Graduate Student Policies and Procedures

Department of Biochemistry, Microbiology and Immunology

University of Saskatchewan

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Revisions

June 2025:

- Added that all new grad students starting their graduate program in the fall 2026 will be required to take BMIS 800 (pg 3)
- Clarified that students are not required to provide their PowerPoint presentations to their advisory committee for their May progress meeting (pg 4)
- The statement indicating that the students' advisory committee chair must approve their progress report has been removed (pg 4)
- Aligned the required timelines for thesis examiners to receive a student's thesis prior to the defense date with CGPS policies (pg 5)
- Clarified that graduate students are expected to contribute up to 120 hours of teaching assistance **per year**, and not over the course of their program (pg 6)
- Updated candidacy assessment process to include next steps after the oral exam – approval of PhD project proposal and subsequent meetings (pg 9)
- Added generative AI and funding policies for BMI grad students (pg 15 and pg 18)
- Added statement that international doctoral students are now eligible to apply for Tri-Agency awards (pg 21)

December 2025

- Added information about new direct-entry PhD program (pg 1, 2 and 3)

January 2026

- Clarified that students only need to submit their presentation, previous progress report and meeting minutes to advisory committee for the Fall meeting (pg 4)
- Clarified advisory committee membership (pg 11)
- Clarified who must present posters at BMI poster day (pg 4)

February 2026

- Added updated TOEFL scoring scale (pg 1)

Table of Contents

1. Introduction

The Department of Biochemistry, Microbiology and Immunology (BMI) offers both M.Sc. and Ph.D. programs. The purpose of this manual is to provide additional information concerning these programs which may not be available on the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral studies (CGPS) website: https://cgps.usask.ca/policy-and-procedure/index.php or the Departmental website: https://medicine.usask.ca/students/graduate-programs/biochemistry-microbiology-and-immunology.php.

2. Application and admission

Prospective students interested in pursuing graduate programs in BMI can learn about the department, its research activities, and the availability of opportunities by visiting its website at https://medicine.usask.ca/bmi/index.php. This site also provides a list of "research-active" faculty.

A. Eligibility

M.Sc. admission requires a Baccalaureate (or equivalent) from a college or university of acceptable standing, and equivalent to the degree at this university with a specialization in biochemistry, microbiology and/or immunology, or a related discipline. A cumulative weighted average of at least 75% (U of S grade system equivalent) is the minimum standard. Students with a lower average may be accepted under exceptional circumstances.

Ph.D. admission requires a Master's degree, or equivalent, from a recognized university in an academic discipline relevant to the proposed field and a cumulative weighted average of at least 80% (U of S grade system equivalent). In order to assess the quality of the student's M.Sc. degree, the BMI Graduate Affairs Committee will review the thesis and/or any published papers. If the M.Sc. is not deemed to be equivalent, then the applicant must enroll as a M.Sc. student and take the Ph.D. Candidacy Assessment within the first 2 years (see regulations for this below).

Admission to the Direct-entry Ph.D. program requires a 4-year Honour's degree or equivalent with a specialization in biochemistry, microbiology and/or immunology, or a related discipline and a minimum 80% average in final two years of course work (U of S grade system equivalent).

If English is not your native language, you must arrange for a certified result of the "Test of English as a Foreign Language" (TOEFL) or International English Learning Test Score (IELTS) to be sent directly to us. Note that our department requires a minimum TOEFL score of 4.5 (with a minimum of 4.0 in **each** area) or an overall IELTS score of 6.5 (with a minimum of 6.5 in **each** area). For those who are unable to get access to TOEFL or IELTS exams, alternative English language exams recognized by the CGPS are acceptable. Please visit https://grad.usask.ca/admissions/admission-requirements.php#Englishlanguageproficiencyrequirements for more information.

B. How to apply

If you intend to apply to the BMI graduate program, it is required that you first find a faculty member in our department who will agree in advance to being your research supervisor (assuming that all other conditions are met). Please contact those individuals whose research you find interesting. There is no set application deadline and applications can be made at any time.

Once you have identified a faculty member who has agreed to be your supervisor, you will have to formally apply to the graduate program through the CGPS (https://grad.usask.ca/admissions/how-to-apply.php). The graduate studies application fee is $120 CDN and is NOT refundable. Completion of CGPS's online application form requires that original academic transcripts and formal proof of English proficiency be provided. You must also arrange for three letters of recommendation to be submitted. Two of your referees must be academic contacts, and the third may be academic or professional.

For the direct-entry Ph.D. program, applicants must also:

- Submit a detailed statement outlining any prior research experience and technical skills, specific research interests and how these align with the potential supervisor's research area and describe long-term goals/career path.
- Arrange for their potential supervisor to submit a letter of recommendation attesting to the applicant's research skills and potential for long-term research success. Note: The proposed research supervisor may be one of the three research mentor referees. However, the supervisor's endorsement letter must be submitted separately, in addition to the three required reference letters.

Once the BMI Department has recommended admission to CGPS, the CGPS will need to approve the admission and issue an offer of admission before you can begin your studies.

Although students may apply to enter our graduate program at any time, the university calendar year begins in September and graduate classes are offered either in September (Term 1) or in January (Term 2). The first round of the Dean's Scholarship is due on December 1st but in any event, complete applications must be received by February 1 in order to be considered for scholarship funding beginning the following September. North American applicants should apply a minimum of 4 months prior to anticipated start date. Due to visa processing, international applicants should apply a minimum of 6 months prior to your anticipated start date.

3. Graduate program

A. Minimum program requirements

New students in consultation with their supervisor will prepare a research proposal that needs to be approved by their graduate advisory committee. Students will have a brief 30 minute "meet and greet" meeting with their advisory committee approximately 6 weeks after starting their graduate program. The student and supervisor will briefly introduce the proposed project topic to the committee. A presentation is not required unless the student and supervisor feel it is needed to explain the project. Potential courses will also be discussed and approved. It is advised that the student and supervisor read the graduate student handbook in preparation for this meeting. Any arising questions on the process will be discussed. From this date, students will then have 6 months to submit their project proposal to their advisory committee. A meeting to approve the project proposal and establish a Program of Studies will be held approximately 2 weeks later. (Guidelines for preparation of the project proposal are in the BMI SharePoint site). Approximate timelines are provided in the following table:

	Start in Graduate Program		
	January	**May**	**September**
Meet & Greet (6 weeks after start in graduate program)	mid-Feb	mid-June	mid-Oct
Submit project proposal (6 months after meet & greet)	mid-Aug	mid-Dec	mid-April
Proposal approval meeting (2 weeks after proposal submission)	Sep	Jan	May
Next meeting after project proposal approval	Following May	Following June	Following Nov

For both M.Sc. and Ph.D. programs the major requirement for continuation in the program is demonstration of satisfactory progress in all components. This includes progress in course work, research, written and oral presentation skills, and thesis writing. If, at any time, the supervisor, committee chair or any other member of the student's advisory committee has reason to believe that progress is not satisfactory then a committee meeting should be called immediately to discuss and address the issue(s).

