University of Windsor

Department of Chemistry & Biochemistry

GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK 2025-26

For MSc and PhD Research Thesis Programs in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Department of Chemistry & Biochemistry at the University of Windsor! This Handbook covers the research-based MSc and PhD programs, detailing degree requirements, typical timelines, and the MSc-to-PhD transition.

As a graduate student, you will need to take a proactive approach to your research. This includes organizing and scheduling your Supervisory Committee meetings and managing your progress. Consult with your Supervisor and the Graduate Secretary for deadlines and form submissions **but remember that staying on track is your responsibility. Do not rely on your supervisor, graduate coordinator or graduate secretary to ensure that you are on track.**

We wish you a productive and enjoyable time in Graduate School and look forward to supporting your development as an independent researcher.

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1. THE MASTER'S PROGRAM

1.1 Course Duration:

- 1 – 3 years

The Faculty of Graduate Studies requires that the MSc be completed within three calendar years. Typically, students complete the program in about two years (6 – 7 terms).

1.2 Program Requirements:

- Complete at least three graduate-level courses.
- Attend the Departmental Seminar Series.
- Conduct original research and defend your MSc thesis.

1.2.1 Courses:

- Courses are from CHEM-8xxx or BIOC-8xxx. Cognate courses require Graduate Program Committee approval.
- Discuss credit transfers with the Graduate Secretary. At least half of your credits must be earned at the University of Windsor, with a maximum of one transferred course.

> ***Note:*** ***Passing Grade****: The minimum passing grade is 70%. One grade between 65–69% may be accepted with committee approval. Two grades below 70% typically require withdrawal.*

Credit Transfer: Discuss transfer credits with the Graduate Secretary. Credits used for another qualification (from another institution) may not transfer. At least half of your MSc credits must be earned at the University of Windsor; no more than one course can be transferred.

1.2.2 Seminar Series (CHEM-8900):

- Register each term. It will show as IP (In Progress) until your thesis submission, after which it changes to P (Pass). *Continue registration if you transfer to the PhD program.*
- Attendance at the Departmental Seminar Series is strongly encouraged. Students should register each term. The series features research seminars on diverse topics in Chemistry and Biochemistry, presented by experts and senior PhD students preparing for their thesis defense. These are normally held at 3 -4 pm Fridays; exceptions can occur.

1.2.3 Research Requirements – The Master's Thesis (CHEM-8970)

- Register for the Master's Thesis each term. It will appear as IP (In Progress) on your transcript until your thesis submission or if you successfully transfer to the PhD program, when it will change to P (Pass).

You will conduct research under your supervisor's guidance and write a thesis. Your supervisor will advise on the expected scope and drafting of your thesis.

For details on thesis format, submission, and defense, see **Appendix A.**

It is strongly recommended to attend MSc or PhD defenses to familiarize yourself with the process.

1.3 MSc Timeline

1.3.1 Duration: The MSc must be completed within three years.

1.3.2 Supervision: Consult regularly with your supervisor about research expectations and progress.

1.3.3 Each Term:

  - Register for Master's Thesis and Seminar Program (CHEM-8900-1, CHEM-8970-1).
  - Sign up for Graduate Assistantship (GA). Master's is required for GA 3 Terms. Anything after the 3 terms is considered a GRACE TERM. ***Note:** **Grace is not guaranteed.** **All positions are subject to sufficient enrolment and final budgetary approval.***
  - Monitor emails, the Department website, the Bulletin Board outside the Graduate Office, and the Faculty of Graduate Studies website for scholarship information. See Scholarships and Awards (Appendix C).

- **Term 1:** Arrange your supervisory committee and submit the committee form (Appendix B) before the end of the term.
- **Term 2:** Register for Seminar, Thesis, and any additional required courses.
- **Term 3:** Meet with your supervisory committee to review annual progress. Submit an Annual Progress Report by May 31 (Appendix B). Consider discussing a PhD transfer with your supervisor and/or committee.
- **Term 4:** If transferring to the PhD program, present a transfer talk to your supervisory committee and submit a transfer form (Appendix B).
- **Term 5:** Discuss a completion timeline with your supervisor.
- **Terms 6-7:** Meet with your supervisory committee to review annual progress and submit an Annual Progress Report by May 31 (Appendix B). Finalize your thesis draft, schedule your defense, and liaise with the Graduate Secretary about deadlines (Appendix A). Apply to graduate once the defense date is set.

