

Policies and Procedures

Graduate Programs in the Department of

Anatomy, Physiology, and Pharmacology

University of Saskatchewan

ANATOMY, PHYSIOLOGY, AND PHARMACOLOGY GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

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1. Introduction

Welcome to graduate studies in the Department of Anatomy Physiology and Pharmacology!

The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with basic information on the services available to you in your graduate program, as well as the duties and requirements that you will need to fulfill to complete your graduate degree in the Department of Anatomy, Physiology and Pharmacology. The Department offers BSc. Hon./MSc, MSc and PhD graduate programs and has faculty and students with diverse research interests in the life sciences. You are expected to gain a detailed understanding of your area of research. Our graduate program consists of independent research as well as didactic work involving academic courses and reading of relevant literature. The didactic component is intended to provide a knowledge framework upon which your research is based. Nevertheless, your efforts in research training and preparation in your area of specialization are of paramount importance. In addition, every effort is made in the department to prepare you to teach and communicate scientific information.

We commit to ensuring that Dept. of Anatomy, Physiology and Pharmacology is an environment free from discrimination, harassment, bullying and retaliation, and in which individuals of any sex, gender, ethnicity or nationality (e.g.) are always treated with dignity and respect. The Dept. of APP takes all harassment and discrimination claims seriously and will not tolerate violations of ethical conduct and professionalism, including by faculty, students or staff within or beyond our department at the University of Saskatchewan.

Recently, the options for graduate programming in the Department have changed as a result of the merger of the Anatomy and Cell Biology, Physiology, and Pharmacology, Departments on July 1, 2018. These three departments had three separate, legacy graduate programs: Anatomy and Cell Biology, Physiology, Pharmacology. As of May 1, 2020, registration in legacy graduate programs was closed and all new students entering a graduate program will enter the Anatomy, Physiology, and Pharmacology (APP) graduate program. All students who were enrolled in a legacy program on May 1, 2020 had the option of transferring into the APP graduate program or remaining in their legacy program. The policies and procedures in this handbook are intended to apply to students in all four graduate programs currently administered by the Department of Anatomy, Physiology, and Pharmacology. Once the last student registered in a legacy program graduates, the program will be officially closed by the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies as no students can be admitted to them. Specific details germane to a legacy program are noted in the relevant section. Should legacy program students have questions about the requirements that apply to them, they should contact the graduate chair.

The departmental Graduate Program Committee develops policy and administers the graduate program. Immediate oversight for each student is provided by a faculty Supervisor, and a faculty Advisory Committee. Direct financial support to graduate students is derived from a variety of sources. All aspects of the program, including conferral of degrees, are ultimately governed by the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, which sets or approves the policies and procedures that departments follow. The Policies and Procedures Manual of the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies can be found at: https://cgps.usask.ca/policy-and-procedure/index.php.

2. How do I apply for graduate studies at the University of Saskatchewan?

There are three potential graduate training programs in the Department of Anatomy, Physiology and Pharmacology:

- 1. Combined Bachelor of Science/Master of Science (B.Sc./MSc): This is a project- and thesis-based program only offered to outstanding students enrolled in an APP undergraduate honours program. Students should inform their supervisors early in their program (first term) of their interest in continuing into the B.Sc./MSc Program. Admissions will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the Graduate Committee based on academic performance. Students must be admitted to the program (and submit a program of studies) by June 1st. This combined program allows students to continue their undergraduate research project and fulfill additional requirements to obtain an MSc. A strict timeline is expected to not exceed 12-15 months beginning immediately following BSc graduation.
- 2. Master of Science (MSc): This is a thesis-based program offered to students holding a four-year

degree, or a Doctor of Medicine (MD) or Doctor of Dentistry (DDS) from a recognized university in an academic discipline relevant to the proposed field of study. The expected length of the program should not exceed 2 years.

3. Doctor of Philosophy (PhD): This is a project- and thesis-based program offered to students holding a Master's degree, or equivalent, from a recognized university in an academic discipline relevant to the proposed field of study. The expected length of the program is should not exceed 4 years.

Before applying for admission to graduate studies, prospective graduate students must first contact individual faculty members with research interests compatible with their own, to determine if that faculty member is willing to supervise the student. Information about the research interests of departmental faculty can be obtained from the Department web site (<u>https://medicine.usask.ca/app/</u>). When you contact your prospective supervisor, include your career goals, your academic credentials, and curriculum vitae. Once a supervisor has been identified and they agree to supervise your graduate program, you should access the website of the College of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Studies (CGPS) (<u>http://www.usask.ca/cgps/</u>) where complete information on requirements and procedures for admission are available. Those international students who must meet English proficiency requirements should arrange for testing in their home country. Please note that international students are charged additional fees. Students with external scholarship support are encouraged to include this information with their application.

After you are accepted into the CGPS, you will need to register with the University of Saskatchewan and pay your tuition and fees. Complete information is available at the CGPS website: http://grad.usask.ca/admissions/how-to-apply.php#Beforeyouapply. Students in the B.Sc./MSc and MSc programs need to register for APP 994 and APP 990. Students in the PhD program need to register for APP 996 and APP 990. You will need to register for additional courses throughout your graduate program according to your Program of Studies (see sections 4B and 6B below). Upon your arrival at the University of Saskatchewan, you will need to meet with the Anatomy, Physiology, and Pharmacology graduate assistant (app.grad@usask.ca) who will help you get settled in the Department.

3. Who is involved in my graduate program?

In addition to yourself, your graduate program involves your research supervisor, your advisory committee members, the Department graduate chair, the Department graduate assistant, and staff in the CGPS. As a graduate student at the University of Saskatchewan, you are enrolled in the CGPS, but your graduate program is administered at the Department level, which operates within the regulations provided by the CGPS.