Course work:

For the M.Sc. program the student must take 9 credit units consisting of graduate level (800) courses. The graduate student must maintain a 70% cumulative grade point average, with no individual mark being below 60%. The committee may recommend additional courses at any level in order to bolster a student's knowledge in perceived areas of weakness and/or to complement the research program.

For students admitted into the Ph.D. program that hold an M.Sc. degree, no graduate level (800) courses are required. In some cases, additional courses may be recommended by the student's committee to bolster a student's knowledge in perceived areas of weakness and/or to complement the research program. It also may be beneficial for students to take several 800 level courses to increase their chances of being awarded scholarships but a cumulative GPA of 80% is required with no individual mark being below 70%.

For direct-entry Ph.D. students, a minimum of 9 credit units at the 800-level, including BMIS 800.3 (Science Communication in Biochemistry, Microbiology, Immunology) must be completed within the first 2 years of the program,

Note: Effective Fall 2026: All BMI graduate students starting their program in the fall term of 2026 will be required to take BMIS 800.3 (Science Communications in Biochemistry). M.Sc. students must then take 6 additional credit units of graduate level (800) courses.

A student failing a graduate course is not necessarily a case for the student to be required to discontinue. If the student does not receive a passing grade, the student can retake the course, or a different one, with the approval of their advisory committee. However, failing the course paired with unsatisfactory progress does qualify as a case for requirement to discontinue. This must be discussed by the student's advisory committee.

Graduate Student seminars: Graduate students are required to present one seminar each year on their research progress as part of a graduate seminar course (BMI 990). Yearly registration and attendance in BMIS 990 is required throughout the graduate program. All Graduate students are also expected to present a poster of their research at the annual BMI Poster Day, typically held in the spring. Students starting their program in January/May are exempt but may present a poster if they wish.

BMI hosts weekly research presentations by faculty, including members from USask and external speakers. Although these seminars are not a mandatory part of the graduate program, it is highly recommended for students to attend to broaden and deepen their knowledge.

Research progress: Progress in research will be assessed by the graduate student's advisory committee annually on the basis of a short but formal presentation (no longer than 20 minutes) and by a progress report submitted to the advisory committee. The written progress report should contain a brief overview of relevant background, hypotheses, objectives, experimental methods, results and future plans. A list of references is required. The report should also include a list of courses completed and those remaining to be taken, and achievements (e.g., publications, conferences and awards) during the past year.

The students should address the questions raised in previous meeting(s) in their progress report. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to make sure that the questions previously raised have been addressed. (A section "issues to be addressed prior to next meeting" will be added to the minutes to help address this problem)

Please remember to follow the guidelines for preparation of the progress report. The report is not supposed to be a mini thesis so the introduction should be brief (maximum 4 pages, 1.5 spacing). The committee is trying to assess the progress in the last year so it is helpful to start the results with a brief overview of the previous results. Please make it absolutely clear which are the new results.

The progress report should be submitted to the supervisor in early April at least 3 weeks before the meeting date for a thorough review and suggested revisions should be made before it is submitted to the student's advisory committee. The student will be responsible for submitting the report to the members of the committee at least 7 days before the meeting date. If the guidelines are not followed, the progress report will be returned to the student for revisions and the meeting will be rescheduled. The main committee meeting will usually be held in May (1.5 hours).

In addition, there will be a second shorter meeting in November (1 hour). A written progress report is not required for the fall meeting. Instead, graduate students will deliver a short PowerPoint presentation (about 15 min). A copy of the presentation should be distributed to the committee 1 week prior to the meeting, along with the student's previous progress report and meeting minutes. The PowerPoint presentation should be reviewed by the student's supervisor but does not need to be approved by the Advisory Committee Chair. The presentation requires only the briefest of introductions and summary of previous results so that the focus can be on the results obtained since the May meeting. If appropriate, a timeline for completion can be included at the end. If needed, a full written report/meeting can be requested at the discretion of the Chair/supervisor.

Note: Students are not required to provide their advisory committee members with their PowerPoint presentation for the May progress meeting; this is only required for the Fall meeting.

Presentation skills: Oral communication skills will be assessed on the basis of the talks to the committee as well as the formal seminar presentations. Written communication skills will be assessed on the quality of the initial proposal and the subsequent progress reports. If required, the committee should expect to see a significant improvement in both oral and written abilities as the student progresses through their graduate program. (Note: Many language courses are available on campus particularly for international students. The student's advisory committee should recommend these when deficiencies are encountered. Information can be found at https://students.usask.ca/international/#InternationalStudentandStudyAbroadCentre).

Student progress with respect to course requirements and other exams will be discussed during the meeting. At the end of the meeting, the student will be asked to leave the room for the advisory committee to discuss relevant issues. Upon their return to the meeting room, relevant issues will be discussed with the student. The Chair of the committee will provide a written report of the meeting to be sent to the Committee members for review, then the Graduate Secretary for data entry, submission to CGPS and filing. If necessary, the Chair may delegate a committee member to take scientific minutes to be communicated to both Committee members and the student. The written minutes of the meeting will be made available to the Supervisor, Grad Chair and the graduate student through PAWS (online).

Thesis writing (See SharePoint guidelines and section 3E below) - When the student has finished or nearly finished their research, an Advisory Committee meeting will be held at which the student will present major experimental data to be included in the thesis along with a draft Abstract and Table of Contents to the committee members. The committee members will discuss the proposed thesis content and indicate their approval for the preparation of the thesis. This committee meeting can be independent of the student's mandatory annual committee meeting, although it may take place concurrently. (If deemed reasonable the discussion can also take place by email). Three possible outcomes may arise from this meeting:

1. The student is given unconditional permission to write thesis with no more lab work required.
2. The student is given permission to write thesis pending completion of certain set(s) of experimental data.
3. The content is deemed insufficient for writing the thesis and additional experimental data are required for the Committee to review the progress.