1.4 Transfer from the MSc to the PhD Program

This process allows students to enter the PhD program without completing the Master's degree.

Eligibility:

- Complete all MSc courses (3) with a minimum 80% average.
- Obtain a recommendation from the supervisory committee based on research excellence and a complete doctoral research plan.
- All applications must be approved by the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

> ***Important:*** *Recommendations must be made no earlier than Term 3 and approved before the end of Term 4.* ***Recommendations after Term 4 will not be considered.***

Transfer Routes:

1.4.1 Students with an MSc Degree:

If you already hold an MSc, discuss it with your supervisor and seek information from the Graduate Secretary/Coordinator. Apply directly to the PhD if your previous MSc is in a relevant field.

1.4.2 Current MSc Students:

Students who excel in coursework and research may apply for PhD admission without completing the MSc thesis, following a successful transfer meeting. Discuss with your supervisor, Graduate Secretary, and Coordinator to initiate the transfer by the 3rd semester of the MSc program.

Transfer Meeting:

- Your transfer must be approved by your Committee. An additional Internal Reader is recommended while the participation of your outside reader is **optional.**
- Present your research progress to the committee, publications, awards, and completed/in-progress courses.

If your Committee is satisfied with your progress, they can recommend your transfer to the PhD program. Complete the Graduate Transfer Form (Appendix B) and submit it to the Graduate Secretary. The Graduate Secretary will then email the form to fgsadmissions@uwindsor.ca before the scholarship deadlines of the term you wish to start.

Requirements:

- All MSc course requirements (three courses, with up to one course credit from prior experience) must be completed.
- Maintain a minimum average of 80% before starting the PhD program.

> ***Note:*** *Ensure that both you and your supervisor are certain about the transfer from MSc to PhD, as you cannot revert to the MSc program.* ***Failure to complete the PhD will result in leaving the University without a qualification.***

*****Note for Supervisors and Supervisory Committee:**

If a student will not be recommended for an MSc-to-PhD transfer, inform them as early as possible to avoid delays in completing their research and thesis. This discussion should begin in the third term during the Annual Committee meeting and the Progress Report.

Supervisors and the Master's Committee must identify and address unsatisfactory performance in research or coursework early on. If a student can complete the MSc but not transfer, they should continue with the MSc program. If a student is unlikely to complete the MSc successfully, they may be asked to withdraw at any time due to poor performance.

MSc-to-PhD Transfer Deadlines:

Course enrollment and academic transcripts are updated termly. If you complete your transfer talk midway through a term, the transfer will be reflected at a later date. Be aware of the transfer deadlines in the table below to ensure you meet entrance scholarship deadlines.

Intended PhD Start Term	**Deadline Date for Transfer**
Winter	October 1
Summer	February 1
Fall	June 1

1.4.3 Example scenario for ideal admission:

1. **Scenario 1:**
    - A student begins in **Fall 2025 (Term 1)** and takes **2 courses**.
    - In **Winter 2026 (Term 2)**, they take the **3rd course**.
    - In **Summer 2026 (Term 3),** submit transfer talk (Deadline: June 1st), start PhD **Fall 2026**. (**Term 4)**

However, if a student wishes to transfer while awaiting grades for the 3rd course, we can issue a conditional offer for their admission. The condition would be that the student must complete the 3rd course with an overall average of **80% between all 3 courses**; otherwise, the student would revert to the MSc program.

Financial Implications of the Transfer:

To be eligible for an Entrance Scholarship upon transfer, you must have a cumulative GPA of at least 80% or equivalent.

1.4.4 Transfer After Completing the MSc:

You may apply for the PhD program after completing your MSc. Note that this is a new application with no guarantee of admission. This route is often chosen by students who wish to complete their MSc and then pursue doctoral work in a different area or with a different supervisor.