A. Your role as a graduate student

You are responsible for the success of your program, although your supervisor, research advisory committee, the graduate chair and the graduate assistant will always be available to help with problems. Graduate students are specifically responsible for:

- 1. demonstrating a commitment to research through diligent and conscientious lab and/or field work
- 2. maintaining a spirit of collegiality with peers, laboratory co-workers, and faculty
- 3. adherence to University regulations concerning work safety, biosafety, ethical treatment of research animals, and Academic Integrity <u>http://www.usask.ca/integrity/</u>
- 4. timely registration for courses and payment of fees owing
- 5. maintaining of appropriate academic performance (minimum 75% GPA in coursework)
- 6. attending and participating in the departmental seminar series (APP 990; APP and legacy students)
- 7. in consultation with supervisor, establish members of advisory committee and arrange advisory committee meetings (minimum once/year) (see FAQ *How do I set up a committee meeting?*)
- 8. seeking advice from members of their advisory committee where appropriate
- 9. timely submission of scholarship applications/renewals and awareness/attendance to the stipend funding periods

10. timely submission of research proposal, annual progress reports, manuscripts, thesis, etc.

B. Your supervisor's role

The supervisor is responsible for providing supportive advice and discussions about the research, assistance with research design, and for timely review of research proposals, manuscripts and thesis drafts. Supervisors are also required to provide sufficient resources to ensure that your research proceeds as effectively as possible. These resources include research operating funds, and access to research space and equipment as necessary. Additional clarification of roles can be achieved by filling out the Student-Supervisor Agreement (Appendix C) and filing it along with your program of studies.

C. The roles of advisory committee members

The guiding principle underlying the advisory committee is that the student needs sustained advice from the beginning of their program if they are to move expeditiously and constructively through the program requirements. The advisory committee meets at least once each year to review and assess student progress and to offer advice. However, students are encouraged to arrange more frequent meetings and/or to contact individual members of their committee whenever they need assistance. The advisory committee also plays an important role in assessing student performance in qualifying and comprehensive examinations and thesis defenses.

The advisory committee consists of the following members (minimum of 3 for MSc, 5 for PhD):

- 1. Supervisor a member of the faculty of the CGPS (adjunct professors included). Co-supervisors are counted along with the Supervisor as one member.
- 2. Advisory committee chair the Department Graduate Chair or designate (typically a member of committee)
- 3. Additional Members a minimum of 1 (for MSc) or 2 (for PhD) faculty members of the Department of Anatomy, Physiology and Pharmacology. Must be members of the graduate faculty of CGPS, adjunct professors, or professional affiliates.
- 4. Cognate Member a minimum of one for a PhD program. The cognate member cannot be a member of the Department of Anatomy, Physiology and Pharmacology but must be a member of the graduate faculty of CGPS or else granted permission by the Dean, CGPS.
- 5. The Department Graduate Chair can designate an advisory committee chair anytime throughout the program of studies.

The supervisor, the student and the graduate chair most often guide the decision-making process for committee member selection. Collectively, committee members should have sufficient experience and knowledge to be able to effectively assist the student with research design, background, methods, and analysis.

D. Anatomy, Physiology and Pharmacology graduate chair

The graduate chair offers advice and information regarding Department and CGPS regulations to ensure consistency among advisory committees and among students within the Department. The graduate chair should be viewed as an advocate for the student and should be the first person that the student consults should problems arise that cannot be resolved with the supervisor and/or committee members. On an administrative level, the graduate chair is responsible for ensuring chairing and recording the minutes for annual advisory meetings, qualifying and comprehensive exams, and defenses. The graduate chair also oversees administrative aspects of scholarship and stipend awards/distribution. At the university level, the chair acts as liaison between the Department and the CGPS.

E. Graduate assistant

The graduate assistant acts as the graduate student resource person, providing advice and guidance on procedures related to the Department, the graduate program, and CGPS requirements. The graduate assistant is responsible for scheduling meetings, exams/defenses, and for maintaining and submitting appropriate

paperwork to CGPS, including relevant information regarding scholarships. They can be contacted via email at app.grad@usask.ca.

F. The Department graduate committee

The graduate committee meets as necessary to make decisions regarding the Department's graduate program, including decisions on scholarship competitions. In some cases, decisions made by the graduate committee are submitted for approval to Department faculty. Members of the graduate committee include the graduate chair, the graduate assistant, four other Department faculty members, and two student representatives (ideally one M.Sc. and one PhD student).

4. Information for students in the MSc or PhD Programs

A. Program Objectives

The primary responsibility of the Department of Anatomy, Physiology and Pharmacology toward its graduate students is the provision of an environment that fosters scholarly development and experience that will enable gainful employment or continued training at an advanced stage. Additionally, the Department has the responsibility of ensuring that its graduates will reflect credit upon the Department and on the University. Below you will find specific student objectives for the graduate programs offered in the Department of Anatomy, Physiology and Pharmacology. A general description of learning outcomes are found in the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies policy and procedure documents (https://cgps.usask.ca/policy-and-procedure/governance-membership/degree-level-learning-outcomes.php).

MSc Student objectives:

The overarching goal of the MSc program is to ensure that students are exposed to the scientific method and procedures/skills important in producing and publishing novel scientific information. Although publication at this level is not mandatory, demonstration of knowledge and skills necessary to take an experimental question to publication must be evident. In order to meet this goal, MSc students should:

- 1. Develop a generalized knowledge base sufficient for design, conduct, analysis and reporting of scientific experiments surrounding a well-defined experimental question/hypothesis.
- 2. Obtain practical experience in laboratory skills necessary to address the proposed experimental questions/hypotheses.
- 3. Develop proficiency in the collection, analysis and presentation of data to aid in final publication.
- 4. Acquire experience with oral presentation of scientific information sufficient to enable preparation and delivery of reports or presentations at scientific meetings.

PhD Student objectives:

In addition to meeting the main goal and specific objectives of the MSc program stated above, the major goal of the PhD program is to develop students into trained problem-solvers. This will include the development of a broadened knowledge base beyond their primary research focus and a mature understanding of the process of scientific inquiry sufficient to enable the assessment and constructive criticism of the work of others. Publication of at least one first authored paper in a reputable peer-reviewed journal is strongly recommended for completion of the PhD degree. Given an experimental question in any scientific field, a PhD student should be able to:

- 1. Find relevant information to create/rationalize a hypothesis that will address the experimental question.
- 2. Seek out relevant information/resources concerning methodology necessary to adequately test the hypothesis.
- 3. Design, perform and overcome/circumvent problems associated with experimentation.
- 4. Analyze, interpret and discuss the results in the context of the current literature leading to publication.
- 5. Obtain familiarity with the process of scientific reporting sufficient to enable the independent preparation

of manuscripts for journals, applications for research grants, and technical reports.