Thesis writing timelines: Satisfactory progress in thesis writing is considered as a component of a student's graduate program. All BMI graduate students are expected to complete a draft of their thesis that is suitable for review by their advisory committee within four months of receiving permission to begin writing. The supervisor is responsible for overseeing the student's progress, setting reasonable milestones and deadlines in collaboration with the student, and addressing any delays or challenges. If the thesis draft is not completed within the four-month timeframe, students may request a two-month extension by submitting a valid reason for the delay to their advisory committee for approval. Should the thesis still be incomplete after the extension, the advisory committee will meet to discuss the reasons for the student's lack of progress. If the reasons for delay are deemed unacceptable, the advisory committee may recommend that the supervisor terminate the student's stipend.

Students should understand that the thesis must be approved, first by the supervisor, second by the advisory committee chair and finally by the committee before being sent to the external examiner. Each step takes time, usually a minimum of three weeks, and revisions may be required at each step. Even after the thesis defense, major revisions may be required. Therefore, PLEASE allow 3-4 months after submission of the thesis to the supervisor before accepting another appointment or leaving the country! Once a student has begun writing the thesis, it is in the student's, as well as the department's best interests, that the writing and defense proceed efficiently. Recognizing that the mode of interactions between supervisors and students varies considerably, the following guidelines are expected to be adhered to once a complete draft of the thesis is in the hands of the supervisor.

- Review of a first complete draft by the supervisor; four weeks.
- Review of thesis by the Advisory Committee; three weeks.
- Review of revised thesis by the Advisory Committee; two weeks (if necessary)
- For M.Sc., review by the Arm's length examiner; minimum of two weeks (M.Sc.)
- For Ph.D., review by the University and External examiners; minimum of five weeks

Students should take account of these timelines when planning the final preparation and defending their thesis. For example, once the thesis draft is ready for submission to the Advisory Committee, the student can expect a time lag of 8 to 10 weeks before the date of the defense, the last four weeks being required for the reading of the thesis by the external examiner for M.Sc. and Ph.D. theses respectively.

B. Duration

In general, it is expected that a M.Sc. should be completed in 2.5 to 3 years, with a maximum length in program of 4 years. For completion of a Ph.D. the time frame is longer, between 4.5 to a maximum of 6 years. The academic unit has the authority to approve one extension to time in program of up to 12 months/three academic terms for graduate students. If program requirements are still incomplete by the end of the first extension, a request may be submitted to the Dean of CGPS for one (master's) or two (doctoral) additional extensions of up to 12-months/three academic terms each. Employment is no longer disqualified from being part of the rationale for requesting a time in program extension. Students can request a leave of absence due to health or compassionate reasons. It is important to make arrangements with your supervisor and chair of the advisory committee well in advance if possible. The CGPS also has to approve all leaves.

C. Teaching

All students are encouraged to obtain as much teaching experience as possible. As part of their graduate program, all students are required to demonstrate in BMI undergraduate courses, both in-person or online. All students without external funding are expected to contribute up to 120 hours of teaching assistance per year. Students with a partial scholarship (e.g. CoMGrad) have to do up to 60 hours and students with full scholarship (e.g. NSERC) have to do up to 40 hours of teaching assistance. Teaching assistants are paid for the hours that they contribute to teaching, in accordance with the PSAC collective agreement. This will reduce the supervisors' contribution to their student's stipend. Any amount above these hours would be a stipend paid to the student but requires mutual agreement between the supervisor and student. It is

expected that time spent teaching/demonstrating will not come at the expense of the student's research.

D. Ph.D. candidacy assessment and transfer from the M.Sc. to Ph.D. program

The Doctoral Candidacy Assessment requirements for new (starting May 1, 2024) Ph.D. students in Biochemistry, Microbiology and Immunology are below. Students who began their program prior to this date have the option to adopt this new Candidacy Assessment format or the previous Comprehensive Exam formats. Note that the candidacy assessment exam does not replace the student's annual advisory committee meeting. However, at the discretion of the advisory committee Chair, the timing of the candidacy assessment and the advisory committee meeting may be adjusted to ensure they are not scheduled too closely together.

The purpose of the candidacy assessment is for doctoral students to demonstrate that they have:

1. an adequate grasp of the current state of knowledge in the intended field of research;
2. the potential to conduct advanced original research independently using relevant methodologies;
3. the ability to communicate in ways appropriate to their field of research and practice (and, if applicable, other knowledge or skill requirements for the discipline).

All students admitted into the Ph.D. program must complete the candidacy assessment no later than 24 months after the initial registration of the student in their graduate program. The student's Advisory Committee shall notify the student at least 60 days in advance of the scheduled Candidacy Assessment approval of the student's research grant topic).

Transfer from the M.Sc. to Ph.D. program: Some students in the M.Sc. program may seek permission from their supervisor and Advisory Committee to transfer to the Ph.D. program before completing the requirements of the M.Sc. program, and without preparing and defending a M.Sc. thesis. In this case, transfer to the Ph.D. program and advancing to candidacy are achieved at the same time through the Candidacy Assessment. This option is normally reserved for students who are doing very well in the M.Sc. program as evidenced by a well-developed research project that can form the basis for a Ph.D. program. These students would have demonstrated potential for success at the Ph.D. level through above average written and oral communication and critical thinking skills. M.Sc. students must have completed at least 9 credits of graduate coursework, have a grade point average of 80% or higher with no mark below 70%.

The formal request to transfer to the Ph.D. program should be made to the student's advisory committee chair no later than 18 months after beginning their M.Sc. program. Approval from the advisory committee to initiate the transfer process may be obtained via email, but a meeting can also be held to discuss. Students must complete all Ph.D. transfer requirements and the Candidacy Assessment before the end of their second year. M.Sc. students who have been in the program more than two years will not be permitted to transfer to the Ph.D.

The Candidacy Assessment will include the cognate member of the student's advisory committee, pending their approval by the graduate affairs committee. If the student does not successfully transfer to the Ph.D. program, the cognate member is not required as part of the student's MSc program but may be retained at the discretion of the student's advisory committee.

Format: Preparation of the research grant proposal and oral defense

The Candidacy Assessment consists of a written component and an oral exam.

