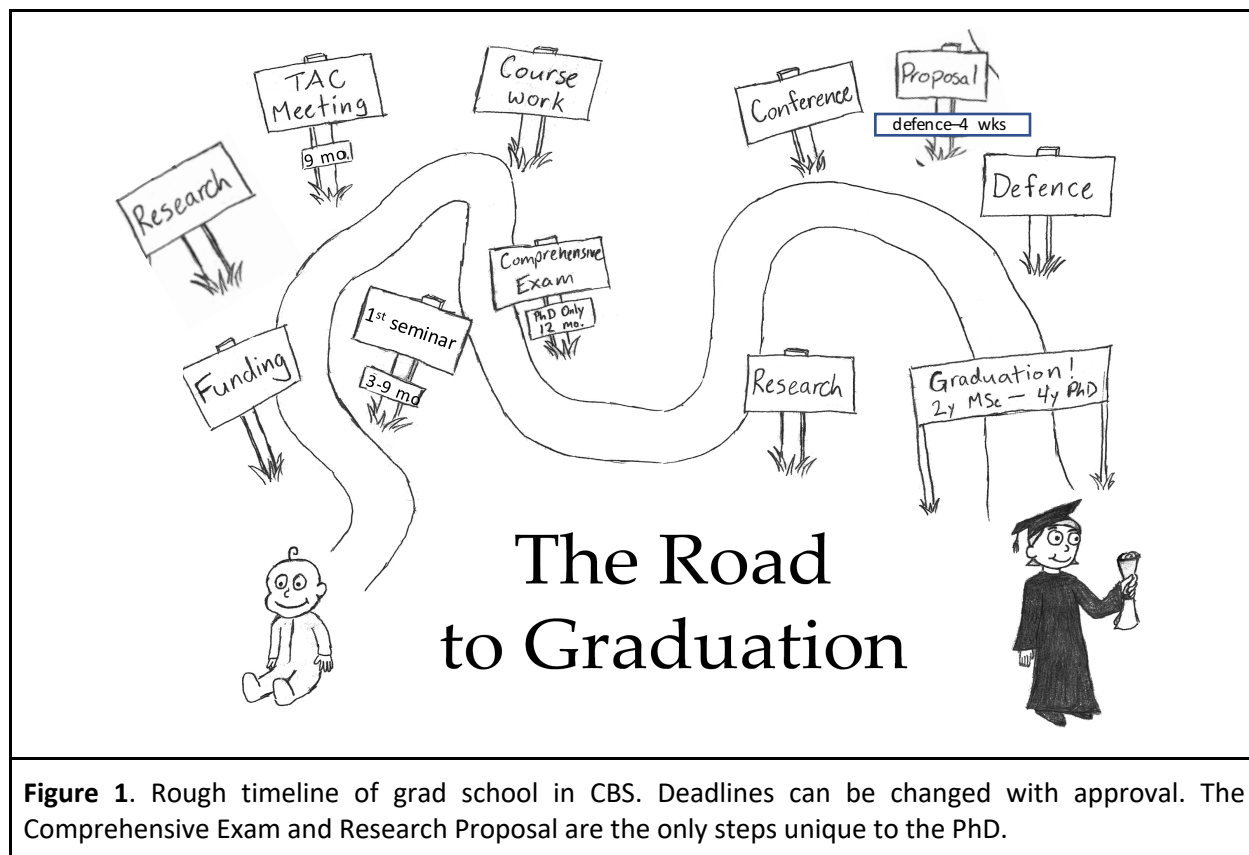


Hello, and a warm welcome to grad school in CBS!

This Guide is designed to help you throughout your grad career at uOttawa. There's a lot of detail: use it as a resource for your entire graduate stay. Some information will not be relevant until long after you start, but this will give you an idea of what to expect.



**Figure 1.** Rough timeline of grad school in CBS. Deadlines can be changed with approval. The Comprehensive Exam and Research Proposal are the only steps unique to the PhD.

We've tried to include information and advice relevant at each step of your degree, from the time you start to the time you defend and submit your thesis. Topics covered include research, academics, teaching assistantships, scholarships, how to write your and more.

This document is continuously updated, but policies and requirements may change between releases. If you are ever in doubt about grad requirements, scholarship info, etc., ask the Chemistry Academic Assistant in the Faculty of Science Graduate Office ([gradsci@uottawa.ca](mailto:gradsci@uottawa.ca), Gendron 181), who will give you the most up-to-date information. For information about teaching assistantships and stipends, contact the Chemistry Department Office at [cbs@uottawa.ca](mailto:cbs@uottawa.ca), in the STEM Complex, Room 342.

Good luck!

Prof. Deryn Fogg  
Grad Director, Chemistry and Biomolecular Sciences

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## First Steps: Admission and Advisory Committee

Offers of admission are typically conditional, as students usually apply before their BSc or MSc graduation. If you start graduate work before you have a final transcript from your prior degree, you will need to provide the transcript to the Grad Office in your first semester of grad school. Ideally, as with all official documents, you supply it in hard copy in a sealed envelope. However, while COVID restrictions are still in effect, it is permissible to send by email to [gradsci@uottawa.ca](mailto:gradsci@uottawa.ca). If that email comes directly from the institution, it's regarded as official.

**Thesis Advisory Committee and Committee Meetings:** Set up your TAC in your first term.

Each grad student has a thesis advisory committee (TAC), which provides guidance on research plans and progress. The TAC members should be sufficiently familiar with your field of study to be able to provide constructive feedback on your research project. Choose your TAC in consultation with your supervisor (and any co-supervisor). For PhD students, one committee member should be from Carleton University, unless the thesis topic or workload issues make it impossible. One member may be appointed from another Department, Faculty, or a government lab in Ottawa, IF the research would clearly benefit. Just make that case briefly but clearly on the TAC form.

MSc TAC: Consists of 2 full-time faculty members and the supervisor

PhD TAC: Consists of 3 full-time faculty members and the supervisor.

Once all members have agreed to serve, the student uploads the form for nomination of TAC members as a Service Request in uoZone. Here is the form:

[https://science.uottawa.ca/sites/science.uottawa.ca/files/tac\\_membres\\_en.pdf](https://science.uottawa.ca/sites/science.uottawa.ca/files/tac_membres_en.pdf)

You can seek advice and guidance from your TAC members throughout your studies. At minimum, schedule an annual TAC meeting (for timing see next page), to review your research (and academic) progress and expectations, agree on yearly development goals, and discuss obstacles and workarounds.\* Either the supervisor or student can schedule a TAC meeting, as needed. Typically, this is an opportunity to pull your results into a coherent narrative, to set your science in context and get additional expert input. Work to communicate your findings concisely and clearly, to maximize valuable feedback and suggestions.

At the end of the meeting, have the members sign your TAC report (link next page) and upload it as a uoZone Service Request. PhD students are encouraged to use their TAC for thesis requirements: see below. Students often ask a TAC member (in addition to the supervisor, of course) for letters of reference for scholarships, jobs, etc. These professors are typically most familiar with your work and strengths, so are well-positioned to do so. However: writing a strong letter takes considerable time and thought, so don't take it for granted. Approach them formally to ask if they would be willing; if they agree, give them material to work with (CV, Terms of Reference for scholarships, details of your goals), and give them LOTS of time -- at least 6 weeks.

## Academic Requirements for MSc and PhD Degrees

*This info is accurate at the time of writing. For the most up-to-date information on program requirements, go to: <https://catalogue.uottawa.ca/en/programs/> and <https://www2.uottawa.ca/study/graduate-studies/thesis>*

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\* **Note:** Plans are under way for a report template, in which you summarize your advances (primarily in research) since the last meeting, and outline goals for the next year. This would formalize a process already used in many groups.

The MSc and PhD programs at the University of Ottawa are research-intensive, so most of your time should be spent conducting research. However, you will also take several courses and participate in a graduate research seminar to earn the degree. If you wish to take additional courses, they must be approved by your supervisor and thesis advisory committee.

Graduate students must register a thesis topic online, via a uoZone Service Request. MSc students must register their topic by the end of Term 2, PhD students by the end of Term 3. These topics aren't binding but will help you think about your goals and interests.

If you're an MSc student, you must register for *THM 7999 (MSc Thesis)* every term.

If you're a PhD student, you must register for all of *THD 9999 (PhD Thesis)* and *CHM 8257 (PhD Seminar)*, *CHM 9998 (Comprehensive Exam)* and *CHM 8958 (Research Proposal)* every semester until those requirements are complete. Register online for these and your lecture courses via the "Enrol" application in uoZone: <http://uozone2.uottawa.ca/>.

In your third term, and each year until you graduate, you must submit an annual Progress Report. This report should be preceded by a TAC meeting (see above). The Progress Report summarizes your progress in research and other degree requirements: it ensures that your supervisor, TAC, and the Grad Director are up to date on your status and needs. Download the form from the Faculty website (<https://www2.uottawa.ca/study/graduate-studies/thesis/progress-report>), fill it out electronically, and upload the completed form as a uoZone Service Request. Your supervisor will then add their assessment and ranking: these should be discussed with you, so you get frank feedback about where you're doing well and any aspects that need development. The report then proceeds for approval to the Graduate Director. I normally only comment on reports with a Fair or Inadequate ranking, but be assured, I read them all.

