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Message from the Graduate Program Coordinator

I wanted to thank you all for the warm welcome to the program and for bearing with me as I get to know all of you and the particulars of this program. I am very happy to be able to work with all of you here. Please let me know if you need any assistance with your program, scholarships, or just need someone to talk to. My office has moved so if you need to find me I'm in 2D01.13 now. Wishing you all the best in the upcoming year.

James Dobson

Message from the Graduate Chair

Hello everyone. I can hardly believe it is now over a year since I was appointed as the Graduate Chair for the Health Sciences Graduate Program and Assistant Dean Graduate Studies for the CoM. It has been a real learning experience for me and I very much appreciate your support and patience. I recognize that it has been a year of many changes at both the college and programmatic level. It is my sincere hope that these and future changes will serve to improve the graduate student experience and better support supervisors and committees in their efforts. In the coming year we will continue to hone and improve the Health Sciences Graduate Program drawing upon recommendations from the review conducted in the Spring by CGPS as well as from feedback from students and faculty.

A key change that will be introduced pertains to the H.Sc. 990 Seminar requirement. Based upon the program review and discussions at the annual meeting in (May 28th) we will shift away from regular bi-weekly seminars in favor of bi-annual research days. This change

is intended to provide a critical venue for students to present their research which is more compatible with busy schedules (for students and supervisors). These research days will be supplemented by additional college-level seminars – likely one per term this coming year. A downside of this change will be the loss of the regular face-to-face communication seminars create. The introduction of a regular newsletter and revamped website are intended to help, in part, address this communication gap. That said, there is no substitute to actually gathering together. As such, we are planning on continuing with activities such as a welcome/orientation night (September and January), the annual meeting in the Spring as well as other sessions that will be developed in concert with the College of Medicine Graduate Student Society (CMGSS).

I hope all of you are enjoying the summer months, taking time to recharge your batteries (and vitamin D). I look forward to see you at the welcome night in September!

Dave Cooper

Program News

Call for Volunteers – Curriculum Committee: In the fall a curriculum committee will be created to examine course offerings in the program. If you are interested in participating please let us know.

Minimum Stipends: The Health Sciences Graduate Program now requires minimum stipends in order for a new student to be admitted. This change addresses a key recommendation of the program review and also brings our program into closer alignment with other CoM graduate programs in the BioMedical Sciences. Details are provided in the handbook. Supervisors are also strongly encouraged to support all students currently in the program who are not otherwise supported by professional employment. The CoM and the Health Sciences Graduate Program now have robust co-funding scholarship programs to help supervisors meet this expectation.

Comprehensive Exam Formats: After extensive consultation the revised comprehensive exam policies are now in the updated handbook. Two formats are approved: a grant format and a traditional format which entails written papers followed by an oral examination.

Role of the Chair on the RAC: CGPS has confirmed that committee chairs need not be academically engaged in the preparation and review of thesis materials. That said, they certainly can be. Appointment of the chair is a responsibility of the RAC, not the Health Sciences Graduate Program.



Current Funding Opportunities

What funds are still available to you right now?

Health Sciences Graduate Scholarships

This program currently has a surplus and thus will consider out-of-cycle applicants applying to the program for a January start date. Details available here:

<https://medicine.usask.ca/students/graduate-programs/funding.php#Program>

Tuition Bursary Program

This program targets students ineligible for scholarships due to professional employment is in surplus and will consider out of cycle applicants. Details available here:

<https://medicine.usask.ca/students/graduate-programs/funding.php#University>

Graduate Students & Post Doctoral Fellows Conference Travel Awards

Students and fellows are eligible for up to \$1250 to offset the costs of conference travel. A recent change to this program is that **doctoral students may now apply twice** during their programs. Details available here:

<https://medicine.usask.ca/students/graduate-programs/funding.php#University>

Major scholarship deadlines for the 2019/2020 academic year will be covered in the next newsletter in September



Professional Development

Graduate student success is not limited to teaching and academic performance. Whether you have lots of time or just a little to devote to professional skills development, there are a variety of opportunities for graduate students and post-doctoral fellows to consider.

Ask James about the Graduate Professional Skills Certificate, GPS 984: Thinking Critically, or Mitacs.

Upcoming Events

- **5 September 2018**
CoM Accreditation Celebration BBQ 4:00-6:00 PM
Location TBD
- **5 September 2018**
Health Sciences Welcome/Orientation Event 6:00 PM
Louis' Loft
- **24 October 2018**
CoM Seminar Series talk on Ethics in Research by Dr. Carolyn Ellis (McGill)
Location TBD
- **December 2018**
HSC 990 Research Day
Details TBD

WEBSITE

The revamped website is now live. It is, and will remain, a work in progress. We welcome your feedback and suggestions for content/improvements.

Please visit:

<https://medicine.usask.ca/students/graduate-programs/graduate-student-index.php>



Feedback:

We welcome any feedback you may have regarding this newsletter and programmatic policies in general. Please send you thoughts to the program coordinator ovdr.grad@usask.ca or Dr. Cooper david.cooper@usask.ca