1. Written component:

The student will be required to prepare a research grant application. The proposal can be related to the student's thesis work but should be a different or a parallel project and not simply extra objectives added on to the student's current project. Students should identify gaps in their field and ask the appropriate questions to address the gap. The proposal must include the student's own thoughts and ideas but can have some overlap with research themes, technologies/methodologies from the supervisor's lab. This will allow the student to draw on some of their own lab experience to aid in the development of the proposal. The grant topic must be approved by the student's advisory committee and the Graduate Chair. Once approved, the student will have 4 weeks to prepare and submit the grant proposal to their advisory committee. The student's supervisor or other faculty members should not be directly involved in contributing intellectual content to the grant. However, they can provide guidance regarding the grant writing process.

Guidelines for the preparation of the grant proposal

The entire length of the grant proposal, including figures, is not to exceed 10 pages in length (single-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, 2 cm margins). References do not count towards the page limit. The project title will appear at the top of each page in addition to a page number at the bottom of each page. Organize your proposal with appropriate numerical headings and sub-headings. For example, Aim 1 may be followed by experimental approaches 1.1 and 1.2.
The proposal will consist of the following sections:

1. **Introduction** (3-4 pages):

    - Significance and Impact (2 paragraphs) – This section should adequately summarize the current state of the field and the significance/impact of the proposed research. It should also include the central hypothesis and the experimental strategy that will be used to test it. It should be briefly stated why information obtained in the study is important or how it will be used (i.e. knowledge obtained will facilitate the design of a new therapy). Lastly, the research aims that will be used to test the hypothesis should be listed.

    - Background information of specific topic areas of the proposed research area – Each topic should be directly related to giving relevant background information on a specific research aim and identify knowledge gaps.

2. **Research design and methods** – This section should contain 2-4 experimental aims. Each aim should start with a one-sentence descriptive title that accurately summarizes the proposed research and a brief introductory paragraph containing sufficient background

information and the rationale for what is being done and why. The specific hypothesis for each aim should also be stated. Experimental approaches should be described in adequate detail and include proper controls. A brief discussion of expected outcomes and follow-up experiments should be included. Alternate experiments/approaches should also be proposed in the event that experiments don't work as expected.

3. **Conclusions** – The proposal should conclude with a brief paragraph summarizing the overall goals of the proposed research and highlighting its potential usefulness and impact.

4. **References** – References should be cited in-text by author last name and the year of the publication using the Molecular Biology of the Cell format. For the bibliography, references should be listed in alphabetical order of the authors. See *Guidelines for the preparation of a thesis* for specific formatting instructions for references.

5. **Budget** – not required

2. Oral exam:

The oral exam will be held approximately 5 business days after the grant proposal was submitted to the advisory committee. At the onset of the exam, the student will give a 15–20 minute presentation of the grant proposal. After the presentation, members of the Advisory Committee will assess several aspects of the student's knowledge including, but not limited to: background information, proposed hypotheses, experimental design, methodology, feasibility.

The outcome of the Doctoral Candidacy Assessment is either satisfactory or unsatisfactory. A student that successfully completes the Candidacy Assessment is deemed a doctoral candidate (e.g., Ph.D. Candidate). The student's official transcript will note the date when the candidacy assessment was satisfied.

A student who does not satisfy the requirements of their candidacy assessment is permitted a second attempt at the recommendation of the academic unit and with the permission of the Dean of CGPS or designate. The second attempt should be scheduled from one to three months from the date of first assessment; exceptions will be considered by the Dean of CGPS or designate. A second unsatisfactory outcome will automatically result in a requirement to discontinue from the doctoral program. Both a second failure and/or denial of a second attempt at the Candidacy Assessment may be appealed to the Graduate Academic Affairs Committee of the CGPS on substantive grounds.

3. Approval of PhD Proposal

Students that successfully complete the candidacy assessment must then submit a Ph.D. project proposal to their advisory committee for approval. This proposal should be an extension of the student's M.Sc. proposal. The timeline for its submission and approval will be discussed and approved by the student's advisory committee but should not exceed 4 months after completion of the candidacy assessment. A meeting of the advisory committee will then be held to approve the project proposal. The meeting date will be set by the student's advisory committee Chair in

consultation with the student's supervisor. Ideally this meeting will coincide with the student's regular Spring or Fall meeting.

E. Preparation of thesis and thesis defense (See "Progress in thesis" for timeline and guidelines); When a student and their Supervisor believe that the research work is complete, the student must ask the Advisory Committee for permission to write a thesis. This request can be made at any time. A table of contents together with an abstract must be sent to the advisory committee for approval. The Advisory Committee must satisfy itself that the quantity and quality of the research is adequate, and that the student has a good grasp of their own work in relation to the existing knowledge base in the area of specialization. For the Ph.D. degree, the student should have published at least one substantive first author paper directly connected to the major focus of the thesis work. If no papers have been published, the student and supervisor must provide the advisory committee with clear evidence that there is a path to publication in the near future i.e., a submitted paper or a preprint in BioRxiv.

The Advisory Committee will either grant permission to stop research and concentrate on data analysis and thesis preparation or specify additional research work that must be carried out.

Theses may be produced in either the traditional "chapter" style or the "manuscript" style, which consists of a manuscript, or cohesive series of manuscripts, written in a style suitable for publication in appropriate venues. If the manuscript format is used, transition chapters need to be added in between the manuscripts (as required by CGPS).

A final oral defense of the M.Sc. thesis will be conducted with an Examining Committee that includes the members of the Advisory Committee plus an "External Examiner" that may be from within or outside the department but should not have been directly involved in the student's thesis research and is approved beforehand by the Graduate Chair. The Examining Committee for a M.Sc. defense will be chaired by the Chair of the graduate student's Advisory Committee.

A final oral defense of the Ph.D. thesis will be conducted with an Examining Committee that will consist of the advisory committee Chair (non-voting), supervisor, committee members including the cognate member, the university examiner and the external examiner. The university examiner must have an "arm's length" relationship with the thesis research but can be from BMI. The university examiner will be approved by the student's advisory committee and is required for all Ph.D. defenses, regardless of the student's start date in program. The external examiner will have an "arm's-length" relationship with the student, the supervisor and members of the advisory committee and will be approved by the Associate Dean, CGPS.

Both the M.Sc. and Ph.D. thesis defense are in the form of an oral examination that is typically about 2-3 hours in length. Immediately before the oral thesis defense, the student will present a 45-minute open seminar on the thesis work, to satisfy the final requirements for BMI 990. The seminar is followed by a closed question and answer defense of the thesis work.

4. Administration of the program

A. Departmental Graduate Affairs committee

The general functions of the Graduate Affairs Committee of the Department of BMI are to administer the graduate programs, to ensure that each graduate student fulfills the requirements

necessary for an advanced degree in BMI, and to ensure that the standards of the Departmental graduate program are maintained.