B. Within the first month of starting your program

- 1. You and your supervisor should meet to decide on committee members and identify some of the academic courses you feel that you need. Departmental course requirements for the B.Sc./MSc, MSc programs are 9 credits at the graduate level. Additional courses can be taken from any academic unit on campus as deemed appropriate to the students' specific program of studies. Students transferring to the PhD program from the MSc program require an additional 3 credits at the graduate level. Students transferring into this APP program from, or wishing to stay in, one of the three legacy programs (Anatomy and Cell Biology, Physiology, Pharmacology) are subject only to those individual legacy program requirements (legacy Anatomy and Cell Biology require 3 additional credits, legacy Physiology and legacy Pharmacology do not require additional credits). Any student may be required to take additional course work if the advisory committee deems it appropriate.
- 2. Arrange and hold your first introductory committee meeting (see FAQ *How do I set up a committee meeting*?). At this meeting, you will discuss your proposed research and the committee will provide advice on coursework. A progress report is not required for this meeting but you will need to send an email to your committee members prior to the meeting which indicates the area of your research and your proposed coursework, both credit and non-credit.
- 3. Coursework will include:
 - A list of academic courses which fulfill the credit requirements for your program.
 - Graduate Research (APP 994 for MSc or 996 for PhD or legacy equivalents) and Graduate Seminar (APP 990 or legacy equivalent) courses.
 - Additional requirements such as Graduate Research Ethics and Integrity Training Course (GSR 960), UCACS Education and Training Program (Animal Care/Handling GSR 962).
 - Laboratory Safety, Biosafety, Radiation Safety and Ethics courses as required.
 - Students may also elect to complete non-credit courses offered by the CGPS, such as Thinking Critically: Professional Skills for Global Citizens (GSR 984); Introduction to University Teaching (GSR 989); Canadian Academic Acculturation and Literacy for International Graduate Students (GSR 981). A full list of courses is available at http://www.usask.ca/cgsr/for_students/gsrclasses.php. These courses have no credit or fees, but require registration. Registration in these courses is limited to current graduate students in a degree program and graduate students are encouraged to participate in these courses. The courses will appear on students' official transcripts.

C. Within the first 4 months of starting your program

- 1. Write your brief research proposal (see FAQ, what should I include in a research proposal?).
- 2. You will need to have a committee meeting to have your Program of Studies (POS) approved by your advisory committee (see FAQ *How do I set up a committee meeting*?). The Program of Studies lists courses required for your individualized research program, as well as the research proposal. When the committee has approved it, the POS is submitted to the graduate chair and graduate assistant who will submit it to CGPS.

D. Each year of your program:

- 1. Maintain your registration in the program, pay tuition and fees.
- 2. Call an advisory committee meeting. It is a requirement of your graduate program to have at least one advisory committee meeting each year (typically in May/June). Call extra advisory committee meetings as deemed necessary. It is the responsibility of the student and the supervisor to call the meeting (see FAQ *How do I set up a committee meeting?*). At least **5 working days** prior to meeting, provide your committee and the graduate assistant with an annual progress report (see FAQ *What should I include in my annual progress report?*). The Supervisor should review the written progress report before it is submitted. At this meeting, you will normally be expected to give a short (*e.g.* 20 min) presentation on your research progress. This presentation should provide a brief overview of your research but should focus on those issues which require input from your committee members. Remember that your committee members have already received and reviewed your progress report.

E. In the final year of your program

- 1. Call a permission-to-write meeting. The purpose of the permission-to-write meeting is to survey the structure and content of the thesis as a unified piece of work. The committee needs to be provided with a standard permission-to-write document at least **5 working days** before the meeting. The Supervisor should review the permission-to-write document before it is submitted. For details on what to include in the document, see FAQ: *What should I include in my Permission to Write report?* At the meeting, you will normally be expected to give a short (less than 20 min) presentation on the proposed structure and content of your thesis.
- 2. Write your thesis (see FAQ: *How should I format my thesis*? and the CGPS website <u>http://www.usask.ca/cgsr/for students/thesis.php</u>) and review recent theses from the Department available through CGPS (<u>http://ecommons.usask.ca/handle/10388/381</u>).
- 3. Once your <u>supervisor</u> has provided feedback on the written thesis and has approved it, the document is submitted to advisory committee members for reading and approval. Please allow the committee at least 2 weeks for MSc and 4 weeks for PhD to review the thesis.
- 4. After feedback from committee members (written and/or verbal) has been incorporated into the thesis, and each committee member has individually advised the committee chair that the thesis has met their approval, the thesis needs to be submitted to the graduate assistant who will deliver the thesis to the external examiner. External examiners participate in the examination of theses to provide an independent assessment of the quality of the graduate research. The external examiner, (faculty member at the UofS external to the department for MSc; external to University for PhD), will have been previously selected by the advisory committee as per CGPS guidelines. The student will not have any formal or informal communication with the external examiner until the date of the defense. CGPS requires 3 weeks for MSc and 6 weeks for PhD between submission of the thesis to the external examiner and the thesis defense.
- 5. Defend the thesis. Students are required to give a public seminar (~30 minutes for MSc; up to 50 minutes for PhD) in the APP 990 seminar prior to the defense of the thesis (this seminar is in addition to the yearly expectations of the APP 990 seminar that the student must complete while enrolled in any graduate program). On the day of their defense, students will give a brief (less than 20 min) summary of their thesis. This presentation is open to anyone. After their presentation, the examining committee convenes with the student for the oral defense of the thesis. The oral defense can be open to the public, or can be closed, including only the student, advisory committee members and the external examiner. Open defenses are encouraged. The decision to have an open or closed defense lies with the student. As of March 2020, defenses are being conducted online. During their defense, it is expected that the student will have their camera on to facilitate interactions with the committee members.
- 6. After successful defense of the thesis, students should be prepared to edit the final version of the thesis as directed by committee members and the external examiner. The normal recommendation is to allow either 2 or 6 weeks for the student to make the appropriate changes to the thesis. For full list of potential outcomes, consult CGPS guidelines.
- 7. Once the recommendations of the thesis examining committee have been met and the final version is approved by the supervisor, students who have met all other graduate program requirements must apply to graduate online through their PAWS account, on or before the second week in April to receive their degree at Spring Convocation, and on or before the third week in September to receive their degree at Fall Convocation. Students are responsible for ensuring the final copies of the electronic thesis submitted to the CGPS and members of their advisory committee meet all regulations as posted on the CGPS website. Students will arrange for hard copies of the thesis to be bound. The supervisor is normally expected to provide funds to cover the binding costs for copies of the theses (As requested). The student also should work closely with their advisory committee and with the graduate assistant in order to ensure all necessary documents have been received in Anatomy, Physiology and Pharmacology and in the CGPS office. Following the thesis defense, students will receive a *Convocation Checklist*. Students are strongly advised to pay close attention to this useful information.
- 8. Graduate!

