



UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

College of Education

EDUCATION.USASK.CA

Cross Departmental PhD Graduate Student Handbook



2023-2024

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SECTION 1 Welcome to the College of Education

Mission, Vision and Values

Mission

The College of Education fosters innovation and collaboration through teaching, learning, discovery, and transformative pedagogy.

Through working together, we impact the development of teachers and learners who are committed to advancing the growth of students and communities, and to building a positive foundation for a stronger and healthier future.

Vision

We embrace Indigenization and reconciliation, recognizing the diversity of values and perspectives, of all peoples.

We endeavor to expand upon pedagogical practices that acknowledge and make space for the cultural and linguistic diversity of our province.

We strive to be leaders of effective and innovative pedagogy, of curiosity-based research work, scholarly work, and artistic work, and of practice that has a sustainable impact locally, nationally, and internationally.

We respond actively and collaboratively to emergent provincial, national and international priorities, including those of the university, school divisions, Indigenous peoples, newcomers, and the Ministry of Education.

Values

We champion

- Academic Freedom
- Collaboration
- Collegiality
- Curiosity-based Research
- Equity
- Inclusivity
- Mental and physical health
- Pedagogical Excellence
- Professionalism
- Promotion of Well-Being
- Reconciliation

We embrace

- Community Engagement
- Diversity
- Imagination
- Indigenous Knowledges
- Socio-ecological Justice
- Wisdom

We Demonstrate

- Accountability
- Civility and Respect
- Equality
- Humility
- Impactful research, artistic and scholarly work
- Integrity
- Transparency

Message from Dean of the College of Education

I would like to extend a warm welcome as you begin your study and research journey in the Cross-Departmental PhD program in the College of Education. I am delighted to see such a vibrant and talented group of doctoral students from Canada and around the world joining in 2023-2024.

The College of Education fosters innovation and collaboration through teaching, learning, discovery, and transformative pedagogy. In partnership, we impact the development of teachers and learners who are committed to advancing the growth of students and communities, and to building a positive foundation for a stronger, healthier, and sustainable future.

During your time as a PhD student, you will engage in rigorous and innovative research, and have opportunities to explore interdisciplinary avenues in education. You will be supported by national and internationally recognized faculty leaders, professional and dedicated staff, the Education Graduate Student Association (EGSA), and your fellow students. We all work together to create a supportive, uplifting community so graduate students can thrive in their academic and professional pursuits.

I wish you a positive learning and research experience ahead. Once again, welcome to the College of Education Cross-Departmental PhD program.

Dr. Julia Paulson, PhD



Message from Associate Dean, Research, Graduate Support and International Initiatives

Welcome to the College of Education Cross Departmental PhD program. Enrolling in this program means that you are a student of the University of Saskatchewan's College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (CGPS) and a member of Education's Cross D program.

The investment of your valuable time and energy in this program will support your personal and professional growth and will lead to deeper understandings of education locally and globally. We believe that, through our program here in the College, you will develop enhanced knowledge and academic skills that will prepare you to be an important contributor to the future of education. We encourage you to develop networks of peers and to work closely with faculty in our academic community as you pursue your doctoral degree; these relationships are very helpful for your time as a doctoral student and beyond. This handbook also serves as an essential resource for you for understanding the policies, guidelines and procedures that inform the steps of your academic journey.

Dr. Vicki Squires, PhD



SECTION 2 Graduate Contacts

Cross-departmental PhD Graduate Chairs

The graduate chair is important to ensure the success of graduate students within the College of Education. Responsibilities of the graduate chair include selection and admission of graduate students, administration of the graduate program, scholarships and awards, and meeting with students to ensure they have ongoing supervision.

Graduate Chairs:

Curriculum Studies:

Dr. Marguerite Koole – m.koole@usask.ca

Educational Foundations:

Dr. Geraldine Balzer – geraldine.balzer@usask.ca

Educational Psychology & Special Education

Dr. Lauren McIntyre – laureen.mcintyre@usask.ca

Cross-departmental PhD Graduate Administrative Support

The graduate administrators work in partnership with faculty and students to promote student success. They liaise with the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies office to ensure policy and procedures are being followed to ensure student success.

