at the Health Sciences Research Day (in April). For those who start in the Winter or Summer terms, a time for this presentation needs to be organized by the student in consultation with their supervisor and with the support of the Graduate Administrator.

HLTH 6905 [0.0 credit]

Final Research Seminar Presentation

Final seminar of PhD thesis research. Seminar presentation should occur within one month of the final oral thesis defence.

HLTH 6909 [0.0 credit]

PhD Thesis

Typical Registration Progression for September start:

Year	Term	Courses
Year 1	Fall	HLTH5903, HLTH6902 ^{1,2} , HLTH6903 ³ , HLTH6909
	Winter	HLTH6902 ^{1,2} , HLTH6906 ⁵ , HLTH6909
	Summer	HLTH6909 ⁴
Year 2	Fall	HLTH6909
	Winter	HLTH6909
	Summer	HLTH6909
Year 3	Fall	HLTH6904, HLTH6909
	Winter	HLTH6909
	Summer	HLTH 6909
Year 4	Fall	HLTH 6909
	Winter	HLTH 6909
	Summer	HLTH 6909, HLTH6905 ⁶
Year 5 (if needed)	Fall	HLTH 6909
	Winter	HLTH 6909
	Summer	HLTH6905 ⁶ , HLTH 6909

Notes:

1. Students can take either HLTH6902 or an elective. Electives should be approved by your research supervisor and completed within the first year of your program (either Fall or Winter term).

2. Students must register for HLTH6902 for two consecutive terms. Each term is associated with the same course number but a different course section. Please ask Claire which section you should be registered in if you are unsure.
3. HLTH6903 is only offered every other year. Please check if the course is available and plan to take in either Year 1 or 2 of your program.
4. You must register for HLTH6909 in every term of the program.
5. You must register in HLTH 6906 in the 2nd term of the program.
6. You must register in HLTH6905 in the term you plan to finish your degree.

3.1.1 Program Milestones

Year	Date	PhD Milestone
Year 1	By end of 2 nd month	Submit Thesis Outline and Graduate Advisory Committee Membership Form
	By end of 1 st term	Complete the first GAC meeting
	By end of 2 nd term	Departmental Seminar (for those who start in September these will be given during Health Research Day)
	By end of 1 st year	Complete the second GAC meeting
Year 2	By end of 2 nd year	Complete the third GAC meeting and ask for permission to proceed to Mid-Program Defence
Year 3	First term of 3 rd year	Mid-Program Defence
	By end of 3 rd year	Fourth GAC meeting
Year 4	By end of 2 nd term	Fifth GAC meeting (and ask for permission to write up thesis if graduating by the end of Year 4) ¹
	1 month before the defence	Final PhD Seminar (requirement to complete HLTH 6905)
	By the end of the 4 th year	Completion of Viva (final oral defence)
Year 5	Extension available as required	Please contact Claire for revised timelines

Important note:

If your project requires you to stay for 5 years, please note that your Fifth GAC must be completed by the end of your fourth year in the program. You will ask for permission to write up in the 6th GAC, which must take place by the 2nd term of your 5th year. Please notify the Graduate Chair and Administrator by the end of the 2nd term of the Year 4 if you are planning to stay for a 5th year.

Dissertation Milestones

Before the dissertation is submitted, the milestones need to be followed as per Section 3.6 and the FGPA website (<https://gradstudents.carleton.ca/resources-page/thesis-requirements/>).

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 normally open in July ([more information](#)). **As a FULL-TIME PROGRAM, you must remain**

registered in Fall, Winter and Summer Terms for as long as you are enrolled as a PhD student. Registration for Fall and Winter Terms is completed at the same time over the summer. Summer Term registration is normally available at the end of March. Please refer to the registrar for specific dates and deadlines.

Please note, that new graduate students 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 and graduate degree(s) sent to Carleton University's Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs (FGPA). For those who have graduated 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 transcripts from their previous academic institution.

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. Please refer to the FGPA website for updated information.