5. Transfer from an MSc program to a PhD program

CGPS regulations regarding transfer from an MSc program to a PhD program state the following: Transfer from an MSc program to a PhD program should take place after the end of the first year and no later than the end of the second year in the program. Recommendation to transfer from an MSc program to a PhD program must be initiated through a formal meeting of the student's advisory committee that forwards its recommendation through the academic unit to the CGPS. The following conditions must be met:

- 1. The student shows great promise both in terms of academic accomplishments and in potential for research. The student has completed at least 9 credit units, and has achieved a high-academic standing (>80% GPA) in these 9 credit units.
- 2. There is evidence of good writing and oral communication ability.
- 3. There is evidence the student has requisite research skills and knowledge to be able to successfully complete a PhD dissertation.
- 4. The student has successfully completed the PhD Qualifying Examination (see section 6 below) prior to being recommended for transfer.

Once permission to transfer is given, a new Initial Program of Studies form must be submitted.

6. Qualifying and Comprehensive Examinations

Students in the MSc program are not required to take a qualifying or comprehensive examination.

Qualifying Examination

This exam is used for MSc students wishing to transfer to a PhD program as outlined above (section 5). The Qualifying Examination is designed to test the student's general scientific knowledge, familiarity with the scientific literature in his or her area of interest, and suitability for study at the PhD level. It has both written and oral components. The written component is a formal proposal for the PhD research project. It must be given to members of the Advisory Committee a minimum of <u>one week</u> beforehand, and should contain the following components:

- A. Descriptive Title, Name, and Date
- B. Background
- C. Specific Aims
- D. Rationale
- E. Preliminary Results (MSc work if transfer)
- F. Proposed Research Plan and Methodology
- G. Significance

The oral component includes a 15 - 20-minute oral presentation of the proposed research plan and methodology. This is followed by questions from members of the Advisory Committee. Questioning by the Advisory Committee is designed to determine whether the student has a sufficient command of the area of research interest to ensure that there is a high probability of success at the PhD level.

If the student fails the qualifying examination on the first try, a second examination can be undertaken within three months. However, a second failure disqualifies the student from transferring to a PhD program or continuing in a PhD program.

Comprehensive Examination

The CGPS guidelines for PhD comprehensive examinations state that the comprehensive examination should cover topics cognate to the candidate's field of research and is used to determine whether the student has a mature and substantive grasp of the field as a whole. The Department should establish and make available clear, written and specific regulations regarding the comprehensive examination, within CGPS regulations.

In Anatomy, Physiology and Pharmacology (and all legacy programs), all students in a PhD program are required to pass a Comprehensive Examination. The examination will be given by the advisory committee, with additional examiners added at the discretion of the advisory committee, and/or the Departmental Graduate committee (see below). The examination should be conducted after all course work has been

completed and the research is well underway. The examination should be taken <u>at least</u> **one year** prior to the final completion of the program. Sufficient time should be allotted in case there is a need for a re-examination. The student may choose (with approval of Supervisor) to be examined in either an oral examination format, or a written/oral grant proposal format. The student should meet with their Advisory Committee to select their choice of exam format. The student will have four weeks to prepare for the comprehensive examination. The student must stop lab work during this time and concentrate on studying for the oral or written examination.

1) ORAL EXAMINATION FORMAT

The oral format of the comprehensive examination is designed to test the student's general competence in three major sub-disciplines of anatomy, physiology or pharmacology cognate to the candidate's field of research chosen from a list provided by the thesis advisory committee. The student is also tested for specific knowledge in the area of research specialization.

The examining panel will be chaired by the Chair of the Advisory Committee. The Examiner in the area of research specialization will be the student's Supervisor. Additional Examiners will be chosen as appropriate for the selected sub-disciplines. The student should meet with the additional examiners assigned to the subdiscipline to determine the scope of the questions – usually a textbook is recommended. To frame the scope of the general knowledge/material involved during the examination, students will also be provided with the specific reading material by committee members. The reading material should help guide the student about the content of the examination. In general, questions of increasing difficulty are asked until the student can no longer answer. Following the oral examination, the examining panel assigns a grade of Fail, Pass or Excellent. In the event of a failure, the student must retake the comprehensive examination in those sub-disciplines where performance is judged to be inadequate. In this case, the second attempt must take place within two to six months following the first examination, depending on how many sub-disciplines require re- examination. The student will be required to discontinue and exit the PhD program in the event of a second failure.