1.5 CHEM-8008 Directed Special Studies

A special course of studies with content and direction approved by the student's research advisor and supervisory committee. Although there may be no formal lecture requirements, the course will be equivalent to three one-hour lectures a week for one term. The student will be required (a) to produce a critical review which will be assessed by his or her supervisory committee; the presentation and standard of the review must be appropriate for publication in a scientific journal; (b) to spend one term working in an agreed industrial setting; the quality of work will be assessed by the supervisory committee. This work may be related to but not part of the research undertaken in CHEM-8970 or CHEM-9980. (Prerequisite: approval of the Program Committee.) (The course cannot be repeated for credit under (a) above. Under normal circumstances, M.Sc. students may take this course ~~only~~ once; PhD. students may register under (b) above for two terms of this industrial experience).

2. THE DOCTORAL PROGRAM

2.1 Course Duration:

- 3 – 7 years
  The PhD program requires a minimum of three years and a maximum of seven years for direct entry or six years with advanced standing (e.g., holding a master's qualification).

2.2 Entrance into the Doctoral Program:

- Some students with an MSc may apply directly to the PhD program.
- Most students transfer from the MSc to the PhD in their fourth term
- Alternatively, students may complete their MSc and then apply for the PhD

2.3 Program Requirements:

- Complete at least **six graduate-level** courses before the thesis defense, including any MSc-level courses. Students with an MSc must complete at least **two additional courses + one (Research Proposal)** for a total of 5 +1 = 6 graduate-level courses.
- Attend the Departmental Seminar Series.
- Pass the Comprehensive Examination.
- Present a Departmental Seminar and complete a Pre-Oral Meeting
- Conduct original research and satisfactorily defend a PhD thesis.

Note: *Students who transferred from MSc to PhD will carry over their 3 courses from 1st year of MSc.*

2.3.1 Courses:

- Complete a total of six graduate-level courses prior to the thesis defense, typically including:
    - Five graduate-level courses (up to three may be from an MSc or previous graduate courses at the University of Windsor for MSc transfers).
    - **+ CHEM-9900 Research Proposal:** This compulsory course for all PhD students in Chemistry and Biochemistry is detailed below.

Note: *Direct PhD students only need to complete 2 graduate-level courses +1 Research Proposal*

Course Selection: Five graduate courses are typically chosen from CHEM-8xxx and BIOC-8xxx. Courses from other Departments *may be taken with approval from your supervisor, the Graduate Coordinator, and the Faculty of Graduate Studies.* For more information, consult the Graduate Secretary or Coordinator, or visit Graduate Studies | Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry (uwindsor.ca)

Passing Grade: The minimum passing grade is 70%. A single grade between 65–69% may be accepted with Graduate Committee approval. **Two grades below 70% usually require withdrawal from the program.**

Credit Transfer: Discuss transferring credits from other institutions with the Graduate Secretary and Graduate Coordinator.

Note: *Credits used to satisfy a degree at another institution may not be transferable*

The Research Proposal (CHEM-9900):

In your final PhD year, you must register for CHEM-9900. Unlike the Comprehensive Examination, which focuses on your research area, CHEM-9900 evaluates your ability to develop ideas in a broader scientific context. This course involves preparing a novel research proposal for funding programs like NSERC Discovery Grants or CIHR Project Grants. You will create a research proposal in Chemistry or Biochemistry that includes:

- A new research idea
- Timelines
- Well-defined aims
- Project structure and methodology
- Resource requirements, including MSc and PhD students
- Training programs for students
- Budgetary framework

Your proposal should not be a direct extension of your current research or closely related to your supervisor's ongoing projects. Consult with your supervisor and the CHEM-9900 course instructor to ensure your idea is distinct**. Plan your proposal thoroughly and have a clear vision before registering for the course.**

Your proposal and Canadian Common CV (CCV) will be evaluated by your Doctoral Committee and the CHEM-9900 Instructor. They will assess your proposal's originality, budgeting, planning, and clarity.