Please review the following websites for detailed information:

- Student Accounts: <https://carleton.ca/studentaccounts/>
 - Student Accounts Email: student_accounts@carleton.ca
- Tuition Fees: <https://carleton.ca/studentaccounts/tuition-fees/>
- FGPA Website: <https://gradstudents.carleton.ca>

3.2.1 Awards and Funding

Funding packages are developed at the time of admission and can differ for each student. In general, funding comes from the following sources:

- Departmental Scholarships: These scholarships are based on your academic grades of your previous degree and are available for top-quality students. Recommendations for these scholarships are made by your department during the application per year.
- Teaching Assistantships (see note below): TAs assist faculty members with various duties which might include conducting labs or study groups, assisting with lecture preparation, marking assignments and tests, etc. A TA work assignment may take place outside the academic unit to which you are applying if your academic record shows strengths in other areas. Carleton offers TAs a wide range of training opportunities through a variety of offices and for which you will get paid.
- Research Assistantships: RAs are hired by faculty members (normally your supervisor) to assist with a research project that will be directly related to your own research. RAs are paid for with funds from the faculty member's external contracts or research grants and thus *may be contingent on the continuation of external funding*

grants and the value varies depending on the researcher. This amount is determined by your supervisor and may vary from student to student. If you have any questions or concerns about this component of your funding package, please consult with your supervisor.

- Please note, as a new or current graduate student, there are a number of internal, external and special awards that you can apply for. Please check the relevant application deadlines for the awards that you are interested in at <https://gradstudents.carleton.ca/awards-and-funding/>. There may also be departmental deadlines for these awards. Please contact the graduate administrator for more information.

Priority Teaching Assistantship dates and deadlines:

If your offer of admission includes a Priority Teaching Assistant (PTA) award, please be sure that you have accepted the award in Carleton Central ASAP. There are also a few deadlines associated with the PTA award, which are imperative that you meet to ensure you keep your priority as a TA. If your offer did not include a PTA award, you may wish to apply as an Outside Priority TA (OPTA) through the TA Management System in Carleton Central. Please note that OPTA positions will be very limited, if any.

August 15, 2025	This is the last day for graduate students who have been offered a PTA to update their TA profile in Carleton Central.
August 18, 2025	Deadline for units to assign final PTA assignments
August 28, 2025	Deadline for PTA to accept their assignment in Carleton Central, or submit an LOA
August 28, 2025	Units to begin considering assigning Outside Priority Teaching Assignments (OPTA), IF there are assignments that haven't been filled by PTA.

3.3 Elective Courses

Students in the thesis-based PhD program are eligible to enroll in electives in Health Sciences, other departments, and other universities. You must consult with your primary supervisor before registering for any courses and ensure that these courses are relevant to your degree progression.

Registration in courses in other departments at Carleton University or other universities is not guaranteed and requires that you complete external requirements as well as ensure that you can transfer credit into our program. Thus, you need to start 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. Edana Cassol 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 students have registered first before allowing other students to register.

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.

3.4 Importance of Graduate Advisory Committee Meetings

Each student will have a Graduate Advisory Committee (GAC) to support their progress through the program that is selected by the supervisor, in consultation with the student. **The GAC will be composed of the student's supervisor and three additional faculty members. Generally, one member should be from within the Department of Health Sciences, and the others can be internal or external to the department based on the needs of the project.** 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 important for the student's project.

Within the **first 2 months of starting the program**, each student must submit a *Thesis Outline and Graduate Committee Form* that lists each proposed committee member and their expertise, and that describes, in brief (<500 words) their PhD project outline. These individuals should be selected in consultation with your supervisor. Updated forms are

posted on the Health Sciences website under *Forms, Guidelines, and Documents* (<https://carleton.ca/healthsciences/current-students/forms-guidelines-and-documents/>).

3.4.1 Graduate Advisory Committee Meetings

The student and their GAC will meet according to the schedule in Section 3.1.1 (page 9) to assess the student's progress, provide expert feedback on the project direction and results (including assist with troubleshooting, if required). These meetings will also assess the communication skills of the student via a written report and oral presentation. **GAC committee meetings play a very important role in supporting the progress of each student through the program and should be taken very seriously. Students are strongly encouraged to complete all reports well in advance of their meetings to allow their supervisor to provide feedback.**

For each GAC meeting, the student will be required to provide a written Progress Report (**~10 pages, including tables and figures**) to each committee member **at least one week before 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 Form developed by the department (<https://carleton.ca/healthsciences/current-students/forms-guidelines-and-documents/>). This evaluation must be signed off by all committee members, the supervisor(s), and the student. The form should be submitted to the Graduate Administrator for review and filing following the committee meeting. The student must also attach their Research Report and an up-to-date Curriculum Vitae when submitting to the Graduate Administrator.

See Program Milestones on Page 9 for the expected timing of GAC meetings.