**New:** The progress report must be uploaded for you to register for Terms 4, 7, 10... E.g., if your report is due by Aug. 31, your registration will be blocked for Winter 2022. Don't delay: if you can't register, you're not eligible for a teaching assistantship. So **schedule your TAC meeting for Term 3 (6, etc.), upload the completed and signed TAC report immediately after, and upload the progress report at the same time.**

**Links:** [https://science.uottawa.ca/sites/science.uottawa.ca/files/tac\\_report\\_en.pdf](https://science.uottawa.ca/sites/science.uottawa.ca/files/tac_report_en.pdf)  
<https://www2.uottawa.ca/study/graduate-studies/thesis/progress-report>

That way you don't forget and then panic when you realize you can't enroll or apply for a TA.

In addition to the standard MSc and PhD programs, the department offers two program specializations: (1) Chemical and Environmental Toxicology, and (2) Science, Society and Policy. These have slightly modified requirements. See Appendix A: Program Specializations.

### ***MSc requirements***

*To graduate, MSc students must complete the following*

- Thesis (THM 7999)
- 6 units of lecture courses in Chemistry at the graduate level. Most grad courses in our department are 1.5 units (6 weeks).
- If you started Sept. 2021 or later: the 6 units includes one mandatory course, CHM 8365 (Communications in Chemistry), which will be offered every winter.
- Students are required to attend the Departmental Seminar (11:30 Wednesdays in DRO 214), which brings in invited speakers from Canada, North America, and around the world. This is a key part of your exposure and education.

**PhD “fast-track” requirements (for additional details, see Research Requirements section on p. 8)**

If the thesis supervisor and TAC are in support, MSc students can apply to transfer directly to the PhD program (“fast-track”) without writing an MSc thesis. The following requirements must be met:

- Transfer must take place within 16 months of initial registration in the MSc program
- Completion of 6 course units with a grade of A- or better in each, and an average of  $\geq 8.0$
- IF YOU STARTED Sept 2021: the 6 units must include CHM 8365 (Communications in Chemistry).
- Strong research performance, attested to by written assessments by the supervisor and thesis advisory committee following a TAC meeting (for details, see **Research requirements** below).

**Procedure:** Upload a Service Request with your completed TAC report form (link above) and the form for Modification or Cancellation of Registration, indicating the term for which you are requesting transfer: [https://www.uottawa.ca/graduate-studies/sites/www.uottawa.ca.graduate-studies/files/esup5227\\_e.pdf](https://www.uottawa.ca/graduate-studies/sites/www.uottawa.ca.graduate-studies/files/esup5227_e.pdf)

Given the new quotas for Grad Admission Scholarships, YOU MUST REQUEST TRANSFER at minimum the term before you want to transfer, and demonstrate the support from the supervisor and TAC. This is important so we can conserve scholarships for fast-track students. Your supervisor and the Graduate Director will then have the option of approving in uoZone.

**Note:** students in the Accelerated Master’s are not eligible to fast-track to the PhD program.

Following transfer to the PhD program, the doctoral requirements below must be met. Note that they include 6 additional units of graduate coursework (i.e. 6 units from MSc + 6 units from PhD)

**PhD requirements**

To graduate, PhD students must complete the following

- 6 course units in chemistry at the graduate level
- Comprehensive exam (CHM 9998)<sup>Ω</sup>
- Research Proposal (CHM 8958)<sup>†</sup>
- PhD Seminar (CHM 8257)<sup>†</sup>
- Thesis (THD 9999)

Students are required to attend the Departmental Seminar (11:30 Wednesdays in DRO 214): see above.

**Courses and Registration**

Graduate-level Chemistry courses are 5000-level or above. Some fourth-year undergraduate Chemistry courses are cross-listed as grad courses (if you took such a course as an undergrad, you may not take it again for graduate credit). Important: uOttawa’s Grad Regulations, as well as the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies (OCGS) regulations, limit the number of mixed grad-undergrad courses that can be taken for credit toward a graduate degree. The maximum is 1.5 units out of the 6 required.

As well, the OCGS requires different evaluation methods for grads vs undergrads in such courses. For example, grad students may be assigned a term paper with a critical review of the current literature.

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<sup>Ω</sup> The comprehensive examination must be completed within 12 months of admission to the PhD program. For details, see the **Research requirements** section below.

<sup>†</sup>The Research Proposal and PhD Seminar CHM 8257 come near the end of the PhD. See the **Research requirements** section.

And while we're talking about term papers, etc.: in these or any other work, you must recognize and avoid plagiarism, whether in writing, in graphics, or in ideas. As a grad student and researcher, it is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic fraud. Bottom line: integrity is the bedrock of science. The [Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies](#) is planning to implement formal ethics training.

### Registering for Grad Courses:

Register via the "Enrol" application in uoZone (<http://uozone2.uottawa.ca/>). Click the "Search Courses" button to browse the courses available in the coming semester. <https://www.uottawa.ca/course-timetable/>

Try to complete coursework early in your program, so you have more time for research and writing as you progress. A passing grade for grad courses in CBS is a B. Students who fail 2 courses, the comprehensive, the thesis proposal, or whose research progress is deemed unsatisfactory, must withdraw from the program: <https://www2.uottawa.ca/about-us/policies-regulations/academic-regulation-ii-5-examinations-and-grading-graduate-studies>

Other course options:

- In addition to the regular course options offered by the Department of Chemistry, students can register for a Directed Studies course with a full-time professor in the Department. These involve an independent project overseen one-on-one by the professor. The professor running the course must create a syllabus and have it approved by the Graduate Director.
- **Graduate courses relevant to your research offered by other departments (medicine, biology, mathematics, etc.) could count toward your degree**, if approved by your supervisor, the professor teaching the course, your TAC, and the Graduate Director. Fill out the Course Attendance Form ([https://www2.uottawa.ca/study/sites/g/files/bhrsksd296/files/2021-10/formulaire\\_de\\_frequentation\\_dans\\_un\\_cours.pdf](https://www2.uottawa.ca/study/sites/g/files/bhrsksd296/files/2021-10/formulaire_de_frequentation_dans_un_cours.pdf)) obtain the signature of the course professor and your supervisor and submit it along with the [Modification/Cancellation of Registration form](#). Provide a clear justification (get your supervisor's input) on that form and confirm the approval of your TAC. That will expedite approval by the Graduate Director. This is especially important if you are seeking full approval for a 3-credit course (which means you are asking to take 50% of your degree course credits from outside the department).

Most courses (as well as many TA positions) use the web application Brightspace to post assignments, resources, lecture slides, etc. See <http://uottawa.brightspace.com> and the "Virtual Campus" application in uoZone (<http://uozone2.uottawa.ca/>).

### ***Exceeding the recommended degree duration***

As of Sept. 2021, the department recommends finishing a MSc in 5 terms (previously 6 terms\*), and a PhD in 4 years. Students who fast-track are recommended to finish in a total of 5 years (see "Academic requirements (PhD Fast-track)" above). These are *recommended* degree durations. *Maximum* degree durations are established in two policies in the Grad Regulations: <https://www2.uottawa.ca/about-us/policies-regulations/academic-regulation-ii-6-time-limits-completion-graduate-degrees-and-diplomas>

### 6.2. Master's degrees

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\* We reduced the recommended duration of the MSc, and the associated course / seminar requirements, in light of university-level grad scholarship reform. The latter increased support for international PhD students, but reduced tuition scholarships for MSc students with a GPA of  $\geq 8$  who enter Sept 2021 or later. Note: students who fast-track are unaffected.

MSc students must complete all their degree requirements within 4 years of the date of initial enrolment in the master's program, unless their specific program requirements provide for a different time limit.

### 6.3. Doctoral degrees

PhD students must submit a thesis for defense within 6 years of the date of initial enrolment in the doctoral program, unless their specific program requirements provide for a different time limit. Students initially enrolled in a master's program who transfer to a doctoral program must submit the thesis for defense within 7 years of initial enrolment in the master's program, unless their specific program requirements provide for a different time limit.

If you have not completed all the requirements before the 4 and 6 year university limits, you will need to fill out a "Request for extension of the time limit to complete the requirements of a graduate degree" form ([https://www2.uottawa.ca/study/sites/g/files/bhrs kd296/files/2021-10/esup5223\\_e.pdf](https://www2.uottawa.ca/study/sites/g/files/bhrs kd296/files/2021-10/esup5223_e.pdf)) and submit this as a service request on uoZone. Without this, you will not be able to register for upcoming terms. Note that students who have exceeded the recommended degree duration have lower priority in the assignment of TA positions. Realistically, this means that any financial support would need to come from your supervisor's grants. You should discuss with your supervisor what the expectations of funding are if you think you will exceed the recommended degree duration.

### **Leaves of Absence**

See also: <https://www2.uottawa.ca/about-us/policies-regulations/academic-regulation-ii-3-graduate-enrolment> and <https://2626.ca/academic-workers/your-rights/benefits/>

Under certain circumstances, you can apply for a leave of absence from your studies.

- You can apply for parental leave for the birth or adoption of a child during your studies. You must provide evidence of the birth or adoption. You will be granted an extension corresponding to the duration of your leave (up to 1 year for each birth or adoption) to complete your studies when you return. All graduate students are eligible for parental leave, but the total leave cannot exceed 1 year per child. This means if both of a child's parents are graduate students at the university, they must split the year of leave between them.
- If you become ill and cannot continue your studies, you can apply for medical leave.
- You can apply for compassionate leave for the illness or death of a family member.