Graduate Administrators:

Curriculum Studies:

Patricia Gillies - Patricia.gillies@usask.ca

Educational Foundations:

Charmaine Spezowka – efdtd.gradsecretary@usask.ca

Educational Psychology & Special Education:

Charmaine Spezowka – epse.gradsec@usask.ca

SECTION 3 General Information

Education Graduate Student Association (EGSA)

The Education Graduate Student Association (EGSA) represents, supports, and advocates for the academic and non-academic interests and needs of graduate students in the College of Education at the University of Saskatchewan (USask). The EGSA serves as a collective student voice, working collaboratively to ensure all graduate students have a positive experience through professional development and other learning opportunities. The EGSA fosters a culture and community that embraces equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging.

To learn more about the EGSA and to get to know your 2023-2024 Executives, please visit:

<https://educationtest.usask.ca/people/student-communities/education-graduate-society.php>

International Student and Study Abroad Centre

The International Student and Study Abroad Centre (ISSAC) is a central support unit and a campus partner for all students, staff, and faculty. ISSAC is dedicated to fostering a welcoming, globally aware, and inclusive campus community.

<https://students.usask.ca/international/issac.php>

Gwenna Moss Centre for Teaching and Learning

The Gwenna Moss Centre supports teaching and learning through a variety of events, workshops, and ongoing programs.

<https://teaching.usask.ca/about/units/gwenna-moss-centre-for-teaching-and-learning.php>

Access and Equity Services (AES)

Access and Equity Services, formerly Disability Services for Students (DSS), is guided by Saskatchewan's Human Rights legislation and the duty to accommodate individuals requiring accommodations based on disability, religion, family status, and gender identity.

<https://students.usask.ca/health/centres/access-equity-services.php>

Online learning resources

Training and Development

This eLearning portal is available to help students identify skills that require mastery and provides the necessary resources: <https://paws2.usask.ca/training>

Remote Learning Readiness Tutorial

Tutorial to help you better understand the skills associated with remote learning success and help you make the most of remote learning: https://libguides.usask.ca/remote_learning

University Library

The University Library's goal is to advance learning, research, and collaborations across our diverse community through the unique combination of academic support services, inclusive spaces, and relevant and distinctive collections.

<https://library.usask.ca/use-the-library/welcome.php#WelcometotheLibrary>

The Grad HUB (CGPS)

The go-to online resource for understanding and planning your graduate journey. The Grad Hub was created *by graduate students and for graduate students* as the go-to place to find relevant information whenever they need it. <https://cgps.usask.ca/onboarding/index.php>

Graduate Student Funding Opportunities

Important note: Student funding is not guaranteed, and each Cross-Departmental PhD student will be expected to cover the costs of their own tuition and student fees to support their graduate education. You are encouraged to investigate all options for funding through a combination of teaching, research, student assistantships, scholarships and awards.

College of Education — Through the Office of the Associate Dean (Research, Graduate Support, and International Initiatives), the College of Education provides graduate students enrolled in any of the master's and doctoral programs offered by its four departments with scholarship and bursary funding.

<https://education.usask.ca/academics/awards/college-of-education-awards.php#GraduateFundingOpportunities>

Graduate Awards — Find scholarships and awards relevant to graduate students using USask's scholarships and awards database. You will find information on eligibility, deadlines and how to apply.

<https://students.usask.ca/money/awards/graduate-awards.php>

<https://grad.usask.ca/funding/scholarships.php#Programspecificfunding>

External Financial Support — Awards administered by the University of Saskatchewan are not the only awards available to students studying at the U of S. Students are encouraged to look for awards from other sources, such as clubs and associations. External awards are offered by agencies, governments, or other organizations outside the U of S.

<https://students.usask.ca/money/awards/external.php>

Tuition and Student Fees

Doctoral students pay tuition three times a year for as long as they are enrolled in their program. Both international and domestic PhD students pay the same rate. In addition to tuition, students also pay fees for programs like health and dental insurance, a bus pass, and other campus services.