3.4.2 First Graduate Advisory Committee Meeting

Topic: Project Proposal Meeting (to be completed by the end of the first term of the program)

Milestones: The focus of this GAC meeting will be an assessment of the student's understanding of their research topic and preliminary research proposal. The proposal should be written in consultation with your supervisor and include, where applicable, the background, rationale, hypothesis, research questions/objectives, proposed methodology, and data analysis plan. It can also include any preliminary data generated to date. It is acknowledged that some research projects may undergo significant refinement during the first year. However, in this first meeting, students must demonstrate a working knowledge of their research topic and methods used in the field. They should also be able to explain why their research is important.

Deliverables (to be submitted to Graduate Administrator): Progress Report, GAC Report Form, and CV.

3.4.3 Second Graduate Advisory Committee Meeting

Topic: Methods and Research Progress Meeting (to be completed by the end of the first year of the program)

Milestones: The focus of this GAC meeting will be an evaluation of the student's understanding of basic research principles and methodologies within their field and their research to date. In general, students must demonstrate that their hypotheses are supported by a sound research plan and explore novel avenues of inquiry. They should also show that the data or knowledge they produced can be integrated into the framework of current literature and theory.

Deliverables (to be submitted to Graduate Administrator): Progress Report, GAC Report Form, and CV.

3.4.4 Third Graduate Advisory Committee Meeting

Topic: Progress assessment and permission to proceed with PhD mid-program defence (to be completed by the end of the second year of the program)

Milestones: The focus of this GAC meeting will be an evaluation of the student's research progress and acquisition of more advanced disciplinary knowledge. The student must have made substantial progress in their research activities (e.g.: method developments, data/knowledge acquisition and interpretation), demonstrate a solid understanding of major concepts, theory, and principles in their field of research, and be familiar with current literature, including latest advances and controversies.

The research report and oral presentation should focus on research results and their interpretations. During the meeting, the student should be able to answer more complex questions related to their research topic and work.

This GAC meeting represents the first formalized decision point to determine the suitability of the student for continuing in the PhD program. Should the student fail to obtain permission from the GAC to proceed with the mid-program defence, they may be granted the option to withdraw from the PhD and enroll in the MSc program. Alternatively, the student may be asked to withdraw from the PhD program without approval to enroll in the MSc

Deliverables (to be submitted to Graduate Administrator): Progress Report, GAC Report Form, Permission to Proceed to Mid-program Defence Form and CV.

Important Notes:

1. After the completion of this meeting, the student must contact the Graduate Administrator to plan their PhD Mid-Program Defence (HLTH 6904) which should be held within the first term of the student's third year in the program.
2. Students who have transferred into the PhD program from an MSc will continue from this point.

3.4.5 Fourth Graduate Advisory Committee Meeting

Topic: Progress assessment (to be completed by the end of the third year of the program)

Milestones: Similar to the Third GAC, the purpose of this meeting is to continue to evaluate the student's research progress and acquisition of more advanced disciplinary knowledge. The student must have made substantial progress in their research activities, (e.g.: method developments, data/knowledge acquisition and interpretation), continue to demonstrate a deepening understanding of major concepts, theory, and principles in their field of research. This includes being familiar with the current literature, including the latest advances and controversies.

The research report and oral presentation should focus on research results and their interpretations. During the meeting, the student should be able to answer more complex questions related to their research topic and work.

Deliverables (to be submitted to Graduate Administrator): Progress Report, GAC Report, CV

3.4.6 Fifth Graduate Advisory Committee Meeting (Please note this applies **ONLY** to those graduating in 4 years. See notes below for those staying for 5 years)

Topic: Progress assessment and permission to Write Thesis (to be completed by the end of the second term of the 4th year of the program).

Milestones: The purpose of this final GAC meeting is to evaluate the student's mastery of knowledge in their research area and ensure they have made enough research progress to write up their thesis and proceed to their defence. This should be equivalent to at least two publishable manuscripts. The student should be able to demonstrate the significant and novel contributions they have made to their field by interpreting their findings in the context of the literature, highlighting limitations in his/her work, and proposing new hypotheses/research questions (and how to answer them) derived from their findings. The student should be able to present clearly and answer questions concisely but in detail. After the completion of this GAC, the student needs to contact the Graduate Administrator to plan and schedule the Final Research Seminar Presentation (HLTH 6905) and the PhD Thesis Defence.

Deliverables (to be submitted to Graduate Administrator): Progress Report, GAC Report, Permission to Write Up Form², CV

Important Notes for those completing their degree in five years:

For students who do not complete their PhD in four years, this meeting should be structured like the Fourth GAC Meeting (see details above). You will be expected to have a Sixth GAC Meeting by the end of the second term of your fifth year to ask for permission to write up (like above). Please contact Claire for additional information on revised timelines.