2) GRANT PROPOSAL FORMAT

The objective of this examination format is to provide PhD candidates with an opportunity to apply their academic and practical scientific training toward the development and defense of a scientific research proposal. The examination will have both an oral and a written component. The written component will be completed in the format of an NSERC Discovery Grant application (Research Proposal, Research Summary, and Budget). The topic of the Research Proposal should be within the broader area of the student's training (e.g. an area that the student might pursue as a postdoctoral fellow) but should not be directly related to the thesis research. Prior to grant preparation, the student will identify 3 research ideas they would be interested in pursuing and will circulate the title and major objectives for each project to their advisory committee members. Committee members will decide collectively on one of the topics and the student will then proceed to prepare the grant application. During grant preparation, the graduate chair and/or supervisor (and possibly other committee members) will mentor the student in the art of grant writing. Specifically, they will explain the structure and key components of an effective funding proposal and may need to explain the various components of the Discovery Grant. The student will also be directed to examples of well-written successful NSERC Discovery Grants (e.g., via the USask's DG repository). However, no intellectual input is allowed from committee members or other faculty members. The oral component of the comprehensive examination will be based on a defense of the grant application, and on knowledge of background information associated with the proposal and with the student's area of specialization. The written component will be assessed on logical flow of ideas, and pertinent topics such as scientific methodology, experimental design, hypothesis formulation and testing, and statistical analysis. Depending upon the grant topic and the range of expertise of the advisory committee, members of the advisory committee and/or the Departmental Graduate committee may choose to select additional examiners. In addition, the student is required to present a brief (15 minute) summary of the research proposal at the beginning of the examination. To frame the scope of the general knowledge/material involved during the examination, students will also be provided with specific reading material by committee members. The reading material should help guide the student about the content of the examination, beyond the content of the grant. The written component, grant application and proposal, must be provided to the committee members 5 working days prior to the comprehensive exam meeting. The Comprehensive Examination may be repeated once. A second failure will result in the student being required to withdraw from the program.

7. Information on scholarships and graduate student stipend funding

The following list identifies the most common sources of stipend funding for graduate students in Anatomy, Physiology and Pharmacology, although they are not the only sources. Eligibility, stipend amounts (minimum of \$18,000 for 2 years at the MSc level and \$21,000 for 4 years at the PhD level), and application procedures for these and other sources of stipend funding are available on the CGPS website (http://www.usask.ca/cgsr/funding/index.php). Details of the funding for each graduate student should be clearly described in the Graduate Student-Supervisor Agreement (Appendix C) that is signed and filed with your program of studies with CGPS. The Department will only admit students whose proposed supervisor has a demonstrated track record and/or a sound plan for stipend funding and operating funds to complete the proposed research.

- a. Application to the College of Medicine Graduate Awards program (CoMGRAD) is strongly encouraged as this can be used as matching funds or top-up if other external awards are also granted.
- b. NSERC/CIHR The CGPS provides a \$6,000 annual award for holders of NSERC-PGS and CIHR scholarships.
- c. U of S Dean's scholarships, including International Dean's scholarships, are open to <u>new</u> students with a GPA of 85% or better. Students are nominated by faculty or the Department.
- d. U of S Awards open to all graduate students. Requirements for U of S Scholarships and Fellowships include a minimum 80% GPA. A call for applications from the Graduate chair is sent out to graduate students in the spring of each year.
 - i. APP Devolved Scholarships
 - ii. GTF Graduate Teaching Fellowships
 - iii. GTA Graduate Teaching Assistantships
- e. College Awards open to graduate students in the College of Medicine. Eligibility varies between awards. These awards are administered through the Vice Dean Research office, and a call for applications is made each year.
- f. Research grants of supervising faculty In some cases, student stipends arise solely from research grants.

8. Teaching opportunities

Graduate students, particularly those in the PhD program, are offered the opportunity to participate in teaching or to serve as demonstrators in laboratory sessions. To this end, the Department offers a number of Graduate Teaching Appointments each year to students deemed to be making excellent progress in their thesis research.

Participation as a Graduate Teaching Appointee will bring the student into direct contact with undergraduate students and afford an appreciation of the problems associated with the administration of courses. Individuals are typically offered teaching in specific courses within their general area of competence. The duties and approximate hours of the appointment will be outlined in writing in a <u>letter of offer for casual employment</u> (PSAC). These duties may include attendance at lectures and meetings of course committees. Employees will complete and submit time sheets reporting actual hours worked.

Students who wish to obtain more extensive teaching experience may wish to apply for a Graduate Teaching Assistantship or a Graduate Teaching Fellowship (see Section 7.) A maximum of 12 hours/week may be spent in teaching. Duties assigned to students holding Graduate Teaching Appointments will be in accordance with College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies guidelines. Teaching assignments will be determined by the Department Head.

9. Time in program, leaves of absence

Official program time limits (maximum) are five years for the MSc program, and six years for PhD programs. However, typical completion times are two years for an MSc and four years for a PhD. This time is measured from the beginning of the first term of registration for work which is included in the Program excluding any periods of approved leave. Typically, May 1st following graduation for the MSc/BSc combined program, or May 1st, September 1st or January 1st for MSc and PhD programs.

Leaves of absence are available to students for compassionate, medical, or parenting reasons (See parental leave policy - Appendix B). Reasonable accommodation is normally made. Leaves of absence from CGPS are normally granted in four-month blocks only, to coincide with the registration terms (Sept. 1 to Dec. 31; Jan. 1 to Apr. 30; May 1 to Aug. 31). Maternity, adoption and parenting leave may be granted for 8- or 12-month blocks.

Requests for leaves should be discussed as early as possible with supervisors so that appropriate accommodations can be made prior to the beginning of the leave. Requests should be made in writing by the student for a minimum leave of four months to a maximum leave of twelve months. The Dean of the CGPS will consider any petitions arising from students whose request for leave has been denied by the supervisor or academic unit. The leave period is not included in the time period for completion of the degree, and tuition fees are not assessed during the leave. While a student is on leave, all supervisory processes are suspended. Financial support offered to the student as a full- time, fully qualified student is not available to students on leave. Every possible accommodation should be made, however, in assisting the student to delay for the period of the leave, rather than having to decline offers of financial assistance. Letters of support in this regard will be sent to external funding agencies. Additional information regarding registration, fees, and funding for students on leave may be obtained from CGPS.

Appendix A: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

- A.1 How do I set up a committee meeting?
- A.2 What should I include in my research proposal?
- A.3 What should I include in my annual progress report?
- A.4 What should I include in my Permission-to-Write report?
- A.5 How should I format my thesis?
- A.6 Going to conferences who pays?

A1 How do I set up a committee meeting?