> ***Note:*** *Chem-9900 must be completed in the term you are registered for the course and before your PhD defense.*

2.3.2 Attendance at the Departmental Seminar Series (CHEM-8900):

Register for the seminar series each term; attendance is strongly encouraged. The series includes research-based seminars delivered by experts nationally and internationally and senior PhD students. These are normally held Fridays at 3-4 pm; exceptions may occur. The course will appear as IP (In Progress) on your transcript until thesis submission when it will be updated to P (Pass).

2.3.3 The Comprehensive Examination:

PhD students must complete an oral comprehensive examination:

- Within 12 months of transferring from the MSc program.
- Within 18 months if admitted directly to the PhD program with an MSc.

The Ph.D. Comprehensive Examination assesses the breadth and depth of a doctoral student's knowledge in (bio)chemical sciences and is a crucial milestone in doctoral training. Success in this exam is required for advancement to candidacy and is the last major examination before preparing your dissertation for defense.

During the examination, you must demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of your research project and related knowledge. While deeper expertise is expected in your specific research area, questions may cover any aspect of (bio)chemical sciences. This exam is broader than just evaluating your research proposal; it tests your overall knowledge and expertise.

Passing the Comprehensive Exam is essential for progressing towards your PhD. The examination, conducted by your Supervisory Committee, is designed to challenge you and simulate the oral defense for your PhD.

Format: The Comprehensive Examination in the Department of Chemistry & Biochemistry consists of a 20-minute presentation of your research to date, followed by a detailed Q&A session. Your Committee will assess your knowledge of your research area and the underlying chemical/biochemical principles.

You should be well-versed in undergraduate-level material relevant to your research. Your supervisor may suggest directed readings if additional preparation is needed. The exam is graded as pass or fail.

If you fail:

a) You may be allowed a second examination within one month, which could include remedial work to address knowledge gaps. A second failure will require withdrawal from the program.

b) If your initial performance is particularly poor, showing limited progress or insight, your Committee may decide that a repeat exam is not permitted, and you may be asked to withdraw from the Ph.D. program immediately

Note: *If you are required to withdraw from the program, you will leave the University without a qualification. Therefore, thorough preparation for your Comprehensive Examination is essential.*

The Comprehensive Exam Report Form (see below) will be provided by the Graduate Secretary and must be completed, signed and returned to the Graduate Secretary in Chemistry & Biochemistry.

COMPREHENSIVE EXAM EVALUATION GUIDE

The following is a list of evaluation categories to help guide the Supervisory Committee in formulating comprehensive exam questions and help graduate students prepare for the question period of the comprehensive exam.

Questions/Categories	Yes (Well Done)	Somewhat (Needs Improvement)	No (Needs much improvement)
1. **Did the student demonstrate the ability to answer conceptual based questions related to fundamental topics in Chemistry or Biochemistry?**			
2. **Did the student demonstrate the ability to answer conceptual based questions related to candidate's specific research area of specialty in Chemistry or Biochemistry?**			
3. **Did the student demonstrate the ability to answer questions related to how their proposed research will**			

advance the knowledge of their specific area of specialty?	
4. Did the student demonstrate the ability to answer questions regarding knowledge of background literature and notable research findings within candidate's specific research area of specialty?	
5. Did the student demonstrate the ability to answer questions regarding general principles of experimental techniques or methods proposed in candidate's thesis work?	
6. Did the student demonstrate the ability to answer questions on data analysis and analytical interpretation of proposed research findings?	
7. Did the student demonstrate the ability to display broad knowledge and articulate using scientific appropriate language that is level appropriate for this stage of the PhD degree?	
8. Did the student appropriately explained applications and/or limitations related to the specific area of research in Chemistry or Biochemistry? (e.g., contributing to certain area of innovation or filling in the knowledge gaps etc.)	

Comments/Notes:

2.3.4 The Departmental Seminar

In your final year, you must present a 45-50 minute seminar to the Department and your PhD committee. This presentation should contextualize your research within the current field. Be prepared to answer questions from undergraduates, graduate students, faculty members, and your Committee. The Departmental Seminar should be completed at least one semester before your PhD defense.