3.5 PhD Mid-Program Defence (HLTH 6904)

Each PhD student must complete a mid-program defence as part of their program requirements. The mid-program defence will include a departmental research seminar followed by an oral examination. **Ideally, the open research seminar will be completed immediately before the closed exam.** However, this will depend on the availability of your supervisor and your exam committee. Please note that if the open research seminar takes place on a different day and not all committee members attend, you will also be required to give a 20 min presentation to the committee on the day of the exam.

The Mid-program defence exam committee will comprise of the student's GAC members as well as two field experts who are not members of the GAC. **In general, the field experts should have a PHD, hold an academic position, supervise graduate students and participating in related research.**

The exam will be chaired by a faculty member of Health Sciences and the department can assist in finding an appropriate chair if necessary.

Mid-program defence report

The PhD student must submit their report to all exam committee members at least 2 weeks prior to the mid-program defence.

The mid-program defence report (~10 pages excluding references) must provide enough information to allow your exam committee to 1) evaluate the progress you have made to date and 2) assess the feasibility of the upcoming/proposed research. It should include:

- Short overview of the relevant literature - should provide rationale for the study
- Statement of study hypothesis and objectives
- Description of the work accomplished to date - should include information on approach/methods and any substantive findings/data produced (figures and tables as appropriate)
- Description of proposed research - should include information on methods/approaches that will be used and anticipated results
- Timeline for completion of study objectives

Departmental Seminar

- 1 hour; typically, 45 min talk + 15 min Q&A consisting of results to date and future directions/aims.
- Seminar will be advertised to the department and the larger university community. Your Mid-program defence exam committee must attend this seminar.
- The seminar will normally take place immediately before the defence.

Mid-Program Defence

- Approximately 2 hours, including 2 rounds of questions (15-20 minute blocks for each examiner). The supervisor does not ask questions but is permitted to make comments at the end of the exam.
- Following the departmental seminar, the student, Supervisor Mid-Program Defence Exam Committee members, and exam chair will remain for a closed-door advanced assessment of the student's knowledge of their field of research and defence of their PhD research to date.
- The committee will complete the [CU Health Sciences HLTH 6904 PHD mid-program defence report form](#) based on their assessment of the student, his/her ability to proceed and succeed in the PhD. The student/Supervisor will submit this report, along with the summary of progress to the Graduate Administrator and Graduate Advisor.
- The Graduate Advisor or Departmental Chair (when the Graduate Advisor is the student's supervisor), will review the committee's report form and supporting documentation, and approve or deny the request to proceed with the PhD. **This represents the second formalized decision point to determine the suitability of the student for continuing in the PhD program.** Should the student fail their mid-program defence, the student may be granted the option to withdraw from the PhD and enroll in the MSc program. Alternatively, the student may be asked to withdraw from the PhD program without approval to enroll in the MSc

3.6 1st Year Research Seminar Presentation (HLTH 6906)

Each graduate student must give an oral seminar to introduce their research question(s) and methodology. This research seminar must occur before the completion of two terms in the PhD. For students who start in September, this presentation will take place at the Health Sciences Research Day (in April). For those who start in the Winter or Summer terms, a time for this presentation needs to be organized by the student in consultation with their supervisor and with the support of the Graduate Administrator.

This seminar will be open to the public and the broader University community.

The 30-minute seminar will consist of a 20-minute presentation followed by a 10-minute question period. After completion of the seminar, students will receive a SAT credit for HLTH 6906 - Research Seminar Presentation for PhD

*PLEASE REMEMBER TO REGISTER IN HLTH 6906 IN THE 2ND TERM OF YOUR MSc.

3.7 Final Research Seminar Presentation (HLTH 6905)

Each PhD student must give a final departmental seminar of their thesis project within one month of their oral examination. 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. After completion of the seminar, students will receive a SAT credit for HLTH 6905 - Final Research Seminar Presentation for PhD.

*PLEASE REMEMBER TO REGISTER IN HLTH6905 IN THE FINAL TERM OF YOUR PHD.

3.8 PhD 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 a PhD thesis, please refer to the Graduate Calendar Regulations.

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

3.8.1 Timeline for Thesis Submission

This note is intended to provide some guidance for PhD 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.

3.8.1.1 Preparing your thesis

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

3.8.1.2 Planning the defence

In addition to completing the thesis, students must carefully work out a plan with the supervisor to make sure they can schedule your defence, submit the defence copy of the thesis, and after the defence submit the final thesis copy with corrections. To graduate in a specific term, all these things must be completed by the required FGPA timelines. Discuss with the supervisor about whom to have as the internal & external examiners (see below for composition).