<https://grad.usask.ca/programs/education.php#Tuitionandfunding>

Important Dates

Academic Calendar 2023-2024:

<https://students.usask.ca/academic-calendar/>

Tuition payment and due dates:

<https://students.usask.ca/money/tuition-fees/pay.php>

SECTION 4 Program Information

Program

The Departments of Curriculum Studies, Educational Foundations, and Educational Psychology and Special Education support doctoral studies through the cross-departmental Ph.D. in Education. This is a thesis-based research program and graduates may have goals of obtaining academic positions at other institutions and conducting education research for government, school divisions, First Nations and other research organizations. The program delivery is intended to be flexible with decisions on program delivery and specific program requirements decided by the student's advisory committee.

Registration Policy

All graduate students will maintain continuous registration throughout their program. PhD students must register in **ERES 996** each academic term throughout the program; September-December, January-April, May-August. PhD students shall be considered full-time for every term for the duration of their programs. There is no part-time option for the PhD program.

Course Requirements

All Cross Departmental Ph.D. students are required to complete a total of 15 credit units of courses.

- 9 required credit units in Educational Research, generally selected from existing advanced ERES courses in the College of Education such as:
 - ERES 841
 - ERES 845
 - ERES 810
 - ERES 820
 - Other research classes, approved by the student's supervisor and advisory committee are also permissible.
- 6 credit units of electives approved by the student's supervisor and advisory committee.

Additional classes may be taken if recommended or approved by the student's supervisor and advisory committee.

ERES 990 Seminar

In ERES 990 doctoral students will develop an understanding of, and ability to apply, research scholarship and methodology in the field of Education.

This non-credit seminar is required to be completed by all cross-departmental PhD students in the first year of their program.

Grades Required to Pass

The standards below are the minimum acceptable grades for passing a course.

	PhD
Undergraduate class	None allowed
Graduate class	70%
Cumulative overall average needed	70%

College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

Graduate students at the University of Saskatchewan belong to the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (CGPS) and will follow all CGPS Policies: <https://cgps.usask.ca/policy-and-procedure/index.php>

Ethics and Integrity

<https://cgps.usask.ca/policy-and-procedure/Academics/Coursework.php#52ETHICSCOURSE>

All Cross Departmental PhD graduate students are required to complete the following ethics modules, in accordance to the CGPS policy:

- GPS 960 – Introduction to Ethics and Integrity;
- GPS 961 – Ethics and Integrity in Human Research, if research involves human subjects.

Previous credit for these ethics' courses from a University of Saskatchewan master's program will satisfy the PhD program requirement.

Transfer Credits

<https://cgps.usask.ca/policy-and-procedure/Academics/Coursework.php#55TRANSFERCOURSECREDIT>

Students may take courses from other institutions to be used toward course requirements in their program of studies. A maximum of 6 credit units can be transferred to the Cross Departmental PhD program.

Full documentation on the course(s) must be provided to the graduate chair and graduate administrator in advance of the term of intended enrolment, to ensure transfer credit is approved. The student must maintain registration at the University of Saskatchewan during the term of absence.

Work already applied toward another degree will not be accepted for credit.

Transfer Credit Process:

- The student requests transfer credit from their supervisor.
- If the supervisor approves, the student submits the request for transfer credit along with the course syllabi to the Graduate Administrator.
- The Graduate Administrator submits the request to the Graduate Chair who will request faculty consultation in review of the course for credit.
- If the Graduate Chair agrees to grant credit, a request will be made to CGPS for approval.

Timeline for Completion

<https://cgps.usask.ca/policy-and-procedure//Academics/student-life-cycle/student-lifecycle-main.php#43TIMEINPROGRAM>

Time in program is measured from the first term of the first course taken toward the program (this may be course work done at USask or elsewhere approved for transfer credit). Any periods of approved leave or suspension are excluded from time in program.

PhD students have a maximum of 6 years to complete from the start of their program.

Leaves of Absences

<https://cgps.usask.ca/policy-and-procedure/leaves-accommodations/Accommodations-and-Supports.php#131LEAVESOFABSENCE>

Leaves of absence are available to students under the following categories: *Personal or health; maternity/parental; professional; and leave to pursue an additional program of study.*

The leave period is not included in the time period for completion of the degree, and tuition is not assessed during the leave. Nominal student fees are assessed during the leave period. While a student is on leave, all supervisory processes and progress on academic and research work are paused. Unless otherwise permitted by the source of funding, the financial support offered to a full-time, fully qualified student is paused and therefore not available to a student during the time they are on leave. All leave requests should be discussed with the student's supervisor, then appropriate documentation should be forwarded to the graduate administrator for processing.