B. Supervisor

The supervisor is the faculty member directly responsible for overseeing your research. The selection of a supervisor should be completed by mutual agreement among student, supervisor and the Department. The supervisor must be a faculty member of the CGPS and should be familiar with the rules and procedures of the department, the CGPS and those of the university. Both student and supervisor are responsible for ensuring that all CGPS and departmental regulations and requirements are observed and met.

C. Advisory committee

The Advisory Committee for each graduate student functions to approve the Program of Study (course work and research program) as well as to ensure that the student satisfies all of the requirements of the Graduate Program in BMI. Major changes in the student's program requires the approval of the Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee also provides a source of information and counsel for graduate students. In this way, the graduate student will be exposed to a variety of opinions and ideas and can obtain help from individuals with particular expertise required for some aspect of the research project. Members of the Advisory Committee are also available for consultation concerning problems in situations where the student does not wish to approach their supervisor. If a conflict arises between the supervisor and the student, the supervisor should attempt first to resolve any problems informally with the student. If informal discussion does not lead to a resolution, then the Graduate Chair and advisory committee should be consulted. If this is not successful, then the Dean of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies will be consulted. Similarly, if the student encounters problems, then they should contact the chair of the advisory committee who will advise accordingly.

All advisory committees are chaired by a member of the Graduate Affairs Committee. This is a non-voting role. For M.Sc. students the advisory committee is composed of the supervisor (and co-supervisor) and two other faculty members. At least one of the other faculty members (not including the chair and supervisor) must be from BMI. For Ph.D. students the advisory committee is composed of the supervisor (and any co-Supervisor), two other faculty members and a cognate member. At least one of the other faculty members (not including the chair and supervisor) must be from BMI. The cognate member must be from a different principal academic unit than the student and supervisor. Adjunct and Associate members of BMI can also serve as the cognate member.

The Advisory Committees will meet regularly in May of each year to receive the Annual Progress Report from each graduate student. A second shorter meeting will also be required in November. The Advisory Committee may also meet at any other time at the request of the graduate student, the Supervisor, the Chair of the Advisory Committee, or the Chair of the Graduate Program Committee.

D. Student/supervisor agreement

The student/supervisor agreement is used to provide a framework for discussion between the supervisor(s) and the graduate student and to establish guidelines to govern their

relationship. It may be revisited at any stage of the student's graduate program. The student/supervisor agreement can be found in SharePoint.

E. Vacation

Graduate students are entitled to a minimum of 15 days of vacation per year in addition to time off for weekends, regularly scheduled university closures, and statutory holidays. Vacation days do not need to be taken consecutively. Students required to work during regularly scheduled university closures may take additional vacation days at a later date. Vacations should be scheduled at a time that is mutually convenient to the student and supervisor(s).

5. Financing graduate school

A. Sources of funding

Specific policies regarding the student support funding from CGPS and the CoM and the 75Th Anniversary Scholarship are described in the Graduate Student Funding Policy for the Department of Biochemistry, Microbiology and Immunology (Section 8).

Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that each graduate student receives a stipend which meets a minimum departmental standard. As of January 1, 2025, departmental minimums will be $21,000 per year for M.Sc. students and $26,000 per year for Ph.D. students. Stipends for both M.Sc. and Ph.D. students will also be increased by another $2,000 per year both January 2026 and January 2027. **The decision to terminate funding cannot be made unilaterally by the supervisor and requires a meeting of the advisory committee**. In the absence of any scholarships or bursaries, this stipend will usually come from research grants held by the Supervisor. However, it is beneficial for both the student and the Supervisor if some, or all, of the support for the student is derived from scholarships or assistantship funds. Support from extramural sources generally provides a higher stipend than support from intramural (University of Saskatchewan) sources. In particular, a student who receives a scholarship (e.g. CoMGrad, Sask. Innovation or federal funding) will have their minimum stipend increased as described in the Graduate Student Funding Policy. A Ph.D. student awarded a Canada Graduate Scholarship (Doctoral) with an unmatched value of $35,000 would not receive a top-up from BMI.

Scholarships are subject to the conditions of the award. For example, some scholarships cannot be held simultaneously. Stipends will revert to the base line when the scholarship ends or is terminated.

M.Sc. students holding CGS-M funding will automatically be topped up by $6,000 (made in two installments) in the first year of their award (Honourary CGPS 75th Anniversary Scholarship). Ph.D. students holding CGS-D and/or PGS-D funding will automatically be topped up by $7,500 each year they hold Tri-Agency funding (Honourary SIOS Doctoral Scholarship from the Government of Saskatchewan's Innovation & Opportunity Scholarship program). These top ups from CGPS are in addition to those provided by BMI.

Special case of CSC students.

The CSC Ph.D. scholarship funding (currently $19,200/annum) requires the supervisor to pay the tuition of the student (in addition to topping up the salary to $24K as per departmental guidelines). Therefore, CSC students will be excluded from the above top-up stipend policy that is in place for other external scholarships.

Departmental Assistance.

The Department allocates funding in August, adjudicated by the Graduate Affairs Committee in consultation with the department head. Sources of funding include student support funding from CGPS and the College of Medicine and departmental funds.

Financial assistance from the College of Medicine.

A limited number of Graduate Teaching Fellowships and Graduate Teaching Assistantships are awarded by the College of Medicine. Applications are submitted through the departmental Graduate Program Affairs Committee.

A limited number of Graduate Research Fellowships are awarded by the College of Medicine. Applications are submitted through the departmental Graduate Program Affairs Committee.

The Arthur Smyth Memorial Scholarship is available through the College of Medicine. These awards are intended for especially meritorious students who are nearing the end of a Ph.D. program. Applications are submitted through the departmental Graduate Program Affairs Committee.

CoMGrad scholarships are awarded annually. Submission dates and application forms will be circulated to students when available.

Financial assistance available from the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

The CGPS offers the Dean's Scholarship for especially meritorious students. Preference is given to students entering the first year of a Ph.D. program, although entering M.Sc. students are also eligible. Several application deadlines occur in the first few months of each calendar year. Applications are submitted through the departmental Graduate Program Affairs Committee.

The Saskatchewan Innovation and Opportunity Graduate Scholarship is offered for graduate students conducting research in specific priority areas. Eligible current students will be invited to apply online. The department will also be invited to nominate a restricted number of external applicants each year. https://www.saskatchewan.ca/residents/education-and-learning/scholarships-bursaries-grants/scholarships/saskatchewan-innovation-and-opportunity-scholarship .