For **medical** or **compassionate** leave, first discuss with your supervisor and TAC to confirm their approval. Then upload a Service Request for Leave of Absence to uoZone ([https://www.uottawa.ca/graduate-studies/sites/www.uottawa.ca.graduate-studies/files/esup-5222\\_e\\_2020.pdf](https://www.uottawa.ca/graduate-studies/sites/www.uottawa.ca.graduate-studies/files/esup-5222_e_2020.pdf)). Along with the request, provide a letter in which you clearly state the reason for, and length of, the requested interruption of studies, and provide supporting documentation (such as a doctor's note confirming the illness). Four people must approve your medical or compassionate leave: your supervisor, the Graduate Director for Chemistry, the Vice-Dean of Graduate Studies in the Faculty of Science, and the Vice-Provost of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. The maximum leave is 1 year. You will be granted a corresponding extension to your degree when you return. Leaves cannot be granted retroactively -- you must have formal approval for absence from your graduate program.

You will still have access to the university's computer and library resources during a medical, compassionate, or parental leave. When the approved leave period is over, you must enroll as a student again for the next semester. Don't forget to register to the thesis again: because of the interruption of your studies, the system will not do it automatically.

The CUPE 2626 collective agreement also guarantees paid or unpaid leave from your employment under certain circumstances:

- For each 32.5 h of work, you accumulate 2.5 h of paid sick leave, up to a maximum of 38 h. Once you have used your paid hours, you can continue unpaid sick leave.
- You have the right to up to one (1) month of paid leave to undergo medical procedures related to gender reassignment. You must present a medical certificate to Health Services, which will then advise the Faculty/Department in which you were hired that you have a legitimate health-related leave.
- Following the death of a close relative, you have the right to three (3) consecutive days of paid bereavement leave. You also have the right to ten (10) hours of paid compassionate leave each year to take care of a close relative.
- You have the right to a pregnancy leave of up to seventeen (17) consecutive weeks. You can choose to start this leave at any time between the seventeenth (17th) week preceding the expected date of delivery, and the conclusion of your pregnancy. In the sad circumstances of a miscarriage or a stillbirth, this leave, and other benefits may apply to you. This leave is paid if it occurs while you are working or when you are guaranteed an employment contract through the collective agreement.
- If you have completed thirteen (13) weeks of employment, you have the right to an unpaid parental leave following the birth of your child or the coming of a child into your custody for the first time. This leave lasts for up to thirty-five (35) weeks if you also took a pregnancy leave, and thirty-seven (37) weeks otherwise.
- You have the right to a paid leave of up to ten (10) hours when you attend a conference.

## Research requirements

Discussed below are specifics relevant to (1) MSc students interested in “fast-tracking” into the PhD program. (2) PhD students planning for the comprehensive exam, the PhD research proposal (a program requirement), and the PhD Seminar.

### Suggestions for the Fast-Track Transfer meeting with your TAC (also see p. 5)

- mention your interest to your committee at the first TAC meeting, even if this occurs well before the term in which you will transfer (normally Term 4)
- Consult your TAC for availability (their preferred month / week in term), then circulate a brief Doodle poll to refine. The student is responsible for scheduling the meeting, booking the room, and bringing the appropriate form for signature by the committee.
- Assemble a PowerPoint presentation to give your TAC an efficient overview of your progress and send them your slides 3 days before the meeting.
- Many committee members will refer to the slides throughout the meeting, so it’s a good idea to format slides for printing 6 per page (thus 20-point font). **Keep it concise** (suggested max 12 slides)
- first 1-2 slides -- general progress, BRIEFLY
  - name, date, grad courses completed, which profs, subjects, grades.
  - Courses planned.
  - publications, presentations (talks/posters), any awards.
  - It can also be useful to provide info about teaching assistantships (can speak to breadth)
- Then slides summarizing your research progress.
  - Situate your research within the field
  - show your understanding of the context, its significance, and the opportunities.



- show where you hope to take your research, i.e. a research plan of sufficient depth and scope to warrant PhD study. Research plans evolve, but what your TAC wants to see is that you have the engagement, breadth, and tools to succeed.

***Comprehensive Examination (updated April 2018)***

All students registered in the Ph.D. program in the Department must complete the comprehensive examination. The purpose of the examination is to confirm that students are equipped with the undergraduate knowledge, as well as the essential background in their area of specialization, to successfully complete their studies.

The examination is administered by the TAC (supervisor and 2 uO faculty members). If a TAC member is unavailable, another faculty member from the Department with the appropriate expertise can be approached to serve by the student or supervisor.

**Preparation and scheduling:**

The comprehensive exam must occur within the first 12 months of admission or transfer to the PhD program. At least 4 weeks prior to the examination, the student should discuss the expectations, scope, and content of the examination (e.g. relevant topics, courses and/or primary literature material) with the supervisor and examining committee members, either in person or by email.

Prior to the comprehensive exam, the student must notify the Graduate Office of the date and time of the oral examination, with cc. to the Director of Graduate Studies. The student is responsible for scheduling the exam, booking the room, and bringing to the exam the appropriate form for signature by the committee. The form is available from the Graduate Office (GNN 181).

*The examination consists of two parts:*

- 1) A seminar of ca. 25 minutes on a topic selected after consultation between the student and the examination committee. Note the Organic sub-group has students summarize their research at the beginning of their comprehensive exam, while Inorganic-Physical-Analytical has them summarize a paper. The Biological Chemistry subgroup uses either approach. Make sure you discuss with your committee, so you know what to expect.
- 2) An oral examination of the student's knowledge in his/her area of specialization. Questions may be inspired by, but are not limited to, the contents of the seminar given by the student. That is, the seminar serves as a starting point for the examination but does not define boundaries. Rather, the scope will be that indicated by committee members to the student. While the exam typically focuses on the area of specialization, a solid foundation (advanced undergraduate level) is expected in other areas deemed relevant by the committee members.

In the case of a failure on the oral examination: A written examination will be set by the professors on the committee approximately 1 month after the oral examination. The questions will be shown to the supervisor to ensure a fair examination. In the event of a failure on the written examination, the student must withdraw from the Ph.D. program.

**Note: It is the student's responsibility to schedule the comprehensive exam at the appropriate time in their studies and in accordance with the availability of the examination committee.**

Possible outcomes:

- *Pass with no conditions* -- performance in the comprehensive exam was satisfactory. The student continues in the program as planned.
- *Pass with conditions* -- performance in the comprehensive exam demonstrated some weaknesses, which the student is required to address. This may include taking an additional course, doing additional reading on a subject, giving an additional seminar presentation, or other academic requirements.
- *Do not pass* -- performance in the comprehensive exam was not satisfactory. The result will be entered into the system as NS (not satisfactory). The student will be given an opportunity to redo the exam as outlined above and must register for *CHM 9998 Comprehensive exam* in the following semester if the second attempt has not yet been made. Failure to pass on the second try requires that the student withdraw from the program.
- After the comprehensive: you must provide your TAC the form on which they will summarize your performance and indicate the outcome. Upload the signed form ([https://science.uottawa.ca/sites/science.uottawa.ca/files/comprehensive\\_exam\\_form.pdf](https://science.uottawa.ca/sites/science.uottawa.ca/files/comprehensive_exam_form.pdf)) as a Service Request for approval by the Grad Director. The Academic Officer (Chloé) then uploads the approved form to your student file (Xtender) and enters the final grade. You are responsible for ensuring that the comp is completed by the 12-month deadline.

#### *Tips for Passing the Comprehensive Exam*

View the comprehensive exam as an opportunity to read broadly and deeply. Brush up on the fundamentals of your field, even topics from your early undergrad, and make sure you know the basic chemistry of your catalysts, synthetic target, model organism or study system, etc. Even if your research does not focus on these details, your examiners will expect you to be conversant with the general area and recent advances. To anticipate the kind of questions your examiners may ask, give thought to their research and teaching focus, and consider reading some of their recent papers.

The comprehensive exam is meant to assess whether you have the required background knowledge and skills, and familiarity with the research area to carry out the research you propose. It is not a test in which you are expected to answer every question. In fact, your committee will try to find the limits to your knowledge and will likely ask some questions to which you do not know the answer. Don't be alarmed or embarrassed if and when that happens. It's fine to occasionally acknowledge that you're not sure, and either end the question there or give an educated guess. Just be explicit when you are venturing into "educated guess" territory!

Visit the room where your exam will be held, either before or early in the day of your exam.\* Check how you will connect your presentation. If there is a whiteboard or chalkboard in the room, bring erasable markers or chalk so you can illustrate your points with figures or diagrams during your exam. Explanations can be clearer and easier when accompanied by a diagram or figure, and it will show your committee that you have a good grasp of your subject matter and/or experimental predictions. Practice including figures and diagrams during your preparation, especially for any difficult methods or for your predictions.

As you get closer to the date of the comprehensive, it is highly recommended that you stage one or more practice exams with your labmates and other students. Present your talk and have your friends ask you questions, as in a real comprehensive exam. Your labmates will be able to probe you deeply with questions about your research area, and students less familiar with your field will help demonstrate gaps in your

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\* If the "comp" is conducted by Zoom, Teams, etc., do a dry run to make sure you're comfortable with the technology, including writing equations, structures, etc. for the committee members to view.

broader knowledge or perspectives you hadn't considered. Practice until you are comfortable. Think about inviting students from the labs of your committee members, as they may be able to give you a sneak peek into the particular questions and perspectives of their supervisors.

### **Research Proposal**

All students who undertake PhD studies in the Department must write and present an original research proposal, toward the end of the PhD. The research proposal is designed to give you experience writing and defending a proposal in preparation for applying to positions in academia or industry, where this is a routine expectation for PhD positions. The evaluating committee is a subset of the TAC (2 professors and the research supervisor).