In consultation with your supervisor, you are responsible for deciding when you should have a committee meeting. Remember that you are required to have at least one meeting each year to review your progress (typically May/June), although you can hold as many meetings per year as is deemed necessary. <u>All</u> scheduling should be done by the Department graduate assistant. Please refrain from scheduling your own meetings as this can lead to confusion among committee members and the graduate assistant. When you have decided to have a meeting, contact the Departmental graduate assistant and provide the approximate dates (usually a 2-week window) and an <u>agenda</u> for the meeting. The graduate assistant will schedule the meeting when all or most of your committee members can attend and will find an available room. Suggested agendas are:

- For the first meeting (at 1 month):
 - Introduction of student
 - Introduction of research topic (be prepared to present an introduction and summary of the proposed research)
 - o Proposed coursework
 - o Source of research and stipend funding
 - Program of studies form
- For the second meeting (within 4 months):
 - 0 Proposal defense and approval
 - 0 Program of Studies approval
- For annual meetings
 - o Research progress
 - o Progress in coursework
 - o Stipend funding

A2 What should I include in my research proposal?

The following is a suggested format for the research proposal – this can be modified as needed to adapt to different research questions and approaches. The total length should be determined by the needs of a specific proposal.

- Background information. (2 5 pages) The literature review should outline the relevant literature framework into which your work will fit. This review should essentially set up and provide a rationale for the experimental hypothesis (*i.e.* what you are setting out to demonstrate).
- 2. Experimental hypothesis and summary of rationale for the hypothesis. A hypothesis is a proposed, falsifiable explanation, made on the basis of limited evidence, as a

starting point for further investigation. For example: **Estrogen maintains bone density**. Rationale for this hypothesis would be published studies that show a relationship between estrogen and bone density. A test of the hypothesis would be to manipulate estrogen and evaluate bone density. A prediction of the hypothesis would be that if you blocked estrogen, then you would lose bone density.

- 3. Objectives how you will address your hypothesis
- 4. For each objective
 - a. Rationale for experiment, and experimental hypotheses, if appropriate.
 - b. Design of experiment, including suitable control groups, sample sizes
 - c. Proposed methods, including statistical analysis, power calculations if possible
 - d. Anticipated results
 - e. Anticipated problems and proposed solutions
 - f. Proposed timeline
- 5. Actual results, if available.
- 6. Interpretation of results.

A2 What should I include in my annual progress r e p o r t?

- A. The annual progress report form, available from the graduate assistant.
- B. Research Progress (4 pages max, excluding references and figures):
 - 1. Abbreviated literature review, providing the rationale for experiments
 - 2. Thesis Objectives, Hypotheses
 - 3. Progress on each objective include summary of methods, provide results, indicate whether manuscript is being drafted, under review or published
 - 4. An updated timeline.
- C. Summary of non-research activities
 - 1. Courses completed and marks, if available
 - 2. Teaching responsibilities
 - 3. Stipend funding
 - 4. Any other activities which have an impact on your graduate program.

A3 What should I include in my Permission-to-Write r e p o r t?

The Permission-to-Write meeting allows the advisory committee to survey the completion and quality of the student's thesis data as well as structure of the thesis as a unified piece of work by allowing committee members to provide input on how the student intends to structure the thesis. With this in mind, the Permission-to-Write report should include:

- 1. A table of contents formatted appropriately for a thesis.
- 2. A list of thesis objectives and hypotheses.
- 3. A 1-2 page summary for each proposed chapter, each of which should include
 - a. the rationale, specific objectives and hypotheses for that chapter (if not included in (2) above) and
 - b. a **summary** of the most significant findings for each chapter, illustrated with 1 3 pertinent figures with complete captions (*i.e.* NOT all the figures for each chapter). There should be an indication of which chapters are published, which are submitted

and which have not yet been submitted for publication.

4. A final summary statement indicating whether the overall objectives/hypotheses of the thesis have been addressed.

A4 How should I format my thesis?

Theses must follow a consistent editorial format. You should consult the CGPS guidelines (available at <u>http://www.usask.ca/cgsr/for_students/thesis.php</u>), and review recent theses from the Department available through CGPS (<u>http://ecommons.usask.ca/handle/10388/381</u>).

Normally the order in which the items are presented in the thesis is as follows:

- 1. title page,
- 2. abstract,
- 3. "permission to use the thesis",
- 4. table of contents,
- 5. list of tables,
- 6. list of figures, and
- 7. list of abbreviations.
- 8. The body of the thesis
 - a. Introduction that gives in 1-2 paragraphs an overview of the rationale for the project
 - b. Literature review, which should outline the relevant literature framework into which your work will fit. This review should in essence set up and provide a rationale for the experimental hypothesis (*i.e.* what you are setting out to demonstrate)
 - c. Hypothesis and objectives. Remember, a hypothesis is a statement of what you predict will happen.
 - d. The next portions of the thesis present your research, in one of two formats:
 - i. If you have published much of your research, you may wish to use these publications as the individual chapters of your thesis. Within the thesis, each publication (or 'data chapter') therefore has its own introduction, materials and methods, results and figures/tables, and discussion section.
 - A few important points:
 - 1. The references from each of the data chapters should **not** be included at the end of each chapter but be collected together in one common bibliography at the end of the thesis.
 - 2. Normally, methods common to different chapters should not be repeated in each chapter but included only once, and then cited as appropriate for subsequent chapters.
 - ii. If you have not published your work, you may elect to use a more traditional thesis format, with one common material and methods section, several results subsections.
 - e. A general discussion chapter is required following the last data chapter (i, above) or results section (ii, above). You will need to present a coherent discussion of all of your work in one common discussion, which needs to be more in-depth and insightful than a simple summary of the discussions of each of the data chapters, for example.
 - f. Conclusions, future directions
 - g. Bibliography
 - h. Appendices

A5 Going to conferences – who pays?

Your attendance and presentation of your research results at local, national and/or international scientific conferences is strongly encouraged. Normally, decisions on whether you will attend a particular conference are made jointly between you and your supervisor. It should be made clear in these discussions whether part or all of your expenses (*e.g.*, registration, travel, accommodation and meals) will be paid through your supervisor's research grants, including how and when these expenses will be paid and/or reimbursed. Usually, the supervisor is expected to pay for student conference-related expenses. In addition, travel awards are available from CGPS or from the College of Medicine. For information on these, contact the graduate assistant.

August 26, 2020

Appendix B: College of Medicine Parental leave policy

College of Medicine (CoM) Graduate Parental Leave Grant

This is a trial program being launched for a three year term beginning September 2018 and extending to August 2021. This program may be superseded by a University-level program during this term, at which point the CoM program will be revised and possibly withdrawn.