Financial assistance available from extramural sources

A. National Science and Engineering Research Council (NSERC). Students (Canadian citizens and residents) may apply for M.Sc. or Ph.D. level awards to support their studies. Generally, students must be working in a NSERC-funded laboratory to be eligible for these awards. Application guidelines, materials and instructions are available at:

https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Students-Etudiants/index_eng.asp (available to Canadian residents only)

B. Canadian Institutes for Health Research (CIHR). Students (Canadian citizens and residents) may apply for M.Sc. or Ph.D. level awards to support their studies. Generally, students must be working in a CIHR- funded laboratory to be eligible for these awards. Application guidelines, materials and instructions are available at (click 'funding opportunities'): https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/37788.html (available to Canadian residents only)

A wide variety of additional intramural and extramural awards are available, most of which are directed towards specific areas of study or particular categories of applicants. Students are strongly encouraged to explore the opportunities available. A comprehensive list of additional scholarship opportunities is maintained by the CGPS at: https://grad.usask.ca/funding/scholarships.php
https://grad.usask.ca/funding/international-scholarships.php

B. Travel funds

Students are encouraged to go to conferences. Approximately $1500 may be available from the College of Medicine and $350 (Canadian) or $550 (international) from the University at least once during the program. Contact the OVDR (ovdr@usask.ca) in the College of Medicine for more information.

6. BMI Graduate Application Checklist

_____ Application Form Online at https://grad.usask.ca/admissions/how-to-apply.php

_____ Three Recommenders - provide 3 email addresses into the online application

_____ Curriculum vitae/résumé

_____ Handwritten statement of research interest/research experience

_____ $120 Canadian application fee paid online

Required, but sent separately:

_____ Sealed, Official versions of all transcripts

_____ Official English Test Results

Applications are submitted online only:
Graduate Programs
BMI
College of Medicine
University of Saskatchewan
GA20, Health Sciences Building
107 Wiggins Road
Saskatoon SK S7N 5E5

7. BMI Policy on the use of generative artificial intelligence

"**Generative artificial intelligence** (**generative AI**, **GenAI**,[1] or **GAI**) is artificial intelligence capable of generating text, images, videos, or other data using generative models,[2] often in response to prompts.[3][4] Generative AI models learn the patterns and structure of their input training data and then generate new data that has similar characteristics.[5][6]" (Wikipedia)"

PURPOSE OF GUIDELINES: To provide guidance and regulation for the use of generative AI for graduate studies particularly in the research based on the program/degree-level competencies students must demonstrate to be awarded their degree, practices acceptable to the discipline and general principles of responsible conduct of research and academic integrity.

CGPS developed a framework for GenAI use and advises that transparency in use is the best practice at this time to balance the usefulness of generative AI with the inherent issues. The framework requires programs to provide guidelines of the use of the use of generative AI in program guidelines.

Principles: Academic Integrity, Transparency and Disclosure, Data Privacy and Confidentiality and awareness of bias in algorithms/training data.

Note - As of May 2024, there is a university taskforce in the process of establishing principles and guidelines for the use of AI and generative AI in teaching and learning, research and administration. When the university principles and guidelines have been adopted, these guidelines may be updated to align with the university guidelines[1].

GUIDELINES

1. **Applications:** In the preparation of applications for internal or external scholarships, research funds, or ethics approval, students are responsible for ensuring they follow the rules of the agency or office about the use of generative AI in preparing applications.

2. **Coursework:** Permission to use generative AI in coursework is up to each instructor. Students must adhere to the instructions provided in each course syllabus.

3. **Thesis/Dissertation Work:** Generative AI has much promise to accelerate research productivity. Regardless of how students gather and report information and ideas, they are responsible for the accuracy of the information and that all sources are appropriately cited in their work. Currently, generative AI is fallible in several ways including perpetuation of biases from the data used to train AI algorithms, generation of sources that do not exist and failure to cite sources to the rigor required in graduate level scholarship.

[1] *For example, the taskforce is considering sustainability as part of this exercise; generative AI uses tremendous resources/has a large carbon footprint which may temper recommendations for use.*

At the end of their degree, students in the Biochemistry, Microbiology and Immunology graduate programs must demonstrate the ability to be knowledgeable of the relevant background in their area of study, critically evaluate background literature, design and conduct original research, create visual representations of complex systems or processes, create and orally defend written descriptions of their research and publish in peer-reviewed publications,. As a final assessment, students must be able to defend their thesis in an oral examination. Students that rely too heavily on software to generate their written documents are at risk of not being able to defend the work in the same way a student who writes their document and is aware of the intended meanings.
With the above principles and required competencies in mind, we developed the following guidelines for use of generative AI in thesis/dissertation work.

1. **Types of generative AI and uses:**

    - Generative AI tools may be used providing that they are disclosed through a transparency statement or listed as part of the methodology.

    - The following generative AI tools are approved by the program for use: Microsoft Bing Copilot, Research Rabbit, ChatGPT. Other generative AI tools will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

    - Prior to using any generative AI applications, the student should consult with their supervisor to ensure it will be acceptable for use and publication. Disputes on whether specific generative AI can be used should be referred to the Graduate Chair.

    - Generative AI should not be used in thesis/dissertation work including reviewing the literature, writing any documents for assessment, preparation of progress reports.

2. **Academic Integrity and Bias:**

    - Students are responsible for their use of generative AI in researching background information including verifying all sources.

    - Students using generative AI (and AI in general) must be aware of the biased nature of training data and able to respond to questions regarding training data for generative AI applications used.

3. **Transparency and Disclosure:**

    - Generative AI tools may be used providing that they are disclosed through a transparency statement or listed as part of the methodology.

- To retain copyright of the thesis/dissertation, the document cannot be entirely written using generative AI tools.

- Use of generative AI software for the production of illustrations, audio, video or other types of audio-visual material must be indicated[2] While legal issues relating to AI-generated images and videos remain broadly unresolved, Springer Nature journals are unable to permit its use for publication.

4. **Data Privacy and Confidentiality**: due to privacy and confidentiality concerns, students must ensure any data provided to generative AI will not breach privacy and confidentiality requirements for personal information or intellectual property. This would include personal information, unpublished research data, manuscripts in preparation for publication and/or grant applications.

Contravening these guidelines will constitute academic misconduct.