The proposal is often given in the same meeting as the PhD Seminar (see below). *You must complete the research proposal (CHM 8958) and PhD seminar (CHM 8257) before you can submit your thesis for defense.*

**1. The Proposal topic** must be clearly different from that of the thesis, to permit assessment of the creativity of the student and their capacity for independent thinking. However, if the student has a truly outstanding and creative idea within their thesis topic, some flexibility is permitted. Novel aspects of the proposal should be clearly stated in the Introduction.

**2. Format:** the introduction should define the topic and show the importance, potential and general interest of the field. Critically review the literature and data in the area. The literature review should be no more than 30% of the whole document. The research proposal should be general, yet sufficiently detailed to enable assessment of feasibility. Maximum length: 6 single-spaced pages, plus 1 page for references (i.e. NSERC format).

**3. Short- and long-term objectives** should be clearly outlined, and the importance of the proposed research should be restated in the concluding remarks. The examiners will assess its potential impact and significance.

4. Summarize the resources required, in terms of personnel and equipment (minor and major).

5. Give a brief, convincing rationale (max 10 sentences) on the suitability of the project for graduate training. Make a case for why the proposed research would attract private- or public-sector funding.

### **Defending the Research Proposal**

The student will present an overview of the proposal (ca. 20 minutes) followed by a period of questions. The presentation and defense are held *in camera*; i.e., solely the committee and the candidate.

### **PhD Seminar (CHM 8257)**

The PhD seminar is a ca. 25-minute overview of your doctoral research, which must be presented at minimum 1 month prior to the thesis defense. Ideally, do it right before you really buckle down to writing your thesis. It offers an opportunity to decide on the overall narrative structure of the thesis: that is, to help you assemble your results into a coherent logical form *before* you start writing. It is also a check-point for your TAC to advise you on whether you're ready to write up, and to point out major "plot holes". They may also advise on writing resources.

It is strongly suggested that candidates present their PhD seminar (CHM 8257) immediately after defending the research proposal (see above); that is, in a single meeting.

### **Writing your Thesis.**

Also refer to: <https://www2.uottawa.ca/study/graduate-studies/thesis/writing-your-thesis>

The thesis is the written culmination of your graduate research. Once you have completed all the requirements of your degree, and you and your supervisor are satisfied that your thesis is complete, you will submit it for evaluation. All theses are examined in an oral defense.

### **Manuscript-Based Thesis**

The manuscript-based thesis is increasingly popular. If you are interested in writing your thesis this way, seek your supervisor's input and approval. The standard structure of such a thesis is as follows:

Chapter 1: The introductory chapter of a manuscript-based dissertation is an over-arching, unifying introduction to the dissertation as a whole. It must contain:

- Introduction
- Literature review
- Information enabling a trained researcher reading the chapter to develop sufficient understanding of the field to understand the theme and hypotheses of the dissertation
- Dissertation theme and objectives or hypotheses to be tested

Manuscript chapters. Each subsequent chapter, aside from the Conclusions, consists of the content of a manuscript (published, submitted, or nearly submitted). Importantly, however, a single, consistent format must be used (e.g. JACS style), and Chapters must be presented in a logical progression.

- Include an introductory Context section for each Chapter, to establish the overall flow within the thesis and to build a tie to previous Chapters
- If the paper was a Communication, in particular, you may have key details in the Supporting Information (SI). Any important elements in the SI, such as the Experimental Details or additional non-routine Figures, you should integrate into the Chapter
- If your SI contains routine spectra (e.g., for characterization), crystallographic details, etc., which are not critical to the discussion in the text, just give these in an Appendix, numbered to clearly show the connection to the Chapter.
- in some cases, subsequent developments in the field may change the Conclusions – this may be covered in the Context section, otherwise in a final “Subsequent Advances” section following the Chapter Conclusion. This should be discussed with your supervisor.
- Not every paper has to be included. if your contribution is minor, omit it. If you're not first author, you may not reproduce the whole paper in your thesis. Talk to your supervisor about what you will include. You must state your contribution (be specific, and do not overstate it) in the Context section.
- Got 15 papers? most examiners dislike reading a separate chapter for every paper. Integrate related papers within a given Chapter. Then the Context section is even more important (potentially as additional sections between the individual papers in a Chapter, to establish appropriate links).

Concluding Chapter: this is a significant part of a manuscript-based dissertation. It is NOT simply a summary of the manuscript chapters. It must include:

- A full analysis of the findings in the various chapters in light of current research in the field
- Discussion of the overall significance and contribution of the research to the field of study
- Discussion and conclusions relating the chapters to each other and the overall field
- Comments on strengths and weaknesses of the dissertation research
- Evaluation of current knowledge and proposals for new ideas related to the field of study

- Presentation of the status of relevant working hypotheses
- Discussion of any potential applications of the research findings
- Comprehensive and original analysis of future research directions in the field

Finally, ensure you respect copyright issues governing published work. All credible publishers make a special copyright exemption for graduate theses, but each has their own requirements for standard text that must be incorporated. Here is the link for the American Chemical Society, for example: <https://pubs.acs.org/pb-assets/acspubs/Migrated/dissertation.pdf>

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have met these requirements for the specific publishers of the journals or books in which your work appeared.

### **Submitting and Defending your Thesis**

*Defenses are open at uOttawa, and you will typically have attended other defenses from your research group throughout your graduate studies. If this is not the practice in your research group, it is strongly recommended that you take advantage of the “open defense” policy to attend at least one before submitting your thesis. As a courtesy, ask the candidate and research supervisor for permission first.*

### **How to Submit**

One month before submitting your thesis, you must propose a list of examiners. For PhD theses, one examiner should be from Carleton University, unless the thesis topic or language requirements make it impossible. Submit your list of examiners for approval by the Grad Director via a uoZone Service Request. In most cases, the examiners will be your TAC members.

- PhD students have an “arms-length” external examiner from outside uOttawa or Carleton, chosen by your supervisor in consultation with you. To demonstrate that there is no conflict of interest, you must upload the proposed external examiner’s complete CV with list of publications. You’ll note the formal requirements say you must suggest two externals, and they must be from North America. Don’t worry about either – virtual defenses have eliminated the “North America” restriction, and the Vice-Dean is OK with one proposed examiner, as long as there is no conflict (as indicated by, e.g., author lists in citations), and the examiner is clearly suitable in terms of stature and expertise.
- Forms for proposing thesis defense examiners are available on the Faculty of Science webpage [https://www2.uottawa.ca/study/sites/g/files/bhrskd296/files/2021-10/list-of-examiners-esup6000\\_e.pdf](https://www2.uottawa.ca/study/sites/g/files/bhrskd296/files/2021-10/list-of-examiners-esup6000_e.pdf) Submit the form as a uoZone Service Request.
- **The supervisor is responsible for confirming that all examiners, including the proposed external examiner, are willing to read the thesis.** But once the examiners are appointed, neither you nor your supervisor may discuss the thesis with them. This is a very serious point, mandated by the Senate to protect the integrity of the process (see Grad Regulation 7.10.3.2).
- For the MSc, there are 2 thesis examiners (both from uOttawa). For the PhD, there are 2 uOttawa examiners, 1 from Carleton (where possible), and 1 external.

Once your supervisor agrees the thesis is complete and ready to be examined, you will upload it as a pdf file through the “Service Request” application on uoZone (<http://uozone2.uottawa.ca/>)

- Click the “Create New Request” button, then choose “Research Related,” then “Submission of the thesis for evaluation.” If you don’t see this option, click “View All.”
- Your supervisor will see your submitted thesis as a Service Request and must approve it in uoZone. **If you’re submitting close to the no-tuition deadline for the term (see next section), TELL YOUR SUPERVISOR you’ve uploaded, so they can approve the service request in time!**
- If your examiners require a paper copy of the thesis, the Graduate Office will contact you and ask that you provide one or more copies of the thesis to the Chemistry grad office (Gendron 181).

- The examiners will read your thesis and submit a report to the Grad Office. They have 6 weeks from submission to assess a PhD thesis, 4 weeks for an MSc thesis. If they determine that the thesis is ready to proceed to the defense, you will receive an e-mail with their comments, and you will be asked if you wish to proceed to the defense or not. You will have 5 days to reply.
- Ideally, the examiners will recommend the thesis as suitable to proceed to the defense. However, if they indicate that the thesis is *not* suitable for defense in its present form, you must enter a request to either withdraw (let's hope not) or to amend the thesis. In either case, the initial decision of the examining committee would appear on your transcript as NS (not satisfactory). Students who request to amend the thesis must submit the revised version to the same jury within 3 consecutive terms, during which they must be enrolled. *All revisions to the original document must be clearly identified* in the revised thesis. *Warning:* if the thesis is deemed unacceptable to defend a second time, this triggers a mandatory withdrawal from the program.
- **Important:** You may not discuss your thesis with your examiners during the thesis evaluation process: this would breach the integrity of the examination process (Grad Regulation 7.10: Thesis Evaluation). Once your thesis is revised, upload it via uoZone – don't email your examiners, or otherwise contact them about it. The Grad Office will forward your thesis and schedule a defense date. *If your examiners' reports indicate that they **annotated** the thesis*, make sure you get a copy from the Grad Office.