Note: *Be sure to specifically invite your Committee, including the external reader, to your Departmental Seminar.*

2.3.5 The Pre-Oral Meeting

Approximately six months before completing your Ph.D. dissertation, you will present an outline of your research to the Doctoral Committee. This meeting should occur after completing all course and Departmental Seminar requirements and is typically the final annual meeting before your defense.

Note: *Your pre-oral meeting is often held immediately after your Departmental Seminar, but that 'linkage' is not mandatory; it can be scheduled approx. six months before your defense.*

The Graduate Secretary will provide the Pre-Oral Report form. It must be completed, signed, and returned to the Graduate Secretary after the pre-oral meeting.

2.3.6 Pre-Oral Meeting Presentation

During the pre-oral meeting, present the following to your Committee:

- **Graduate Courses:** List attended courses and grades.
- **Chapter Summaries:** One slide per chapter, outlining work needed and current progress.
- **Publications:** List any publications from your doctoral work.
- **Presentations:** List any presentations (poster/oral) of your work.
- **Completion Timeline:** Propose a timeline for finishing your dissertation.

The Committee will provide feedback on what remains to complete your dissertation, evaluate the realism of your timeline, and suggest suitable external examiners for your PhD defense. A pre-oral report form, including a draft timeline and potential external examiners, will be completed.

The external examiner must be a tenured faculty member at another university with no collaborative research relationship with you. They should work in your research area or a closely related field. Approval from the Dean of Graduate Studies is required, and this must be secured at least 8 weeks before the defense date. The Graduate Secretary in Chemistry and Biochemistry will handle the approval process.

Note: *Please contact the Graduate Secretary for the process of securing the external examiner after your pre-oral meeting. Your supervisor must informally request their participation and obtain their CV. You then need to submit the request and supporting documents to UWinsite for approval.*

Instructions: This form needs to be submitted as a Service Request in UWinsite Student. Login to your student account - select **Research Tracking** - then **Service Requests** - create **New Service Request** - select **Research Activities** - select **External Examiner Request** - Choose your program -

Add attachment -Upload this form and any attachments **(including the CV)** - Add any relevant comments to text box – Click **Submit.**

2.3.7 Research Requirements (CHEM-9980)

In addition to coursework and seminars, you will conduct research under your supervisor's guidance and write a thesis. Your supervisor will help determine the acceptable scope of your research and assist with drafting your dissertation. Use the University-approved templates available online to ensure your thesis meets formatting standards: University Formatting Requirements. Download a template early to ensure uniformity.

Once your dissertation is underway, consult with the Graduate Secretary about submission timelines to meet financial deadlines and align with University Convocation dates.

2.4 Timeline for Submission of the Doctoral Dissertation

The final examination is the dissertation defense, conducted by your Committee with the external examiner, who is an expert from another university. Specific deadlines for thesis submission and defense are detailed in Appendix A.

Note: *Dates and timelines may change annually. Check with the Graduate Secretary for the current deadlines when nearing thesis completion, preferably just before your Pre-Oral Meeting. This ensures you have up-to-date information for an informed discussion.*

2.5 PhD Milestones to Completion

Keep a record of your courses and grades. Present this information on coursework progress during committee meetings to provide a complete view of your academic and research progress.

Course	Course Code	Course Title	Grade
Course #1			
Course #2			
Course #3			
Course #4			
Course #5			
Course #6	CHEM-9900	The Research Proposal	
Milestone		Comprehensive Examination[1]	

[1] There is no grade for the Comprehensive Examination – it is pass/fail. Similarly, there is no grade for giving the Department Seminar – it is a milestone to be completed.

Milestone		Department Seminar[3]	
Seminar	CHEM-8900-1	Seminar	(IP)
Milestone		Pre-Oral	
Thesis	CHEM-9980-1	Doctoral Dissertation	(IP)

3. Your Supervisory Committee

All MSc and PhD students must have a Supervisory Committee to monitor progress toward their degree. Consult your supervisor about potential Committee members, then obtain approval and signatures from each member on the Committee form (Appendix B). Upload this form to UWinsite for approval by the Graduate Coordinator and the Faculty of Graduate Studies. Once this is complete, let the Graduate Secretary know so the form can be forwarded to Graduate Coordinator.