Personal or Health Leaves – A graduate student experiencing health-related or personal circumstances that are significantly affecting their ability to make academic progress in their program of study may be eligible for a personal or health leave. Requests for a personal or health leave must be submitted by the student for review and approval by their academic unit. The Graduate Chair, Head, or Dean has the authority to approve personal or health leave requests for up to 12 months taken consecutively or in non-consecutive terms.

*Where additional time is required, not exceeding up to an additional 12 months taken consecutively or in non-consecutive terms, requests must be submitted to the CGPS for review and approval.

Maternity, Adopting, Parenting Leave – A graduate student who is bearing a child, and/or who has primary responsibility for the care of a child immediately following a birth or an adoption is eligible for parental leave. Please see the [CGPS policy](#) for details about leave duration and requirements.

Leave to pursue an additional program of study — With support from your academic unit, a graduate student that has been offered admission to pursue an additional program of study at the University of Saskatchewan or other post-secondary institution (nationally or abroad), and who would like to pause their graduate program, may apply for a leave of absence. Requests for leave to pursue

an additional program of study must be submitted by the graduate student, with the support of the academic unit, to the CGPS for review and approval. A plan and timeline to completion for the student's graduate program that has been approved by the student's supervisor and the Graduate Chair, Head, or Dean/Executive Director (non-departmentalized colleges/schools) must be included with the leave request. Support of the leave request from the academic unit will not guarantee CGPS approval of the leave to pursue an additional program of study.

*Leaves to pursue an additional program of study will not typically exceed two consecutive academic terms per academic year.

Professional Leave – A professional leave supports graduate students who engage in relevant work or professional development opportunities. A professional leave can be approved by the student's academic unit for up to a maximum of 12 months taken consecutively or in non-consecutive terms.

*Where additional time is required, requests must be submitted to the CGPS for review and approval. Requests for additional time beyond the 12 months must include a rationale and any relevant supporting documents and must be supported by the supervisor and Graduate Chair, Head, or Dean/Executive Director (non-departmentalized colleges/schools).

Student Vacation

<https://cgps.usask.ca/policy-and-procedure/leaves-accommodations/Accommodations-and-Supports.php#133STUDENTVACATION>

Graduate students are entitled to a minimum of two weeks of vacation per year, in addition to weekend, statutory holidays and regularly scheduled university closures. Vacation should be scheduled at a time that is mutually convenient to the student and their supervisor.

Withdrawals

Withdrawal from courses:

Before withdrawing from a course, students should discuss their intentions with their course instructor and/or their supervisor.

Please check registration deadlines:

<https://students.usask.ca/academics/deadlines.php#Standardtermschedule>.

Withdrawals from courses after the add/drop deadline, but prior to or on the day of the withdraw deadline, are assigned a grade of withdrawal (W). Withdrawing from a course after the withdraw deadline will result in a failing grade. Requests to repeat a course must be made in writing to the graduate chair.

Withdrawal from program:

Students are encouraged to have a discussion with their supervisor or graduate chair before proceeding to withdraw from the program. To withdraw from the program, students must complete the Notice of Withdrawal from Graduate Program ([link](#)). Please include your graduate administrators name on this form so that they may be informed of the withdrawal.

Graduation

To graduate, students must pass all required courses with a combined minimum weighted average of 70%. In calculated weighted averages the grades in all courses will be used (excluding transfer credit courses from other institutions).

In the last term of your program, students must complete an online application to graduate. Complete the application for spring convocation on or before **March 31**; and for fall convocation on or before **August 31**. Late applications to graduate are not accepted.

PhD students must have defended their thesis, completed all the required forms and submitted their thesis to the University of Saskatchewan Electronic Thesis Dissertation (ETD) site before the deadline to register for the upcoming term.