Description: A CoM graduate student may apply for financial assistance during a leave to serve as the primary care-giver immediately following the birth of a child occurring prior to the completion of the student's program.

Amount: \$4000/6 month period paid via monthly installments. Renewable once with a lifetime total of \$8000 per student.

Funding Source: OVDR (Assistant Dean Graduate Studies Discretionary Fund). Eligibility Criteria:

- CoM Graduate Student in good standing for at least two terms (8 months) prior to the start of the leave
- M.Sc. student within first two years at start of leave
- Ph.D. or M.Sc./Ph.D transfer student within first five years at start of leave
- Funding level of \$16,000/yr or greater from scholarship(s), stipend, or employment in the CoM (e.g. as a TA or graduate teaching fellowship)
- · Leave granted by CGPS
- · Expected to return to full-time studies following the leave
- · Primary caregiver
- Not receiving any additional parental benefits (e.g. Parental funding from Tri-council scholarships, El etc.).

How to Apply:

- · Completed CoM Graduate Parental Leave Grant Form
- Letter from Supervisor confirming funding level and duration for the student, student progress in program and expected time needed to complete their program upon the completion of the leave
- · Doctor's note

Note: CoMGRAD scholarships may be deferred for the period of a leave approved by CGPS for parental reasons.

Tri-Agency Paid maternity/parental leave for students and postdoctoral fellows:

The Tri-Agencies will provide maternity/parental leave supplements within 12 months following a child's birth or adoption to eligible students and postdoctoral fellows who are paid out of agency grants and who are the child's primary caregivers. The supplement paid to the grant recipient will be based on the students' and/or postdoctoral fellows' current salary/stipend from the grant for up to 12 months to cover the leave period.

The most up-to-date information is available in the Tri-Agency Guide on Financial Administration: <u>https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/InterAgency-Interorganismes/TAFA-AFTO/guide-guide_eng.asp</u>.

Appendix C: Student-Supervisor Agreement (SSA)



UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies GRAD.USASK.CA

Student-Supervisor Agreement

for thesis-based degree programs (May 2017)

This document has been adapted from guidelines created by the University of Manitoba Faculty of Graduate Studies and the Canadian Association of Graduate Studies.

NOTE:

The student should be the main party responsible for the study program and the performance of related activities, such as the submission of a Master's or Doctoral thesis, and should demonstrate a deep commitment to the program of study and interest in the selected research topic.

Introduction

- This form is designed 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 to accommodate for changes in the Student-Supervisor(s) relationship and/or the research project.
- The Supervisor(s)-Student relationship involves mentoring, support, career development, as well as academic oversight. The Supervisor(s) and Student should work together to arrive at jointly acceptable terms to establish their relationship.
- The completed form is to be regarded as an aid to planning and finishing the thesis project. It is not intended to be legally binding.
- It's anticipated that the discussion between Student and Supervisor(s) while completing this form will contribute to a healthy relationship, but completion of this agreement is not mandatory. This agreement is not a required element of a graduate student's program.
- The Supervisor and the Student are free to add items to the form to tailor it to their joint purposes.
- The Supervisor(s) is/are responsible for supervising the Student's graduate program. The Supervisor(s) is/are the Student's primary contact(s) at the University of Saskatchewan, and should be familiar with the general policies and regulations of the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies as well as the specific supplementary regulations of their academic unit. This form does not replace official University of Saskatchewan statements of policy and procedure.
- If the Student or Supervisor(s) have any questions or concerns regarding their graduate program or this form, advice may be sought from the program graduate chair, unit head, or the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.
- Please visit the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies website to find more information and guidance for both the Supervisor(s) and Student.
- The Supervisor(s) and the Student should review each of the points listed below and check off each box to confirm that the items have been discussed and understood by the Supervisor(s) and the Student. Ideally, this document should be completed prior to the commencement of any research and no later than the submission of the first Progress Report for the Student.

Part 1 | Supervisor(s) and Student

- a. The supervisor(s), ______ (the "Supervisor(s)") is/are a member/s of the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies and agree(s) to supervise the graduate program of the Student named below; and
- b. The student _______(the "Student") is registered in the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, studying in ______ at the University of Saskatchewan and wishes to carry out a graduate program under the supervision of the above named Supervisor(s).

Part 2 | General Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 The Supervisor(s)

Please review the following points, and click each box to acknowledge that it was discussed. The

Supervisor(s) will:

- Guide the Student on degree requirements, appropriate elective course work, research, thesis proposal, thesis writing, suitable resources, and workspace.
- Assess and confer appropriate and fair acknowledgment of Student contributions to scholarly activity.
- Give reasonable notice to the Student of extended absences from campus, such as research leaves, and make satisfactory arrangements during such absences.
- Provide advice on the composition of the advisory and examining committees.
- Disclose any conflict of interest that may arise with respect to the Student.

The following are optional points to be discussed. If relevant, please review the following points, and click the box to acknowledge that it was discussed.

Provide guidance on how to work effectively as a member of a team.

- Assist in providing infrastructure and facilities required for the Student to undertake scholarly activities.
- Any other mutually agreed upon responsibilities:

2.2 The Student

Please review the following points, and click each box to acknowledge that it was discussed.

The Student will:

- Familiarize themselves with the policies, procedures, regulations and deadlines established by the University of Saskatchewan, the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, and their respective unit.
- Seek the advice of the Supervisor(s) regarding required course work including appropriate electives, research, thesis proposal, thesis writing, suitable resources, and workspace.
- Demonstrate appropriate professional judgment, collegial behavior, academic rigor and integrity at all times and in every facet of the graduate program.
- Dedicate time to the graduate program to make timely and effective progress towards degree completion.
- Maintain contact with the Supervisor(s) and provide any changes in contact information.
- Consult with the Supervisor(s) regarding graduate program examiners and assessors.

The following are optional points to be discussed. If relevant, please review the following points, and click the box to acknowledge that it was discussed.

□ Keep laboratory, research, and computer areas tidy, and respect the space and property of others.

Strive to work effectively as a member of a team.

Any other mutually agreed upon responsibilities:

2.3 The College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

The College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies holds primary responsibility for ensuring that program policies, including admission criteria, program timelines, and requirements are clearly articulated and duly followed. The College also facilitates access to funding sources. Students and Supervisor(s) should be familiar with the College website, regulations, and resources. See http://www.usask.ca/cgps/

Part 3 | Meetings

Please review the following points, and click each box to acknowledge that it was discussed.