### Thesis Submission Deadlines

If you successfully submit your thesis (with your supervisor's approval) before the start of a new semester, you do not have to register or pay tuition for the coming semester, if all other requirements are complete (courses, seminars, etc.) See: <https://www.uottawa.ca/important-academic-dates-and-deadlines/>

If you submit your thesis within the first month of the new semester (for official deadlines, see link above), the university refunds 100% of your tuition for that semester. The last day to pay tuition is the same day as this deadline (e.g., for fall 2021, both are Oct. 1). However, if you're close to the deadline, you're strongly recommended to pay the fees and then have them reimbursed, rather than counting on a large amount of administrative work being done in a few days. For example, it may take 1-2 weeks for prospective examiners to agree, during which late fees are added every day. Important for international students - make sure you've paid UHIP regardless.

If you submit your thesis after 1 month, but before 2 months, the university refunds 50% of the semester's tuition (not ancillary/incidental fees). It is your responsibility to request the refund, if applicable, via the form in your uoZone account.

Grad students who submit their thesis between Sept. 1 and Sept. 30 can have their U-Pass fee refunded by filling out an exemption form (<https://www2.uottawa.ca/current-students/upass/>) for a refund.

Remember, the official submission deadlines for each semester are available online at: <https://www.uottawa.ca/important-academic-dates-and-deadlines/>

### Defending your Thesis\*

On the day of the defense:

- You will give a ca. 15 minute presentation of your thesis research. Focus on the main discoveries to remind the examiners and try to address any major concerns raised in their comments

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\* If your defense is run by (e.g.) Zoom, the CBS Grad Assistant (the kind and very efficient Ms. Chloé Lagacé) will meet you by Zoom 30 min beforehand to walk you through the controls.

- The individual examiners will question you on your thesis, in two rounds
- At the end of the defense, everyone leaves the room except the examiners, who will consult to decide on the final verdict.

Possible verdicts:

1. *Pass with minor corrections (Verdict 1)* -- All examiner corrections and comments must be addressed and the final thesis submitted within 30 days of the defense. These corrections are normally overseen and approved by the supervisor. If your corrections take more than 30 days, you will automatically be registered for the semester. You will have pay the tuition fees and submit your revisions within 120 days of the defense.
2. *Pass with major corrections/revisions (Verdict 2)* – If your corrections take more than 30 days, you will automatically be registered for the semester. You will have to pay tuition, complete the revisions and submit the thesis within 120 days of the defense. In the closed discussion after the defense, the examiners will decide whether the revisions will be overseen by the supervisor alone, or whether one or more of the examiners must also approve them. In either case, you should list the comments and the actions you took to address them, with relevant page numbers (other than typos, which can just be shown with Track Changes). The process is very similar to manuscript revision.
3. *Thesis is not accepted* -- The thesis must be revised and evaluated again by the same jury of examiners, within 3 terms after the defense. A mark of NS (not satisfactory) will be entered in the system. The candidate must be registered as a student during this time, pay the tuition fees, and make satisfactory progress during each term.

If a thesis is not accepted after a second defense, the student must withdraw from the university. This is exceptionally rare, as your supervisor will generally not let you submit if they do not believe you are ready.

Revise your thesis based on your committee's comments and upload it as a service request for final approval. Once it is approved by your supervisor and the Grad Director, you will submit the final version to uO Research (RUOR): <https://www2.uottawa.ca/study/graduate-studies/thesis/final-submission>

**Important: if some of your work is not yet published, talk to your supervisor about requesting an embargo period (usually 1 or 2 years) before your thesis is made accessible to the public online.** This can be important to ensure you aren't "scooped" when your thesis shows up in a Google search. The request is easy - just complete the Embargo Request Form:

[https://ruor.uottawa.ca/help/RUOR\\_Embargo\\_Form\\_October2017.pdf](https://ruor.uottawa.ca/help/RUOR_Embargo_Form_October2017.pdf)

and submit it with your thesis using the service request "Approval Final Version of the Thesis" via uoZone. Once the service request is approved, deposit your thesis online through uO Research: <https://ruor.uottawa.ca/?locale=en> **Note: An embargo cannot be applied retroactively.**

**And lastly, apply for graduation!** <https://www.uottawa.ca/obtain-your-degree/convocation-ceremonies>  
You can do this via your uoZone account. You may get an invitation earlier: if so, go ahead and apply for your diploma even if you haven't yet completed the defense.

## Stipend and Funding FAQ

See also Funding and financing: <https://www2.uottawa.ca/study/graduate-studies/funding-financing>

### ***Do I get paid to do my degree?***

Graduate students in the Department of Chemistry are normally guaranteed an annual stipend so they can work full-time on their thesis research for the expected duration of their degree (5 terms for MSc if

you started Sept 2021; 6 terms if you started in May 2021 or earlier, or 4 years for PhD). The annual stipend is currently set at \$24,077 for both MSc and PhD. *You are guaranteed to be paid this much every year, up to the recommended degree duration.* It is possible to be paid more if you have a scholarship, but rarely otherwise (see below: How can I be paid more than my annual stipend?) All grad students normally work as teaching assistants (TAs: see “What is TAing?” below). If you’re a non-scholarship student, the TA contributes about half your stipend. Unless you have a major scholarship, your supervisor pays the rest via a Research Assistantship (RA). Stipend support is guaranteed up to the recommended degree duration. If you exceed that duration, your supervisor is not required to support you, and you may no longer be eligible for TA support. Thus stay on track. If you suspect you may take longer, discuss the situation with your supervisor to determine whether any funding is possible.

*Example 1:* If you are a non-scholarship MSc student, your TA pays about half your ca. \$24K stipend. Your TA (2 courses per term) earns you \$6K in fall and winter. Your supervisor pays \$2K in RA in each of the fall and winter terms, as well as your entire \$8K summer salary.

*Example 2:* If you are an MSc student with an OGS scholarship, the OGS contributes \$15,000 to your guaranteed \$24,077 stipend. You TA in the fall (2 units) and make \$6,038. Your supervisor provides a further \$4,000 in RA. You can formally apply to TA more, but then your supervisor is not obliged to provide the RA (remember, your supervisor is invested in your research success!)

*Example 3:* You are a PhD student with an NSERC PGSD scholarship awarding you \$21,000 a year. You TA a total of 2 units (say, 1 in fall, 1 in winter), bringing your stipend to \$27,038.

### ***When do I get my stipend?***

You will be paid for your TA and/or RA in direct deposits to your bank account on the 15th and final day of every month. You will need to send a direct deposit form to the Chemistry Office (STEM, room 342) to set up payment. If all the required documentation is completed on time, pay cycles generally start on September 15, January 15, and May 15. However, if you don’t complete the payment forms until after the term begins, you will likely receive your first paycheck from the university at the end of the month.

We try to keep the amount you receive per pay period consistent, so budgeting is easier (something the grad students requested many years ago). There can be exceptions – if, for example, if you TA an intensive (4-week) course, or receive a scholarship. When you are awarded an external scholarship (e.g. OGS, NSERC, or FQRNT), this will be split into lump-sum amounts for each semester and deposited into your university account at the start of each semester. From this will be deducted any fees and tuition you owe: if there is a credit (i.e. the total amount of scholarships exceeds the amount of fees/tuition), you will receive a reimbursement by e-transfer or as a cheque sent to your mailing address in the second or third week of the semester. You can check your account balance at any time through the “Statement of Account” application on uoZone (<http://uozone2.uottawa.ca/>).

*Example 1:* You are a Canadian MSc student who started in September 2021, and your ca. \$24K stipend is funded through a TA plus RA. You begin your TA in September and your first paycheck arrives by direct deposit on Sept. 15. You will be paid every 2 weeks throughout the year. You TA 2 courses in both fall and winter, earning ca. \$12K in TA,\* and your supervisor pays your RA (a direct bursary) of \$12K. Out of this you pay tuition (<https://www.uottawa.ca/university-fees/>) unless your admission GPA was ≥80% and you were awarded a uOttawa Grad Admission Scholarship.

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\* Note that while you are not guaranteed 2 TA units each term (see “How are teaching assistant positions assigned, and am I guaranteed a position?” below), this is the norm. However it’s distributed, you’re guaranteed \$24K in Year 1, and \$16K in Terms 4 and 5 of the MSc. See comments above re the reduced duration of the MSc degree.



You're enjoying and doing well in your research and courses, and request transfer to the PhD program for Term 4, with the support of your supervisor and TAC. You have 6 credits of grad courses with a grade of  $\geq A^-$ , your TAC attests to strong research performance, and your GPA is  $>80\%$  in your last 30 credits. Thus you will be considered for the \$9K Admission Scholarship: if you receive it, this essentially eliminates tuition for 4 years. **Important:** research performance is a key consideration for Grad Admission Scholarships. We are still figuring out how to best manage the quotas introduced in spring 2022, but a top priority is supporting fast-track students who are emerging as excellent researchers.

Example 2: You are a Canadian PhD student, with an OGS scholarship and an Admission Scholarship of \$9K, which pays your tuition. The OGS award contributes \$15K toward your stipend; your supervisor pays an RA of \$5K, and you earn another \$6K from your TA (1 unit in both fall and winter; i.e. you carry half the TA of a non-scholarship student). Thus your net income is \$26K. You will receive your OGS in 3 payments of \$5K each, at the start of the fall, winter, and summer terms. At the beginning of term, your student account should show the tuition owed, your tuition fee credit from the Admission Scholarship, and a \$5K credit from OGS.