All information about the ceremony will be sent to students through their PAWS email account. Students are asked to order tickets through PAWS. Information about convocation ceremonies including gown rental, photography and tickets is available at: <https://students.usask.ca/academics/graduation.php>

SECTION 5 Graduate Students' Supervisor and Student Advisory (SAC) Committee

PhD Advisory Committee

<https://cgps.usask.ca/policy-and-procedure/Academics/student-life-cycle/supervision.php>

Advisory Committee changes as of January 2022: <https://cgps.usask.ca/operational-info/policy-procedure/advisory-and-defence-changes.php>

* The policy is in effect for all students beginning their program May 1, 2022, onward.

The Ph.D. advisory committee consists of at least three members:

- 1. Supervisor:** A member of the faculty of the CGPS (Adjunct Professors included but cannot be a Professional Affiliate). The Supervisor typically chairs meetings of the advisory committee.
- 2. Additional Member:** Must be a regular member of the faculty of CGPS, adjunct professors, professional affiliates or be granted one-time membership by the Dean, CGPS or designate. The list of regular faculty, adjuncts, and professional affiliates can be accessed in PAWS.
- 3. Cognate Member:** Must be a member of the faculty of the CGPS (Adjunct Professors included but cannot be a Professional Affiliate) from a different principal academic unit (department/college/school) than the student and supervisor.

* **A Co-Supervisor may be included, if applicable.** Co-supervisors share a vote in decision-making, and essentially count as one member. A Professional Affiliate or someone approved for one-time membership by CGPS may serve as a co-supervisor, with permission from CGPS.

Supervisors are responsible for arranging regular meetings with their students each academic year. The student advisory committee will meet once per year to complete a yearly progress report, and when a meeting is required for the purposes of the qualifying exam, comprehensive exam, proposal defence and final dissertation defence. These meetings will be arranged by the graduate student supervisor.

Considerations in Choosing a Supervisor

It is recommended that students find a supervisor prior to beginning in the program. If a student is not successful at finding a supervisor prior to beginning in the program, then the student must meet with the graduate chair to discuss their interests in research. The student and the graduate chair will make every effort to find an appropriate supervisor within their research area.

Student-Supervisor Agreement

<https://cgps.usask.ca/policy-and-procedure/Academics/student-life-cycle/supervision.php#32STUDENTSUPERVISORAGREEMENT>

Students enrolled in the PhD program will complete a CGPS Student-Supervisor Agreement in partnership with their supervisor (template available [here](#)). The agreement must be completed within the first twelve months of the student's program and will be treated as a non-course requirement.

When the CGPS Student-Supervisor Agreement has been completed and signed by the supervisor and student, it should be submitted to the Graduate Administrator in the academic unit. The Graduate Administrator will keep a copy in the academic unit and submit a copy to CGPS.

SECTION 6 PhD Qualifying Examination Procedures

The thesis examination for the award of a master's degree at this or other recognized universities, may, at the discretion of the student's advisory committee be accepted in lieu of the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) Qualifying Examination. However, students admitted to the College of Education Cross-Departmental Ph.D. (CD-Ph.D.) who completed a *Course-based*, or *Project* master's degree program (i.e., they did not complete and defend a thesis as part of their master's degree program) will be expected to satisfy the qualifying exam requirement *prior to* proceeding toward the candidacy requirement for their doctoral degree; the purpose of this requirement is to ensure registered Ph.D. students are able to demonstrate the skill of scholarly writing required to be successful in their degree.

College of Education Cross Departmental Ph.D. students will complete the qualifying exam in the *first year* of their program of study (preferably within the first four months) of the CD-Ph.D. student's program. Students shall be informed in writing at least *60 days in advance* that a qualifying examination will be required as part of their program of study. The qualifying exam process will be like a master's degree thesis defense in that the student will be expected, through their written and oral presentation, to demonstrate to the Advisory Committee he/she/they has the potential to undertake a scholarly writing task that, in turn, will indicate the relative knowledge and skills required to successfully complete the CD-Ph.D.; students will, through this qualifying exam, show they are equipped to undertake a research project in their chosen general field of study.

The examination process will involve one of two options:

(1) The student will provide a written, critical review of the research literature related to the focus of his/her/their proposed doctoral program research *and* orally defend the content of their written document; both the written and oral defense will be submitted to the Advisory Committee for review and evaluation. The written document should be of a length and level suitable for publication in an established peer reviewed journal in the field of study related to the student's research topic or have received a score of at least 80% as determined by the University of Saskatchewan grade scale.

