



UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

College of Education

EDUCATION.USASK.CA

Cross Departmental PhD Graduate Student Handbook



University of Saskatchewan
College of Education
2021 Edition 1

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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 welcome you as you begin your studies in the Cross-Departmental Ph.D. program of the College of Education. This program gives you an opportunity to explore the connections and synergies across a wide range of disciplines, frameworks and perspectives. You will learn much from your instructors and from each other, and you will develop new understandings and skills that will support you as you proceed in your professional life. We are proud of our graduate students, and we all benefit from the experiences they share with us as they study here. I wish you well in this new undertaking.

Dr. Beth Bilson, Ph.D., Q.C.



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

Welcome to the College of Education Cross Departmental PhD program. By investing your valuable time in this program, we hope that you will gain deeper understandings of leadership, engage in teaching and learning, and learn practical skills and knowledge to assist you in your professionally related teaching and learning endeavors. Additionally, by enrolling in this program, you are becoming a student of the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. This handbook serves as an essential resource for understanding the policies, guidelines and procedures that inform the steps of your academic journey.

Dr. Vicki Squires, Ph.D.



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. Dirk Morrison – dirk.morrison@usask.ca

Educational Foundations:

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

Educational Psychology & Special Education

Dr. Laureen 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:

Danielle Tollin – efdtd.gradsecretary@usask.ca

Educational Psychology & Special Education:

Danielle Tollin – epse.gradsec@usask.ca

SECTION 3 General Information

Important Dates

Academic Calendar 2021-2022:

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

Tuition payment and due dates:

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

International Student Support

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#Programs>

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

LinkedIn Learning

- This eLearning portal is available to help students identify skills that require mastery and provides the necessary resources:

<https://training.usask.ca/linkedin-learning/LIL.php>

Remote Learning Readiness Tutorial

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

SECTION 4 Program Information

Registration Policy

All graduate students will maintain continuous registration throughout their programs.

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.

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%

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 two terms of their program.

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/Programs/studentlifecycle/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), excluding any periods of approved leave.

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 for compassionate, medical, parenting, educational and 'Co-op Program'/Industry reasons.

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 are suspended. Unless otherwise permitted by the source of funding, financial support offered to a full-time, fully-qualified student is not available to a student 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.

Types of Leaves:

- **Compassionate and Medical Leaves** – a graduate student who has developed an illness, who has been the victim of an accident, or who has suffered grave events in his/her life, upon provision of appropriate documentation to the graduate chair, may be eligible for medical or compassionate leave.
- **Maternity, Adopting, Parenting Leaves** – 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.
 - Parental leave may be granted for up to 16 months.
 - Maternity leave may be granted for up to 4 months.
 - Maternity leave and parental leave can be taken consecutively when applicable.
- **Co-op Program Leaves and Graduate Studies in Industry** – when a graduate student receives an offer to spend a period of time in industry or the public sector pursuing research-related activities which are closely linked to their PhD, the CGPS will consider granting a four-month leave.

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 form at:

<https://jira.usask.ca/servicedesk/customer/portal/7/group/60> . 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

Selection of a Supervisor and advisory committee (SAC) members

PhD student advisory committees are composed of an advisory chair, student, supervisor (or co-supervisors), at least 2 committee members and 1 cognate.

Advisory Chair: Shall be the Graduate Chair of the department of the supervisor.

Supervisor: A member of the faculty of the College of Education and must be a member of the faculty of the CGPS.

Co-Supervisor (if applicable): persons who are not members of the faculty of the College of Education or CGPS may be granted permission to a co-supervisor. The Graduate Chair must approve the co-supervisor before permission is sent to the CGPS. Co-supervisors share a vote in decision-making at the oral defence, and thus count as one member.

2 Committee Members: Must be members of the faculty of CGPS, adjunct professors, professional affiliates or be granted permission by the Dean, CGPS.

Cognate Member: Must be a member of the CGPS graduate faculty from a different academic unit (department/college) than the student and supervisor, or granted permission by the Dean, CGPS.

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 find an appropriate supervisor within their research area.

Responsibility of the Student Advisory Committee to Student

At the beginning of their program students will meet with their supervisor to complete the Student-Supervisor Agreement:

<https://students.usask.ca/documents/graduate/student-supervisor-agreement.pdf>

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.

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.

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 submit a paper copy of their dissertation proposal to each member of the advisory committee.

The advisory committee will have 6 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. Within this period, members of the advisory committee will each review the dissertation proposal and then meet as a committee without the student being present. The Supervisor will record the feedback in written format, circulate it among committee members for accuracy, and once approved send the feedback to the student.

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

Once the advisory committee has received the final draft of the dissertation proposal from the student, and has had an opportunity to review it, the supervisor will schedule a proposal defense within one month.

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.

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#82APPOINTMENTOFTHEEXTERNALEXAMINER>

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

Notification of the defence must be submitted to the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies a **minimum of 5 weeks prior to the defence date**.

SECTION 9 Program Completion

Graduating from the Program

At the time of the defence, the student and committee are given forms to complete. The student will make any necessary changes 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*).

Tuition Refunds

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.