Example 3: You are a Canadian MSc student who entered in September 2022 with an OGS scholarship of \$15K per year and an Admission Scholarship of ca. \$6K, which covers ca. 70% of tuition for 3 terms. The OGS contributes \$15K; your supervisor pays a \$4K RA, and you will earn another \$6K from your TA (2 units total, i.e. 130 hours distributed over fall and/or winter), for a take-home income of \$21. In year 2, terms 4 and 5, the Faculty and your supervisor step in to help defray tuition: the Faculty Soft-Funded Scholarship in Term 4 and your supervisor will pay an extra \$2K on top of the RA. (Approved by departmental vote in Fall 2021). If you fast-track in Term 4, see example 1.

### **How do I pay tuition?**

See: <https://www.uottawa.ca/financial-resources/student-accounts/method-payment>

You will receive an email to your student email address each semester when tuition and fees are charged to your account. You can also view outstanding charges to your student account at any time, by clicking on "Statement of Account" on the "Finances and jobs" tab of uoZone (<http://uozone2.uottawa.ca/>). Any tuition scholarships you are awarded should be applied to your account automatically. If you are not receiving your scholarship money, visit the grad office (GNN 181) or email [gradsci@uottawa.ca](mailto:gradsci@uottawa.ca). Students with partial scholarships or without scholarships can transfer money to their student account to pay tuition. You can also pay by cheque at InfoService (in Tabaret Hall) or in person at your personal bank or the National Bank branch at 232 Rideau St, by following the instructions on the web page linked above.

As an alternative to paying tuition and fees up-front as a lump sum, you can pay tuition in 3 installments throughout the semester, without interest, via the "Payment Plan for Graduate Students" (<https://www.uottawa.ca/financial-resources/student-accounts/payment-plan>). To qualify for the plan, you must have a TA contract or RA contract at the university (see "What is TAing?" below), and not owe any debt to the university. Email a copy of your contract to [finance@uottawa.ca](mailto:finance@uottawa.ca) or bring it to the financial office at Tabaret 021, and they will enroll you in this payment plan.

Make sure you know when tuition payments are due. See "Tuition fee payment" at <https://www.uottawa.ca/important-academic-dates-and-deadlines/>. If you miss the deadline, you will be charged \$60, plus interest on the remaining balance. For more information on late payments, see <https://www.uottawa.ca/financial-resources/student-accounts/paymentdates>.

### ***Does my stipend cover tuition?***

For Canadian citizens or permanent residents, tuition is ca. \$9K (MSc or PhD) per year: see <https://www.uottawa.ca/university-fees>. (For international students, see below). You will need to pay tuition from your stipend. However, if you are entering the PhD with a strong record of research performance and a GPA of  $\geq 8$ , you are eligible for consideration for an Admission Scholarship of \$3,000 per term for the 4-year recommended duration of the PhD. For international PhD students, this is on top of the International Doctoral Scholarship; see below. In either case, it covers tuition, though not incidental fees such as GSEAD, UPASS, UHIP, etc.

MSc students with an entrance GPA of  $>8$  will be considered for an Admission Scholarship of \$2K for Terms 1-4 (initially from the University, then from the Faculty; see Example 3 above), then \$2K in Term 5 (CHM scholarship; from your supervisor).

MSc students without an Admission Scholarship pay full tuition.... :(

Keep in mind that you do not need to pay tuition once you submit your thesis. However, if you receive a verdict of “major revisions” in your defense, you will need to pay the full cost of tuition while you revise your thesis (see “Submitting and Defending Your Thesis” above).

*For international MSc students, tuition is about \$28K a year as of Sept. 2021, including incidental fees. For up-to-date tuition information, see <https://www.uottawa.ca/university-fees/>.*

*Since 2018, international PhD students receive a uO International Doctoral Scholarship of \$9K a year, which brings their tuition to the level of non-scholarship Canadians. New: as of Sept. 2021, if their admission GPA is  $\geq 8$ , they will be considered for an International Doctoral Admission Scholarship (ca. \$9K a year).*

### ***Can I be paid more than my annual stipend?***

Yes, if you have an OGS or NSERC scholarship: e.g. an NSERC CGSD scholar makes \$41K, and a CGSM scholar makes \$26K. In principle you could make more by TAing, but this is rare, because the department does not normally assign a full TA to scholarship holders.

Example: If you're an MSc student with an OGS award, you make ca. \$25K with your RA and a 2-unit TA (130 hours). If you're able to TA in French, you could probably apply for and receive 2 TA units in fall and winter. The TA would then bring in an extra \$6K. But: bear in mind this will reduce the time you have for research -- that's precious time, and what you're truly here for. If you're thinking of doing this, discuss it with your supervisor and your TAC, so nobody has unwelcome surprises.

### ***Can I still apply for OSAP?***

OSAP = Ontario Student Assistance Program, <https://www.ontario.ca/page/osap-ontario-student-assistance-program>

Even though you have a guaranteed stipend, and even if you have OGS, NSERC, or other scholarship awards, Canadian citizens and permanent residents can still apply to the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) for loans to be repaid, and for grants/bursaries (which do not need to be repaid). After applying for OSAP and finding out if you qualify and for how much, you can choose to accept the offered loans and bursaries, OR only the bursaries. If you have questions related to OSAP funding, email [loansandawards@uOttawa.ca](mailto:loansandawards@uOttawa.ca).

### ***Do I need to pay taxes on my stipend?***

Full-time grad students often receive refunds on their tax returns, so file your taxes! This is a legal requirement for working in Canada. Scholarships like OGS and NSERC are not taxed, and you will likely not

make enough money from your TA to owe taxes on this amount. However, there are various tuition tax credits, public transit tax credits, and provincial credits that you can apply for on filing your income tax return to obtain a refund. Income tax forms related to scholarships, tuition, and TAing can be downloaded from the Income Tax Form on uoZone (<https://uozone2.uottawa.ca/content/income-tax-form>).

### ***Can I be employed outside the university?***

No – not if you are being paid for TA/RA. The Graduate Regulations restrict full-time grad students to  $\leq 10$  hours of paid work per week outside their thesis research, which includes the TA. If you're not TAing 2 units in a semester, you could potentially work at a part-time job, but you may not exceed 10 hours a week of non-thesis work. This restriction is designed to ensure that you have the time to conduct quality research and submit your thesis in a timely manner. If you need to work  $>10$  hours a week at a part-time job outside your thesis research, you must obtain approval from your supervisor and TAC, and submit the form "Exception to the 10 hours rule" in a service request through uoZone. **Important:** *read the fine print* concerning limits on the permitted duration of any such exception – this is part of the CUPE 2626 COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT: <https://hrdochrh.uottawa.ca/info/en-ca/cupe/policies.html>  
International students are responsible for confirming whether their student visa allows them to work legally in Canada outside the University. Check with the International Office.

## **Teaching Assistantship (TA) FAQ**

### ***What is TAing?***

See Teaching Assistantships | Faculty of Science: <https://www2.uottawa.ca/faculty-science/student-life-services/teaching-assistantships>

Most grad students in the department work as TAs during their degree. This forms part of their stipend and gives university teaching experience. It is an important contribution to your training and departmental activities, but you must balance it against your primary goal: productivity and excellence in research.

There are generally 2 types of TA positions: lab demonstrators/correctors or Discussion group leaders /correctors (who lead undergrads through labs and correct lab reports, or run discussion groups and grade assignments and exams), and course correctors (who mark undergrad midterm and final exams, and course assignments). Teaching assistantship contracts are measured as units (these have nothing to do with course weighting units -- confusing, sorry!) **One TA unit represents either 65 hours of lab or Discussion group work, or 90 hours of course correction work.** The difference in hours is due to the additional work, including preparation, for TAs who have direct contact with undergrads. All TA positions (lab/discussion demos and course correctors) make ca. \$3K per unit.

### ***How do I apply to TA positions?***

TA applications open well before the fall and winter semesters begin; usually July for Fall positions and October for Winter positions. You will receive an email when they open, so watch your uOttawa email inbox for notification around these times. There is only one round of applications to TA positions per semester. All students must apply during the posting period, via the Human Resources website (<https://erp-forms.uottawa.ca/uohmsweb/cupe.aspx?lang=en>). Complete a single application for all positions you're applying for, to a maximum of 4 choices. You can request either 2 units of 65 hours (2 labs), or 1 unit of 65 hours and 1 unit of 90 hours (i.e. 1 lab, 1 lecture). You cannot request 2 corrector positions in a given term, as this would exceed the maximum of 10 TA hours you can work in a week.

**Important:** don't apply to positions indiscriminately! This delays TA assignment for everyone. Apply for maximum 4-5 TA positions you're actually interested in -- AND only positions you're qualified to TA. Every

year, some grad students apply for TA positions, then decline offers when they realize they're not qualified (e.g., applying to TA an organic chemistry lab, but don't know how to set up a reflux; applying to TA a French section but don't speak French). Be kind to others -- read the details before you apply. Note: in principle you can apply for TA positions in other departments (e.g., environmental science, earth sciences, or physics, IF you're qualified), but most departments give preference to their own students.

If there is a particular course you'd like to TA, contact the professor or lab coordinator before applying and ask them to recommend you for the position. If they have worked with you before and you did a good job, or they think you would be a good TA for the course, they may tell you to indicate on the TA application that they recommended you for hire. This "recommended for hire" generally appears as a box you can tick during the application process, and can increase the odds that you are chosen for the position.