(2) The student will submit a completed application for a research grant (i.e., Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council or SSHRC Doctoral Fellowship) following the application procedures and requirements laid out by the funding agency and will orally defend the content of their written document. The written document can either be evaluated based on the funding agency's adjudication criteria or have received a score of at least 80% as determined by the University of Saskatchewan grade scale using the provided literal descriptors.

The *formal oral defense* of either option #1 or option #2 will consist of an oral presentation on the content of the student's written document and then approximately two rounds of questions from members of the students' Advisory Committee related to the student's written document. Time allotments will vary according to circumstances, but typically, time allocations for the exam will be as follows:

10-15 minutes:	Student's Oral Presentation
30-45 minutes:	Round 1 Supervisory Committee's Questions
30-45 minutes:	Round 2 Supervisory Committee's Questions
20 minutes:	Open questioning and general discussion regarding coursework and tentative research plans.

Once the written document has been reviewed, and rounds of oral questions have been completed, the student will be asked to leave the room and the committee will engage in a discussion/evaluation of the student's performance (i.e., the written document, oral presentation, and oral responses to questioning). The committee will use the provided literal descriptors to determine the final recommendation of the student's oral defense. For the student to *qualify*, there should be general agreement that the student has the knowledge and skills to be granted pursuing Doctoral Student Status. Feedback regarding the student's document and oral defense will also be provided.

Students failing their first qualifying examination attempt will be permitted a second opportunity. Students will be asked to voluntarily *withdraw*/be required to *discontinue* with a second failure.

The Cross-Departmental Education Ph.D. Qualifying Exam will follow all the policies of the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (CGPS). See CGPS Policies and Procedures Manual: (<https://cgps.usask.ca/policy-and-procedure/Academics/examinations.php#61FINALEXAMINATIONSANDEXAMINATIONEXEMPTIONSFORCOURSEWORK>).

SECTION 7 PhD Comprehensive Examination Process

The purpose of the **Ph.D. comprehensive exam** is to determine whether the student has a mature and substantive grasp of the field as a whole. Typically, upon completion of the candidate's course work, the candidate and the supervisor will jointly determine that the candidate is ready to undertake their candidacy paper and will notify the Graduate Chair (i.e. Associate Dean, Research, Graduate Support and International Initiatives) of this approaching milestone. A student passing the comprehensive examination is deemed a Ph.D. candidate ([CGPS policy 6.3.2](#)).

The Graduate Chair and the advisory committee (with the student present) will meet in order to formulate and submit three questions that should elicit the candidate's understanding of the pertinent literature in the following three areas:

- theoretical and foundational context of their research inquiry
- methodology appropriate to the research
- body of research and literature specific to their research interest

Once the questions for the candidacy papers have been determined, the candidate will have two months at minimum and four months maximum to complete the candidacy papers. The Graduate Chair will inform the candidate by letter of the time frame for researching and writing the candidacy papers. Prior to the commencement of the time frame for preparing the candidacy papers, the student in conjunction with the supervisory and the advisory committee members will provide a list of key readings as a guide for the student. It is expected that the student must also engage in further independent research in preparing each candidacy paper. Each candidacy paper will be a minimum of 5000 words (20 pages) and a maximum of 6250 words (25 pages).

If the advisory committee agrees that the candidacy papers are satisfactory, the next step is the oral defense. If the advisory committee believes that the candidacy papers are not satisfactory, the candidate will have an opportunity to rewrite the papers. The candidate will have three months to complete the rewrite. If successful, the candidate will proceed to the oral defense. If unsuccessful, the candidate will be required to discontinue from the Ph.D. program.

Upon agreement by the advisory committee that the student has successfully completed the candidacy papers, the supervisor will arrange for an oral defense. The oral defense should occur within six weeks of the committee's determination of successful completion of the candidacy papers.

The candidate will provide an overview of the three candidacy papers at the oral defense. The overview will consist of an integrated presentation of the three papers. The presentation should be approximately fifteen to twenty minutes in length. The advisory committee will have an opportunity to post questions to the candidate on the three candidacy papers and the presentation. The oral defense should be approximately two hours in length.