Once the internal & external examiners have been confirmed, please submit the [HLTH 6909 Thesis Defence form](#) at least 2 months before the anticipated defence.

The date and time of the exam will be coordinated by the Health Sciences Graduate Administrator in coordination with the student, supervisor, and examination board.

Please note that you will also need to plan & schedule your Final Research Seminar Presentation for PhD (HLTH 6905) one month prior to your defence date.

3.8.1.2.1 Constitution of the Examination Board

The composition of the exam board is determined by FGPA regulations – [See their website for details](#). The chair of the examination board will be assigned by FGPA in coordination with the Department of Health Sciences.

The examination board to comprise as a minimum:

- One member from outside Carleton University who is a recognized authority in the subject of the thesis (External Examiner)
- One member (full-time faculty or adjunct) from outside the student's home unit or program and who has been at arm's length from the thesis research (Internal Examiner)
- Thesis supervisor(s)
- At least two thesis advisory committee members.
- Chair of the Department (ex officio)
- Dean of Science (ex officio)
- Vice-Provost (Graduate Studies) or delegate (chair of the examination board; chair of the examination board; from outside the student's home department).

Important Notes on External Examiner (copied from Thesis Examination Policy):

The external examiner should be an impartial scholar with recognized expertise in the thesis research area, typically with a faculty appointment at a PhD degree-granting university. In addition, it is necessary that they be at arm's length from the candidate, from the supervisor(s) and from Carleton University.

To guarantee the impartiality of the external examiner, the following conditions should be met:

1. The external examiner should have no family ties, financial ties or close professional ties to the candidate or the supervisor(s) in the six years prior to the oral defence;
2. The external examiner should have neither held an appointment at Carleton University nor be a member of the joint institutes with the University of Ottawa in the six years prior to the oral defence;
3. The external examiner should have no prior supervisory relationship with the candidate or with the supervisor(s) in the six years prior to the oral defence;
The external examiner should not have been a principal co-author or close research collaborator with the candidate or with the supervisor(s) in the six years prior to the oral defence.
4. The external examiner and the candidate should have no direct communication from the date of the submission of the dissertation to the date of the oral defence.

Please note that alternate examination board membership, such as government/industry employees, Indigenous Knowledge Keepers, and faculty members at other universities, must be pre-approved by the Vice-Provost (Graduate Studies).

3.8.1.3 The PhD Exam

The general process for the PhD exam is as follows:

- Defence chair (2-3 min): In-camera introductions & procedures
- Student (15-20 min): Presentation of thesis research (can be removed if student holds departmental seminar immediately before their exam)

- Examiners (60-90 min): Questions (ordered: external, internal, GAC, supervisor)
- Examiners (15 min): Deliberation (in-camera)
- All: Congratulations & discussion

3.8.1.4 Submitting the examinable thesis

The defence copy of the thesis must be uploaded to Carleton Central at least 5 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).

3.8.1.5 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 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.

3.8.2 Thesis Timelines in Summary

Please see the Graduate Calendar for specific due dates and requirements for submitting your final thesis.

- At the **beginning of the last term (after receiving permission to write up)**, students must start to make plans to complete the thesis, schedule the final departmental seminar, and schedule the defence. Please review the departmental website for specific deadlines for the seminar and defence.
- During the **last term** of the PhD, 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(s).
- **2 months** before the proposed defence date - submit the PhD in Health Sciences Thesis for Defence form to the Graduate Administrator. The department will help assign a defence chair, make the room reservation (or Zoom booking)*, and

provide the necessary paperwork & instructions to defence examination board members.

- **5 weeks** before the defence date - upload the defence copy / examinable copy of the thesis (in Carleton Central). Note that an email must be sent to the Graduate Administrator, from the thesis supervisor, to confirm the examinable copy has been approved and is ready for upload. Once the email is received, the Graduate Administrator will initiate upload in BANNER, so that the student can upload the examinable copy in Carleton Central.
- **1 month** before the proposed defence the student will complete the departmental seminar [HLTH 6905].
- **After the defence**, the revisions (if applicable) must be made, and the final copy must be uploaded into Carleton Central. Note that the Thesis Revision Approval Form must be sent from the **thesis supervisor** to the Graduate Administrator, to confirm the Final copy has been approved and is ready for upload. Once the form is received, the Graduate Administrator will initiate upload in BANNER, so that the student can upload the Final copy in Carleton Central.

* Students are STRONGLY encouraged to hold their defence in person. If external examiners are not in the Ottawa area, hybrid options are available. Please contact Claire with any questions.

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