***How are teaching assistant positions assigned, and am I guaranteed a position?***

First, you must apply to at least one position. After the application period closes, the departmental TA Assignment Committee assigns units according to the entitlement and hiring priorities set out in the collective agreement with CUPE 2626, including whether you are within 2 years of your MSc, or 4 years of your PhD. Once these criteria are met, the department matches student with positions based on the amount of external funding you have (students with less funding are favoured, so the Departmental can honour the stipend commitment). Students without major scholarships (e.g. OGS, NSERC, or FRQNT) will usually be given 2 TA units per semester, after which the remaining TA assignments are distributed among students with scholarships, and students who have exceeded the recommended degree duration. Because of the limited number of TA positions, students with major scholarships may not receive any TA units in one term. In this case they will normally receive 2 units the following term. As noted above, Chemistry grad students can also apply for TA positions in other departments, such as environmental science, earth science, and physics. If you are qualified, this can be another way to increase your chances of getting a full TA load. Units obtained in another department count towards your entitlement.

From the time you accept a TA or RA contract until 12 months after the contract ends (as long as you're still a student), you are a member of CUPE 2626 (Canadian Union of Public Employees: see "What is CUPE?" below). The university is required to offer you, as a CUPE member, at least 130 hours of employment annually (generally equivalent to 2 TA units). This could mean 2 units in the fall, or 1 unit in fall and 1 in winter, or 2 units in the winter. If you applied to TA in both semesters, but did not receive at least 2 units throughout the year, contact the Administrative Officer of the Chemistry Department.

***Can I TA in French?***

Absolutely, as long as you have the required competence in speaking, reading, and writing scientific content in French. You will TA or mark students from a variety of backgrounds who will expect you to be able to understand and answer their questions in French. Historically, the Department has too few francophone TAs, so NSERC and OGS holders are more likely to receive 2 TA units if they apply to TA positions requiring French. The TA Assignment Committee strongly encourages bilingual graduate students to apply to French positions.

***How much work is TAing going to be?***

TAs are meant to work no more than 10 hours a week, on average, throughout the term. In reality, the TA workload is variable. Some weeks you will need to dedicate 30 hours to TA responsibilities, and other weeks you will not do any TA-related work. The TA job description varies between courses due to the diverse type of jobs available. Some students may find TAing a burden, especially when given 2 units in a semester, while other students may find TAing very enjoyable and manageable. You should record your

hours worked during your TA to ensure they do not exceed your contract hours. If hours worked exceed hours contracted, you must contact your TA supervisor to discuss options (i.e., paying extra hours or ending the contract). If you are being efficient, and think you are being pressured to consistently work more than 10 hours a week, or within unreasonable deadlines, discuss it with the department Chair. If you cannot resolve the issue with your supervisor and/or the Chair, you should contact the departmental CUPE union stewards (to get contact information for your CUPE stewards, email [chemistrygsa@gsaed.ca](mailto:chemistrygsa@gsaed.ca)).

### ***How much do I have to TA?***

Generally you are expected to TA if you do not have a scholarship that covers your stipend. Each fall and winter semester you can apply for 1 or 2 units of TA work. The TA positions are not guaranteed, but the department works hard to accommodate everyone's needs.

### ***What is proctoring?***

Every TA unit includes proctoring (invigilating) a final exam. The final exam periods are usually Dec. 5–20, and April 5–26 (see <https://www.uottawa.ca/important-academic-dates-and-deadlines/>). You will be randomly assigned a final exam, usually 3 hours long, during this period. It is part of your TA contract to show up and monitor this exam under the guidance of a senior proctor (professor). If you know you cannot be present for your assigned proctoring duty, inform the Chemistry office by email as soon as possible ([chminfo@uottawa.ca](mailto:chminfo@uottawa.ca)); find a replacement, and find a proctoring assignment that works for you (e.g. switch with another TA). If you will not be present for the entire December or April exam period, contact the Chemistry office by email as soon as possible. You can be assigned to proctor any exam in the Faculty of Science in French or English, but you will not need to answer questions on the exam content.

### ***What's CUPE?***

Every student who TAs becomes a part of the Canadian Union of Public Employees, Local 2626 (CUPE 2626: <http://www.2626.ca/>) for up to 12 months after the end of their TA contract. CUPE 2626 represents all teaching assistants, research assistants, markers, and other student employees at the university and offers several sources of financial aid (for non-thesis related conference travel, emergencies, and non-insured medical costs, among other things). They also provide services for students who want to file a grievance against their employer.

## **International Students - Special considerations**

- ***Student Visas*** -- To attend university in Canada, you must have a student visa and/or study permit, depending what country you're from. See the Canada Immigration and Citizenship website at <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/immigration-citizenship.html>. When your student visa expires or your studies end, you will no longer be able to stay in Canada under the visa.  
*IMPORTANT: If you are an international MSc student who fast-tracks to PhD, you must renew your study permit or visa to reflect the new "expected duration" of your degree. If your visa expires during a semester, you will not be able to accept TA contracts that semester, so renew it before then.*
- ***Social Insurance Numbers*** -- International students must obtain a temporary Social Insurance Number (SIN) to work in Canada, including as TAs. You can get one at the Service Canada office in City Hall (110 Laurier Avenue West, just over the Laurier bridge: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/sin/apply.html>)
- ***University Health Insurance Plan*** <https://international.uottawa.ca/en/study-at-uottawa/uhip/international.uottawa.ca/en/study-at-uottawa/uhip/ohip>  
International students are required to pay for UHIP health insurance through the university. This insurance plan covers basic medical services but not dental care or prescriptions, which fall under the grad student Green Shield insurance (see "Perks" at the end of the document).

Some scholarships are available to both Canadian and international students (for example, the OGS and all Departmental scholarships). A few scholarships and grants at the federal and provincial level are specifically targeted to international students, as are several Departmental scholarships. For more information, see Appendix B: Scholarships and Grants.

## Appendix A: Program Specializations

See also: [Graduate Studies in Chemistry and Biomolecular Sciences | Faculty of Science \(uottawa.ca\)](https://www.uottawa.ca/graduate-studies/chemistry-and-biomolecular-sciences) In addition to the standard graduate programs in Chemistry, the Department of Chemistry offers 2 specialized degrees for MSc students, and 1 for PhD students. Each involves a research project related to the theme of the specialization, and has course requirements that differ slightly from the standard program.

### ***MSc Specialization in Science, Society and Policy***

Research relating to science, society and policy, carried out under the supervision of a faculty member in Chemistry or participating in the science, society and policy collaborative program. As well:

- You must take *ISP5101 Decision at the Interface of Science and Policy*, in addition to the 6 course units in Chemistry grad courses of your choosing
- CHM 8256 MSc Seminar in Chemistry
- THM 7999 Thesis

### ***MSc Specialization in Chemical and Environmental Toxicology***

Toxicology research, carried out under the supervision of a faculty member participating in the chemical and environmental toxicology collaborative program.

- In addition to 3 course units in Chemistry graduate courses of your choosing, you must take either
  - TOX8156 *Principles of Toxicology*, or
  - TOX9104 *Ecotoxicology*
- TOX9105 *Seminar in Toxicology*
- CHM 8256 *MSc Seminar in Chemistry*
- THM 7999 or THD 9999 Thesis

### ***PhD Specialization in Chemical and Environmental Toxicology***

Toxicology research, carried out under the supervision of a faculty member participating in the chemical and environmental toxicology collaborative program.

- In addition to 3 course units in Chemistry graduate courses of your choosing, you must take either
  - TOX8156 *Principles of Toxicology*, or
  - TOX9104 *Ecotoxicology*
- TOX9105 *Seminar in Toxicology* (PhD students who completed TOX9105 for the MSc specialization are exempted from taking it again)
- CHM 9998 Comprehensive Exam
- CHM 8958 Research Proposal
- THD 9999 Thesis

## Appendix B: Scholarships & Grants

See [Funding and financing | University of Ottawa \(uottawa.ca\)](https://www.uottawa.ca/funding-and-financing)

Below I list the departmental and faculty awards (\$3,000-\$8,000), then the major external awards.

There are many internal and external scholarships you can apply for via the “Online Scholarships and Bursaries” application on uoZone. Many scientific societies and non-profit agencies also have scholarships you can seek out, and grants that could provide support for your research (e.g. travel to field sites, conferences, etc.) Apply for them!! You will see others at the link above: some are small, but an extra \$100 helps your wallet, and any award listed on your CV is a good thing!

Internal scholarships:

Name	Eligibility	Amount	Admin By	Deadline
Keith Fagnou Memorial	all	\$5,000	Dept	Oct 31
Tito Scaiano Fund	Canadians & Landed Immigrants	\$5,000	Dept	Oct 31
Tito Scaiano Fund (Int'l)	International Students	\$8,000	Dept	Mar 31
Hans Helmut Baer	International	\$3,500	Dept	Mar31
Dr. Yu (MSc)	Entry scholarship international MSc	\$9,000	Dept	Oct. 23
Dr. Yu (PhD)	Entry scholarship international PhD	\$15,000	Dept	Feb. 1
Denis Vézina	all	\$3,500	Faculty	Oct 31

### **Scholarships for Canadian Students (Citizens & Permanent Residents)**

For major external scholarships (OGS, NSERC, FQRNT), you should apply in the fall term of the year before you begin graduate work. For students starting in September, this means applying the fall before. Students starting in January should apply in the fall *TWO* calendar years before (e.g. in Fall 2019 if you plan to begin in Jan 2021). Note that PhD students can apply for these scholarship each fall throughout their degree.