It is understood that the successful completion of the candidacy papers and the oral defense will demonstrate that the candidate has the background knowledge of the field of study and mastery of methodologies necessary to develop a research proposal and shows the necessary promise to undertake successful Ph.D. research. Defense of the dissertation research proposal, which refines and elaborates a specific research question within the area of research that has been examined, will typically occur within six months of successful completion of the comprehensive exam.

SECTION 8 Dissertation/Thesis

Proposal Defence

Typically, within 6 months of a successful Doctoral Comprehensive Exam, the student will be required to submit the dissertation proposal to the advisory committee for review. The student will provide an electronic copy of their dissertation proposal to each member of the advisory committee.

The advisory committee will have up to 4 weeks to review the proposal. This is a guideline for a proposal submitted during term 1 and term 2 of the academic year. Proposals submitted outside these periods may require an adjusted (typically longer) review period.

The supervisor will schedule a proposal defense. At the proposal defense the student will have an opportunity to orally present their proposal (approximately 12-15 minutes in length), following which there will be a question and answer period. Upon completion of the oral defense, the advisory committee will meet without the student present in order to determine by consensus or majority vote whether or not to approve the dissertation proposal. If consensus cannot be reached, the committee will arrive at a decision through majority vote. All CGPS policies will be followed.

Ethical Approval for Research

Ethics approval is required for all research conducted that includes human participants. The student completes the ethics forms accessible through the Research Ethics website that are relevant to their study and data collection: <https://research.usask.ca/rei/researchers/ethics/human-ethics.php>. After successful defense of the proposal and approval of the supervisor, the student submits the ethics application to the Research Ethics Office. Once the student receives the Certificate of Approval from the Behavioral Research Ethics Board, they can begin their data collection. As the student nears completion of the final document, the supervisor, in conjunction with the student and the committee, begin setting up the final defense.

Selection of External Examiner for Thesis Defence

The purpose of an external examiner is to provide an independent assessment by someone who is at “arm’s length” from the student, supervisor and advisory committee.

Criteria for Selection of the External Examiner for Doctoral Theses: <https://cgps.usask.ca/policy-and-procedure/Academics/defence.php#82APPOINTMENTOFTHEEXTERNALLEXAMINER>

Due to possible conflict of interest (or improper influence), the supervisor and student **must not** have any contact with the external examiner. CGPS must approve the external examiner.

Final Defence

The student will provide an electronic copy of the draft of their final dissertation document to each member of the advisory committee.

The advisory committee will have up to 6 weeks to review the document. The members will each review the document and provide feedback to the supervisor regarding the readiness of the document for moving forward to final defense. The feedback may be gathered at a meeting of the committee or may be provided electronically. Committee members may request revisions or suggest edits that should be completed before going to final defense.

The student will have 3 weeks to complete the required revisions and provide a final copy of the draft dissertation document to the advisory committee.

The format of the final defence follows that of the proposal defence with a presentation followed by rounds of questions. Upon completion of the questions, the student leaves the room and the committee deliberates on whether or not to approve the draft dissertation document. If consensus cannot be reached, the committee will arrive at a decision through majority vote. All CGPS policies will be followed. The extent and type of revisions to be undertaken will also be

decided upon by committee. Once the decision has been made, the student will be asked to rejoin the meeting, and the decision will be communicated.

Final Defence Forms

At the time of final defence, the student and committee are given forms to complete. The student will make any necessary changes to the dissertation suggested by the committee. If the supervisor is satisfied with the revisions, they will contact the graduate chair for the paperwork to be signed and forwarded to the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. The student will then upload their dissertation to the University Library Electronic Thesis Dissertation (ETD) site and apply to graduate through their PAWS (*see Graduation, page 9*).

Note: Students who defend their thesis prior to the end of a term may be eligible for a tuition refund. Tuition refunds are pro-rated monthly. Credits will be returned to the method in which the student used to pay their tuition (cash or cheque payments will show as a credit on the students account).

All requirements must be completed (defence paperwork and uploading thesis to ETD site) prior to the end of a month in order to be eligible for a tuition refund for the remaining months of that term.

Example: Student A defends on July 6, completes all their revisions and uploads their thesis to the ETD site on July 25. Graduate Chair collects all signatures on the paperwork and submits them to the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies prior to July 31. Student A will be eligible for a tuition refund for the month of August.