PUBLISHING

In our discipline students disseminate their scholarly work primarily through publication in peer-reviewed journals. Because of the broad scope of journals used for publication in BMI, students and supervisors are responsible for keeping up to date with current editorial/publisher policies where they intend to publish research to ensure compliance with those policies, including their policies for the use of generative AI.

Failing to follow editorial rules with regard to publishing or peer review will constitute a violation of the responsible conduct of research policy.

PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS IN PEER REVIEWING:

Students may be engaged in reviewing for journals (not likely grants). Journals and granting agencies provide regulations on whether or not generative AI tools can be used in reviewing work. In general, information from proposals should not be entered into generative AI due to the need for confidentiality.

TRAINING:

Supervisors and students are encouraged to engage in workshops and training to develop AI literacy, focusing on ethical use, academic integrity, and critical evaluation of AI tools.
Library learning module (in GPS960) – Academic Integrity Module: Understanding Generative AI
TLE https://teaching.usask.ca/learning-technology/gen-ai/overview.php#top

[2] Distinguish programs such as BioRender that requires user to select items with generative software such as AI image generator – powered by DALL-E 3 (I found in ask AI) that draws from a prompt.

8. BMI Graduate Student Funding Policy

Effective January 1, 2025

This policy applies to all thesis-based graduate programs in the Department of Biochemistry, Microbiology and Immunology -

Purpose: The overarching objective of financial assistance is to support graduate students in completing their graduate programs in an efficient and timely manner and to attract students to programs.

1. As of January 1, 2025, the minimum stipend for all full-time Ph.D. students during their program of study is $26,000/year. Subsequently, the minimum stipend will be increased to $28,000/year effective January 1, 2026 and to $30,000/year effective January 1, 2027.

2. As of January 1, 2025, the minimum stipend for all full-time M.Sc. students during their program of study is $21,000/year. Subsequently, the minimum stipend will be increased to $23,000/year effective January 1, 2026 and to $25,000/year effective January 1, 2027.

Admission of potential students to our graduate programs is contingent upon supervisors demonstrating that they have at least 2 years of funding available for an M.Sc. student and 4 years of funding for a Ph.D. student at the minimum levels described above. Supervisors must continue to fund students until they have completed their program. The decision to discontinue funding must be approved by the student's advisory committee

- Students must maintain satisfactory progress in research as evaluated at least annually by their advisory committee. Exceptions to these criteria can be made upon approval of the Dean, CGPS or designate.
- Supervisor(s) are responsible for ensuring that students receive the minimum stipend from their research funds.
- Where students hold scholarships and/or academic employment, these amounts will be counted toward their stipend. The supervisor is responsible for providing additional funds so that the stipend reaches the minimum level.
- Supervisors may provide a stipend that exceeds the minimum at their discretion.
- Funding is not guaranteed during program extensions (applies where > 4 years guaranteed for Ph.D.).

3. All of the following **do** count toward meeting the student's minimum guaranteed funding amount:
   - Stipend payments from supervisor's research grants.
   - Scholarships provided through the department/school/college or CGPS.

- Teaching Assistant payments falling within the PSAC collective employment agreement assigned through the department.
- External and/or internal scholarships such as the various Tri-Agency programs and the CGPS funded scholarships (Dean's Scholarship, Indigenous Graduate Leadership award, Teacher-Scholar Doctoral Fellowship, Saskatchewan Innovation and Opportunity Scholarship), CoMGrad.

4. Income from the following sources **do not** count toward the students guaranteed funding amount:
   - Income earned through unrelated paid employment external to the university.
   - Student Loans (domestic or international).
   - Funds provided by Indigenous communities to their member
5. Funding in place for the upcoming year (September to August) will be communicated to the student and supervisor in writing by Aug 31 from the graduate chair and include employment obligations, such as teaching assistantships. This timing may be adjusted students who have started their programs in January or May. The combination of funds may change during the year should the student receive a new scholarship or take on additional academic employment.

6. Student Support Funding (SSF)
   - Students must be accepted by CGPS as a qualified graduate student into the graduate program of the Department of Biochemistry, Microbiology and Immunology
   - A faculty member must have agreed to supervise the student.
   - The supervisor(s) must agree to provide the financial support necessary so that the total amount of financial support that the student receives meets or exceeds the minimum amount of funding established by the Department of Biochemistry, Microbiology and Immunology. As of January 1 2025, these amounts are $21,000 for M.Sc., and $26,000 for Ph.D.
   - Only full-time M.Sc. and Ph.D. students are eligible for student support funding and are required to have a two-year GPA of 80% or greater. Once in the program, they must show satisfactory research progress and maintain their 80% GPA. Every student has a major committee meeting in May and a mini meeting in November (unless extenuating circumstances necessitate a meeting at a later date), to ensure that progress in research, communication skills and course work is on track. The eligibility for support funding is reviewed annually in August.

   - **All eligible students will receive funding with M.Sc. students getting 80% of the value of the Ph.D. award.**
     - Calculation of funding awards:

     X = Total funding available/(P+0.8M), where X = amount paid to Ph.D. and 0.8X is the amount paid to M.Sc. (The 0.8 is based on $21,000/$26,000, the minimum salaries ratio of M.Sc. vs. Ph.D. student).

     P = number of Ph.D. students and M = number of M.Sc. Students.

- Only students who are still within the first three years of a M.Sc. program may receive support funding. M.Sc. students can receive 24 months of funding during the first 36 months of their program.
- Only students who are still within the first 5 years of a Ph.D. program may receive support funding. Students who transfer from the M.Sc. to the Ph.D. program are eligible to receive support funding only during the first 5 years of combined graduate study (including M.Sc. portion).
- Every student who is eligible (Canadian citizen or a permanent resident of Canada) and has a GPA that makes them competitive is required to apply for Tri-Agency scholarships.
- The amount of SSF funding for each student may differ from year to year and is based on the allocation from CGPS and the CoM and the number of eligible graduate students.