Note: Selection of your Committee should be made in conjunction with your supervisor, and the form submitted to the Graduate Secretary within the first term of graduate school.

3.1 Committee Composition

Master's Committee: The committee typically consists of the thesis supervisor, one departmental reader, and one external reader (usually a non-expert from outside the department).

As of May 2025, following Senate approval, the MSc committee may now consist of a thesis supervisor and **two internal readers within the department**, with no requirement for an external reader. *This option is recommended if you are having difficulty finding an external reader.*

Doctoral Committee: Consists of the thesis supervisor, **two** departmental readers, and **one** outside department reader. An external examiner, an expert from another university, is added for the dissertation defense.

Additional committee members, such as a co-supervisor or extra expertise, may be included if beneficial. The above committee membership is the minimum required by University regulations.

3.2 Your Thesis Supervisor

Your supervisor must be a regular or cross-appointed member of the Departmental Graduate Faculty. They are usually chosen before admission and noted in your offer letter. In some cases, you may have two co-supervisors.

Your supervisor is crucial to your graduate education, serving as your advisor, counselor, and research director. They are also your employer, providing a Research Assistant (RA) salary from their research budget. They offer guidance on daily research questions, help you meet your M.Sc. or Ph.D. goals, assist with career planning, and support applications for scholarships, awards, and job references.

The Faculty of Graduate Studies recommends establishing clear expectations through open dialogue. Both you and your supervisor should complete a guidance document to prevent conflicts and address all aspects of the supervisory relationship. The document, adapted from McMaster and other Canadian universities, can be accessed here: Student-Supervisor Guidance Manual. It can be updated as needed throughout your program.

3.3 Role of the Committee

Your Committee should meet with you at least once a year to assess your progress, with additional meetings as needed. Their duties include:

- Attending your transfer meeting (MSc to PhD), if applicable
- Conducting the comprehensive examination (PhD)
- Evaluating your CHEM-9900 research proposal (PhD)
- Attending the pre-oral meeting after your departmental seminar (PhD)
- Conducting the dissertation examination/defense (MSc or PhD)

While the outside department committee member's presence is optional at most meetings, it is recommended to invite them to stay engaged with your progress.

Note: You will receive email reminders about Annual Reports from the Graduate Secretary. Complete and submit the form to the Graduate Secretary for the Graduate Coordinator's signature by May 31st each year.

You are responsible for organizing your Committee meetings and should consult the Graduate Secretary for the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry for assistance and necessary forms. Do not rely on your Supervisor or the Graduate Secretary to keep you on track.

4. OTHER INFORMATION

4.1 Seminars

Graduate students, faculty, and visiting researchers present on various research topics in chemistry and biochemistry. **Students must register for CHEM-8900 each term of full-time enrollment in the MSc/PhD programs.** Attendance at all departmental seminars (normally Fridays 3-4 pm, with exceptions) is mandatory for all graduate students. Doctoral students must also present a departmental seminar on their research before their thesis defense, typically in their final year.

4.2 Writing the Thesis or Dissertation

The timeline for writing your thesis or dissertation is set by you and your supervisor. Since writing is time-consuming, it's crucial to establish a clear timeline to ensure timely completion. Refer to Appendix A for more details on timelines.

Minimum residence times are outlined in the Graduate Calendar. Most students will need additional terms to complete their degrees. Typically, M.Sc. students take about two years, while Ph.D. students take four to five years. The Graduate Calendar provides specific deadlines for completing requirements if you aim to graduate on a particular convocation date.

4.3 Other Responsibilities of Graduate Students

- **Deadlines:** Adhere to published University deadlines for scholarships, awards, and tuition payments. Check the Graduate Studies and Cashiers' Office websites for updates: Important Academic Dates and Financial Date
- **Safety and Instrument Usage:** Complete required safety training from the Occupational Health and Safety Office (Safety Details) to work in laboratories and gain storeroom access. Follow all safety procedures and obtain training and permission for instrument use from the relevant technician or faculty member. **Rules may include:** the proper use of sign-up sheets; adherence to the time-slot policies; the proper use of log books; following the correct shut-down procedures etc. **Adhere to all instrument usage rules; failure to comply will result in loss of access.**

4.4 Graduation

Apply for graduation to receive your diploma, regardless of your attendance at the convocation ceremony. For more details, visit Graduation and Convocation.

5. SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS

5.1 Federal and Provincial Awards
Check the Graduate Studies website for updates on available scholarships and awards: Scholarships and Awards.

5.2 Scholarships from Other Sources
Apply for field-specific scholarships from academic societies (e.g., Parkinson's Society Canada, Cancer Research Society) and conference travel awards. Securing these awards can enhance your career prospects.

6. CUPE LOCAL 4580 INFORMATION

As a graduate student at the University of Windsor, you are entitled to assistantships under the collective agreement with CUPE Local 4580. This agreement details your rights and responsibilities. Review it at www.4580.cupe.ca. where you can also find executive lists, bylaws, event updates, and related policies.

For assistance, involvement, or information, contact the union at cupe4580@uwindsor.ca

7. OTHER INFORMATION

7.1 Conflict Resolution

Conflicts with other graduate students, supervisors, or staff can impact your morale and productivity. Address such issues promptly, professionally, and respectfully. Seek advice or assistance from the following contacts:

7.2 Conflict Resolution Contact List (as of August 2025)

- Graduate Student Representative – ***Natalie Robinson, MSc*** (*robins73@uwindsor.ca*)
- Graduate Coordinator- ***Dr. Jim Green*** (jgreen@uwindsor.ca)
- Interim Head of Chemistry and Biochemistry- ***Dr. Sirinart Ananvoranich*** (anans@uwindsor.ca)
- Assoc. Dean of Science – Faculty of Science- ***Dr. Dan Mennill*** (scienceadgsr@uwindsor.ca)
- Assoc. Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies- ***Dr. Laurie Freeman*** (adgs@uwindsor.ca)

For any administrative issues/concerns please contact the Graduate Secretary- Honey Jibrail (jibrailh@uwindsor.ca).

Note: Please follow the hierarchy for complaints and concerns. Start with the initial contact and allow time for resolution before escalating. Avoid contacting everyone at once to prevent miscommunication and delays.

If the conflict is related to personal and interpersonal skills, you can contact any of the persons listed in Section 7.2 There is no order of priority here, please approach whichever person you feel the most comfortable with for direction and advice.

8. FAQ'S

Q: Why didn't I get an email announcement about a Departmental seminar?

A: *Please email the Graduate Secretary Ms. Honey Blythe Jibrail at (jibrailh@uwindsor.ca) to have your email address added to the email list.*

Q: Which graduate course is easy so that I can easily pass with top mark?

A: *Graduate courses are parts of your education. You should consider taking courses that will benefit your research and your future career. You are encouraged to consult with your supervisor about which courses might benefit your research as well as follow courses which might be of general scientific interest to you. As a doctoral student, some graduate level courses focus on specific research skills which are directly relevant to your research. These courses might develop your depth of knowledge which might be advantageous when it comes to your comprehensive Examination.*

Q: I feel my progress is slow, especially in comparison to some of my fellow students, and I am concerned about completing the course on schedule

A: *Research progresses at different paces depending on which field of chemistry or biochemistry you are in. Some research areas produce results very quickly, while others take time to develop methodology. Your supervisor is the person best placed to advise you on overall progress and they should provide you with constructive feedback to allay your concerns or develop a strategy to keep you on track to completion.*

Q: Who should I talk to when I have a problem with my supervisor?

A: *If the problem or conflict is related to research, you can contact any member of your graduate committee for a meeting to resolve or to outline the research activities. See section 7.1. If the conflict is related to personal and interpersonal skills, you can contact any of the persons listed in Section 7.2. There is no order of priority here, please approach whichever person you feel the most comfortable with for direction and advice.*

Q: Who should I talk to if I feel threatened by other graduate or undergraduate students?

A: *You can contact any of the persons listed in section 8.2. There is no order of priority here, please approach whichever person you feel the most comfortable with for direction and advice.*

Appendix A: The Thesis and Thesis Defense

A.1 Format of the Thesis

University templates are available on-line to ensure you complete the thesis according to the University standards: Format Requirements | Faculty of Graduate Studies (uwindsor.ca)

Any questions regarding the preparation and formatting of a thesis or dissertation should be directed to Svetlana Georgieva (Faculty of Graduate Studies) at ext. 2104.