- The Supervisor(s) and Student will arrange and attend regular meetings. The frequency of the meetings may vary, but at a minimum, meetings normally will be held every (indicate weekly or monthly intervals and/or frequency).
- The Supervisor(s) will respond in a timely manner (normally not to exceed 30 days) with constructive suggestions/revisions to written work (including proposals, literature reviews, analysis, chapters), as well as research and scholarship applications, reports, manuscripts, or scholarly presentations.
- The Supervisor(s) and Student will organize and schedule an in-person meeting with the entire advisory committee at least once annually. Additional meetings may be held at the request of either the Student or the Supervisor(s). If appropriate, the Student will distribute reports in advance of scheduled meetings with the advisory committee.

Any other mutually agreed upon responsibilities:

Part 4 | Publications

Please review the following points, and click each box to acknowledge that it was discussed.

- The Supervisor(s) will acknowledge the contribution of the Student in any publications and/or presentations, as appropriate.
- Order of authorship and the criteria to determine the order of authorship on any shared publications will be established.
- All University policies pertaining to attribution and/or authorship will be followed.
- The Student and the Supervisor(s) will discuss the patentability of any invention arising out of the research before any publication or presentation of the research in order to ensure that the patentability of the invention is not jeopardized.
- Any other mutually agreed upon responsibilities:

Part 5 / Intellectual Property, Academic Integrity, and Ethics

Please review the following points, and click each box to acknowledge that it was discussed.

- The Student will hold the copyright of their thesis.
- The Supervisor(s) and Student will abide by the specific guidelines and rules for copyright and intellectual property at the University of Saskatchewan.
- The Student will keep orderly records of all research data produced or developed.
- Where research data is produced or developed, both the Student and Supervisor(s) will have access to the data at all times.
- Both Student and Supervisor(s) understand that the provisions of the University's Intellectual Property Policy pertaining to work done while a graduate student, as well as the guidelines around publication and access to research data, remain in place even after the Student is no longer attending the University.
- The Student is responsible for understanding the meaning of academic integrity at the Uni- versity of Saskatchewan and ensuring it is applied to all their work.
- The Supervisor(s) and the Student will adhere to the University's policies and procedures related to the conduct of research, including any necessary human ethics review procedures, and animal care ethics, that must be completed.
- Where the Supervisor(s) is/are a member(s) of the University of Saskatchewan Faculty Association ("USFA"), the provisions of the USFA collective agreement will apply to the Supervisor(s).
- The following are optional points to be discussed if relevant. Please review the following points and click the box to acknowledge that it was discussed.
- The Student must complete appropriate courses on the use of animals or humans in research. Any

other mutually agreed upon responsibilities:

Part 6 | Timelines and Completion

Please review the following points, and click each box to acknowledge that it was discussed.

- Progress Report forms are to be submitted at least once per 12-month period. More frequent updates may be necessary. The Advisory Committee and the Supervisor(s) must jointly complete this form.
- The maximum time period, including course work, examinations, research, thesis writing and defence (if applicable) permitted for the Student's graduate program is _____ years (please con- sult your specific program regulations as set by the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies). It is anticipated that the Student should complete the graduate program within years.

The following are optional points to be discussed. If relevant, please review the following points, and click the box to acknowledge that it was discussed.

Student commitments for other duties such as non-degree research, teaching and teaching assistantships, or other responsibilities, should not delay efforts to complete the graduate program.

Any other mutually agreed upon responsibilities:

Part 7 | Funding

Please review the following points, and click each box to acknowledge that it was discussed.

The Student will seek opportunities for scholarships appropriate to their program, aided by the Supervisor(s).

If relevant, please review the following points, and click the box to acknowledge that it was discussed.

- The student will receive \$ _____ per month for _____ (duration) from _____ (source) subject to satisfactory progress in program requirements.
- Any other mutually agreed upon responsibilities:

Part 8 | Safety

If relevant, please review the following points, and click the box to acknowledge that it was discussed.

The Student will be subject to appropriate safety courses or requirements at the University of Saskatchewan, including those pertaining to workplace and fieldwork protection, hazardous materials, radioisotopes, laboratory and environmental waste management, or others.

The Supervisor(s) and Student will seek input and direction from safety officers or other appropriate personnel within their unit if further training is required.

Part 9 | Privacy and Confidentiality

Please review the following points, and click each box to acknowledge that it was discussed.

If confidential information is provided to a student in the program, the student will not disclose the confidential information to any third parties, except as required by law or as permitted by agreement pursuant to which the confidential information was shared.

The U of S Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Policy applies to the Student's program along with provincial and federal legislation.

Part 10 | Professional Development

Please review the following points, and click each box to acknowledge that it was discussed.

- Opportunities for the Student to attend suitable conferences and present scholarly work will be sought.
- Sources of funding for Student travel should be investigated and applied for.
- Professional development programs, such as effective writing courses, teaching training, academic integrity, and workshops on research grants and career opportunities will be encouraged.

Any other mutually agreed upon responsibilities:

Part 11 | Vacation

Please review the following points, and click each box to acknowledge that it was discussed.

Graduate students are entitled to a minimum of 2 weeks vacation per year in addition to weekends, statutory holidays, and university closures. Vacation time will be scheduled at times that are mutually agreed upon by the student and supervisor(s).

- Where program requirements necessitate working during weekends, statutory holidays, or university closures, alternate time off will be provided as mutually agreed.
- Students receiving funding with a service requirement may not take vacation at a time that causes disruption to the service requirement unless approved by the person/unit in charge of

the service.

Part 12 / Other

Any other mutually agreed upon responsibilities:

The Student and Supervisor(s) have reviewed and understand these guidelines.

By checking this box, you agree that you have read and understood this form, and that the information provided within is true and accurate to the best of your knowledge.

student signature	student printed name
Date:	
supervisor signature	supervisor printed name
Date:	
supervisor signature	supervisor printed name

Date:

Copies of these signed guidelines will be kept by the Supervisor(s) and the Student, the unit (in the Student's file), and the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.