7. 75th Anniversary Recruitment Scholarships (from CGPS)
    - Awarded based on the application for admission to the program and is assessed by the BMI Graduate Affairs Committee
    - Eligibility: all full-time thesis-based M.Sc. and Ph.D. students.
    - Students awarded a 75th Anniversary Recruitment Scholarship will also receive a top up from their supervisor such that their total stipend amount is $5,000 above the minimum M.Sc. and Ph.D. stipends.
    - Assessment criteria will include (1) the student's graduate program admission average, (2) Research achievements, including publications, presentations, awards, leadership, and community engagement and (3) Letters of support.
    - Students awarded the 75th Anniversary Recruitment Scholarship would not be eligible to hold SSF.
    - A separate application for this scholarship is not required. Outstanding applicants that have been accepted into the BMI graduate program will have their names put forward for consideration for the 75th Anniversary Scholarship at the time their application is reviewed by the Graduate Affairs Committee. This will be indicated in the applicant's letter of admission. Applications submitted after May 30 will not be considered for funding for the current year but would instead be considered for the following year.
    - Will only be awarded one time to a student at the time of admission. Students are expected to apply for other scholarships in subsequent years.
    - Options for distribution of funding:

        1. The full value of the 75th Anniversary Recruitment Scholarship is paid in full ($20,000) to a Ph.D. or M.Sc. student in year 1 of their program.

        2. Payment of the full value of the 75th Anniversary Recruitment Scholarship ($20,000) to a M.Sc. or Ph.D. student can be deferred until year 2. This would be allowed when the student obtains another scholarship that meets the minimum funding requirements and must be used in the student's first year.

3. The full value of the 75th Anniversary Recruitment Scholarship ($20,000) can be split such that M.Sc. or Ph.D. students are paid $10,000 in year 1 and $10,000 in year 2. The student's total stipend amount would only be topped up $2,500 above the minimum M.Sc. and Ph.D. stipend levels, but for both year 1 and year 2. This will be allowed only when there are additional funds available. Additional funding to meet the required funding requirements would be provided by the supervisor and/or other eligible funding sources (i.e. COMGrad).

In all cases, students will be able to reflect being awarded a CGPS 75th Anniversary Recruitment Scholarship in the amount of $20,000.

- The yearly allocation of 75th Anniversary Recruitment Scholarships does not need to be used every year. Funding can be rolled over to the next year but must then be used.
- Student's stipends revert to minimum funding levels when the award is completed.

8. Students are strongly encouraged to apply for all awards and scholarships for which they are eligible. In order to hold student support funding, every student that is eligible (Canadian citizen or a permanent resident of Canada) and has a GPA that makes them competitive is required to apply for Tri-Agency scholarships. As of the summer of 2025, international students are eligible to apply for Tri-Agency doctoral awards.

9. Scholarship awards and stipend increases

- Students are required to inform the Graduate Chair when they receive a new scholarship and will not be required to accept an external award that does not financially benefit the student. In the BMI department a student who is awarded an internal or external scholarship (e.g. CoMGrad, Sask. Innovation) will have their minimum stipend increased as follows:

  Scholarship amount <$10,000: Top up to student stipend = 30% of award.
  Scholarship amount = $10,000-18,000: Top up to student stipend = $3,000 + 20% x (award value - $10,000).
  Scholarship amount >$18,000: Top up to student stipend = $4,600 + 10% x (award value - $18,000).

- Graduate students awarded a Canada Graduate Scholarship – Doctoral (CGS-D), Canada Graduate Scholarship – Master's (CGS-M) or an NSERC Postgraduate Scholarship (PGS-D) would receive no student support funding from BMI.
- Stipends are subject to the conditions of the award and will revert to the minimum respective amounts for M.Sc. or Ph.D. students if the fellowship is terminated or when its term is completed.

10. All students are responsible for paying tuition and fees on a per term basis.

11. Special case of China Scholarship Council (CSC) students: The CSC PhD scholarship funding (currently $19,200/annum) requires the supervisor to pay the tuition of the student (in addition to topping up the salary to $26,000 as per departmental guidelines). Therefore, CSC students will be excluded from the above top-up stipend policy that is in place for other external scholarships.

12. Funding will continue during thesis writing, the defense and subsequent revisions. The approximate length of time to make revisions will be determined at the thesis defense by the examining committee. Funding cannot be terminated unilaterally by the supervisor and requires a meeting of the advisory committee.

13. To be eligible to receive financial support, a student must be registered full time and active in program, maintain satisfactory progress in the program and meet the expectations laid out between the student and supervisor in the Student-Supervisor Agreement. Decisions to discontinue funding based on poor academic performance and progress in research will be made in consultation with the student's advisory committee and the graduate program chair and align with the institution's rules regarding requirement to discontinue.

14. If the supervisor cannot continue stipend/scholarship support after the guaranteed time frame, this must be discussed with the graduate program chair, department head and the student before any action is taken to stop payments.

15. Equity: The Department of Biochemistry, Microbiology and Immunology fully supports and commits to the equity goals of the CGPS and the University of Saskatchewan.

9. Graduate Student Support, and Resources

1. What to Do If Problems Arise

People to Contact:

- Graduate Chair – Scot Stone
- Department Head – Linda Chelico
- College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (CGPS) Associate Dean – Jaswant Singh

Key Advice:

- Problems do not resolve themselves – take action and talk to someone before they escalate.
- Self-Care Matters: Balance work with self-care activities to maintain your physical and mental well-being.
- Seek Support: If feeling overwhelmed, reach out to your supervisor, faculty members, department head, graduate chair, peers, or a mentor.
- **Confidentiality: All discussions regarding concerns are confidential.**

Other resources are available through the University of Saskatchewan Student Affairs and Outreach

- A team of Social Workers is available to support students throughout their academic journey.
- Services include immediate support to students, crisis response, educational programming, and consultation with faculty, staff, and students who are concerned about a student.
    - https://students.usask.ca/health/centres/student-affairs-and-outreach.php
    - **Telephone: (306) 966-5757**

Support Areas Include:

- Anxiety and depression
- Thoughts of suicide
- Grief
- Eating and body image concerns
- Relationship difficulties
- Abuse and sexual assault
- Questions about sexual orientation or gender identity

3. Discrimination and Harassment Prevention

The USask Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Unit ensures a safe and respectful academic environment.
https://wellness.usask.ca/safety/discrimination-harassment.php#Discriminationandharassment

Your Rights:

- Under the Saskatchewan Employment Act, everyone has a right to a healthy, safe environment free from discrimination and harassment.

Harassment Includes:

- Inappropriate conduct (comments, displays, actions, or gestures) based on race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, or ancestry.
- Actions that negatively impact psychological or physical well-being.
- Sexual harassment, which includes inappropriate comments, actions, or displays of a sexual nature.

If you experience discrimination or harassment: Contact the Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Unit. **All discussions are confidential.**

Contact Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Services for a confidential consultation, or seek assistance from another university official.

Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Services (DHPS):
(306) 966-4936
Contact DHPS