The thesis should contain both a declaration of originality and an approval page for signing by your Committee. Both these forms can be downloaded here:

www.uwindsor.ca/graduate-studies/360/student-forms

A.2 Timeline to the Defense

Final copies of the thesis must be with each committee member at least two weeks before the Examination date. Consult the Graduate Secretary early in your thesis writing to understand submission timelines and financial deadlines (Phase I or Phase II) and to schedule your defense in time for a specific University Convocation.

For current timelines, visit "Thesis and Dissertation Forms" at:
http://www.uwindsor.ca/graduate-studies/360/student-forms

Start planning your thesis defense several months in advance and consult the Graduate Secretary to ensure you meet all deadlines.

Carefully review the timelines in the link below.

PhD Submission and Defense Timelines.pdf (uwindsor.ca)

A.3 The Oral Defense of the Thesis

For a PhD defense, a faculty member from another Department will chair the Examination. For an MSc defense, the Graduate Coordinator or another delegated Faculty member will chair. Both MSc and PhD defenses follow the same format.

The defense is open to the public and includes:

- **Presentation**: A 20–30 minute overview of your research, focusing on highlights rather than all aspects.
- **Q&A from Audience**: After your presentation, the chair will invite questions from the audience.
- **Audience Withdrawal**: The audience may leave after the Q&A. If they stay, they must remain for the entire committee questioning period, which can last several hours.
- **Committee Questioning**: Each committee member will ask questions for about 15–20 minutes, with the external examiner leading. Two rounds of questioning are typical.
- **External Examiner**: Expect technical questions challenging your knowledge and specific details of your research.
- **External Reader**: Prepare for general questions and explanations for non-experts, including how key instruments work or fundamental scientific principles.
- **Remaining Committee Members**: They may ask questions similar to those of the external examiner to assess your understanding of the work and underlying theories.

After questioning, you and any public attendees will withdraw while the committee deliberates. You will then be called back in to receive the decision.

Appendix B: University Standard Forms:

Current versions of standard forms can be downloaded from the Faculty of Graduate Studies website.

www.uwindsor.ca/graduate-studies/360/student-forms

Forms that can be found here:

- Committee Forms
- Annual Report
- MSc Transfer to PhD

**Or ask the Graduate Secretary for any additional forms

Appendix C: Travel Support

C.1 Faculty of Graduate Studies Conference Travel Award

Master's students are eligible for a maximum of one (1) reimbursement within the first 6 terms of registration. Doctoral students are eligible for a maximum of two (2) reimbursements within the first 12 terms of registration. Visit the following website for more details: Graduate Studies Conference Travel Award

C.2 Faculty of Science Travel Award

Students must apply for this award 30 days before attending a conference.

Link to this application: **Science Travel Award**

Contact: Laura McLean at lmclean@uwindsor.ca in the Dean's Office for further information.

Appendix D: Extended Absences from Campus

D.1 Extended Leave from Campus to Undertake Research

It is understood that a graduate student may be absent from the University while still under supervision, e.g., visiting libraries, attending a graduate course at another institution, doing fieldwork, etc. **If such period of absence exceeds four weeks in any term, written evidence must be made available to the Office of Graduate Studies to the effect that the absence has the approval of the program coordinator.**

D.2 Leave of Absence for Personal Reasons

Occasionally, students may need a leave of absence for medical, health, or personal reasons. Consult your supervisor for guidance on the process. Submit a Leave of Absence application through UWinsite and **inform the Graduate Secretary**. Failure to do so may result in procedural issues. The Graduate Secretary will then forward the request to the Graduate Coordinator for approval.

The Leave of Absence application form can be downloaded from the Faculty of Graduate Studies website:

http://www.uwindsor.ca/graduate-studies/360/student-forms

The Leave of Absence application form is under **enrollment, registration & other general use forms**, or ask the Graduate Secretary for the forms.