Major external scholarships include: (More info available through the links)

- *NSERC/CIHR*
- <https://www2.uottawa.ca/etudes/etudes-superieures/financement/prix/bourses-etudes-superieures-canada-maitrise-irsc-crsng-crsh> \$17,500/year (CGSM; MSc: sadly, NSERC appears to have cut their standard PGSM MSc scholarships), \$21,000/year (PhD; PGSD) or \$35,000/year (PhD; CGSD).
  - Acronyms: PGS = postgraduate; M or D = master’s or doctoral; CGS = Canada graduate scholar; the latter awards are made to the top scholars Canada-wide)
- *OGS (Ontario Graduate Scholarship)*
  - [Ontario Scholarships : OGS and QEII | University of Ottawa \(uottawa.ca\)](#) \$15,000/year
  - Available to both MSc and PhD students
  - [OGS and QEII-GSST Application Portal - Step by Step Instructions | University of Ottawa \(uottawa.ca\)](#)
- *FQRNT (Fonds québécois de la recherche sur la nature et les technologies)*
  - [Fonds de recherche du Québec | University of Ottawa \(uottawa.ca\)](#)
  - \$17,500/year (MSc), \$21,000/year (PhD)
  - Applicants must be Canadian citizens who live in Quebec
- *Queen Elizabeth II graduate scholarships in science and technology*
  - [Ontario Scholarships : OGS and QEII | University of Ottawa \(uottawa.ca\)](#)
  - \$15,000/year (MSc and PhD), with one-third from a sponsor (industry, private or other)

- *Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship*
    - <https://research.uottawa.ca/rms/researchers-resources/external-sources/vanier>
    - \$50,000/year; available to Canadian or international PhD Students
    - Applicants must be nominated by the university
  - *Mitacs Globalink*
    - <https://www.mitacs.ca/en/programs/globalink>
    - \$6,000 to support students who come from abroad to study in Canada (or vice versa)
- And many more!!

### **Scholarships for International Students**

- *OGS (Ontario Graduate Scholarship)*
  - [Ontario Scholarships : OGS and QEII | University of Ottawa \(uottawa.ca\)](#) \$15,000/year
  - Available to both MSc and PhD students
  - [OGS and QEII-GSST Application Portal - Step by Step Instructions | University of Ottawa \(uottawa.ca\)](#)
- *Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship*
  - <https://research.uottawa.ca/rms/researchers-resources/external-sources/vanier>
  - \$50,000/year
  - Available to international PhD students
  - Applicants are nominated by the university
- *Ontario Trillium Scholarship*
  - [Awards and financial support | University of Ottawa \(uottawa.ca\)](#) \$40,000/year
  - Available to international PhD students only
- *Mitacs Globalink*
  - [Globalink Research Award | Mitacs](#) \$6,000 to come from abroad for research in Canada (or to go for research abroad)
- *Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)*
  - <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/afsa>
  - \$US citizens can apply to FAFSA for financial aid for graduate studies abroad
- *Fulbright Student Awards*
  - [Awards for Canadian Students | Fulbright Canada](#) Fulbright and Fulbright Canada offer research and study awards for Canadian citizens to study in the US, and US citizens to study in Canada

The BMO bursary supports PhD students in financial need. Preference will be given to students in their 5<sup>th</sup> year of study, but I have seen students get it even in their 2<sup>nd</sup> year. See:

<https://uottawa.syntosolution.com/api/downloadDocumentation/9148>

For a full listing of scholarships and bursaries available through uOttawa, see <https://uottawa.syntosolution.com/general-directory>

To apply, see: <https://www.uottawa.ca/financial-aid-awards/online-scholarships-and-bursaries>

### **Conference travel funding**

MSc and PhD students are highly encouraged to present their work at conferences throughout their degrees. Talk to your supervisor to discuss how many conferences they will be willing to fund for you, and what they will cover (e.g. airline tickets, conference registration, and accommodations are usually covered, but what about food, bus/taxi/Uber between airports/hotels/conference centers?). You can apply for one or more conference travel grants (see below) to help offset costs.



Generally, all conference reimbursements and grants require:

- Itemized receipts for purchases being reimbursed, or a Missing Receipt Affidavit. Provide your detailed flight itinerary, ticket invoice, etc. Boarding passes are not required, if there is proof of travel.
- Credit card or bank statement records (evidence that you personally paid for the purchase)
- Proof that you attended the conference (e.g. program with your name, conference nametag)

Travel reimbursement forms can be found at <https://www.uottawa.ca/financial-resources/accounting/>

### List of conference and travel grants:

*Travel grant via Faculty of Science Graduate Office*

See <https://www2.uottawa.ca/faculty-science/student-life-services/conference-travel-grants>

This is the primary travel grant for conference travel. It provides up to \$500 (for travel costs only); the eligible amount varies depending on how far away the conference is. MSc students are allowed 1 of these travel grants during their degree, and PhD students up to 2. Students who have fast-tracked into a PhD are allowed up to 3 of these conference grants. You must apply before you go, and there are forms to fill out before and after the conference.

*GSAÉD Academic Project Fund*

See <http://gsaed.ca/individual-academic-project-fund/>

The Graduate Students Association (GSAÉD) provides a travel grant of up to \$100 a day (for up to 4 days) of travel-related expenses. This is used primarily for conferences, although it can be used for other academic projects as well. MSc students can receive 1 GSAÉD travel award, while PhDs can receive 2. You apply for these funds *after* the conference. You must receive funds from other sources as well.

*CUPE Conference grant:* [http://www.2626.ca/your-rights/funding/#conference\\_fund](http://www.2626.ca/your-rights/funding/#conference_fund)

The Canadian Union of Public Employees offers a conference grant for **non-thesis related** research. It covers all travel expenses up to \$800 per award. There is no limit on how many CUPE conference grants you can receive, but priority is given to students who have never received one. You cannot request support from the CUPE Conference grant if you will receive funding for the same meeting from the Faculty of Science. Applications must be submitted at least 2 weeks before leaving for the conference.

*Society grants*

The hosting societies or organizers of a conference sometimes offer Student Travel Grants. The deadlines for these are generally around the early-bird conference registration deadline, and applicants usually need to show they have applied (or are planning to apply) to other external sources of funding.

### **Research travel funding**

There are a few sources of funding to help you travel for research overseas, for example to collaborate with another researcher or an industry partner. Below are a few.

*Faculty of Science Research Travel Grant:*

<https://www2.uottawa.ca/faculty-science/student-life-services/research-travel-grants>

The Faculty offers a grant of up to \$550 to support thesis-related research for full-time MSc and PhD students. You can receive only 1 such award during the degree. Eligible students will have completed 2 terms (MSc) or 3 terms (PhD), but not yet exceeded 6 terms (MSc) or 12 terms (PhD). Your application must include an estimated budget and describe how the research stay is related to your thesis. Your supervisor must indicate support. Applications must be submitted before the travel takes place.

*uOttawa PhD Student International Research Scholarship*

[PhD Student International Research Scholarship | University of Ottawa \(uottawa.ca\)](https://www.uottawa.ca/graduate-studies/graduate-student-international-research-scholarship) Domestic PhD students in their 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> year can apply for a Student Mobility bursary to support a research stay of 3 months or more at a foreign institution. Depending on the proposed budget, students can receive up to \$4,000 to cover the exchange. Students should submit their application at least 1 month in advance. The application includes a description of the research to be conducted (1-2 pages), a letter of support from the thesis supervisor (½ - 1 page), a letter of invitation from the host researcher (½ - 1 page), an CV, and a brief budget. Deadlines are usually March 1 and Oct. 1.

*MITACS Globalink Research Award:*

<https://www.mitacs.ca/en/programs/globalink/globalink-research-award>

Mitacs provides \$6,000 for graduate students in Canada to conduct 12–24-week research projects at universities overseas. Applications are open year-round but should be completed about 4 months prior to travel. Your supervisor and the host supervisor should work with you on the application.

*MITACS Accelerate Award:*

<https://www.mitacs.ca/en/programs/accelerate>

This award supports for faculty collaborations of longer durations, via student stipends for internships at partner organizations.

## Appendix C: Resources and Perks for Grad Students

### *Life Outside the Lab!*

The Chemistry & Biomolecular Sciences Grad Student Association (CBGSA) <https://uottawacgsa.wordpress.com/buddy-program/> seeks to bring together grad students throughout the department, to help build relationships and networks, have fun, and expand your life beyond research. The CBGSA organizes activities throughout the year: a mixer once a term (i.e. 3x per year – in person again this year!), a Hallowe'en pumpkin-carving context; a December holiday party (in 2019, this took the form of a potluck followed by movie afternoon in the departmental seminar room, in part to ensure an inclusive, “non-pub” occasion); biweekly coffee clubs and Friday summer bbq's, rounded off by the Summer Chemistry Olympics. Discussions are under way between the CBGSA and the Grad Director about mechanisms to promote mingling of different research groups, both casual (e.g. via sports or other means – karaoke!), and networking events with faculty and industry. The CBGSA runs a mentoring “[buddy program](#)” that pairs up incoming and senior grad students, with the intention of making the transition easier and more enjoyable. Join the CBGSA Slack space via this link:

[https://join.slack.com/t/uottawacbs-grad/shared\\_invite/zt-14n9nhqwg-AucCTiV0SFVG6VJZBqaPAQ](https://join.slack.com/t/uottawacbs-grad/shared_invite/zt-14n9nhqwg-AucCTiV0SFVG6VJZBqaPAQ)

New students are invited to join and ask questions and make connections even prior to arrival.

### *Other Resources*

*Chemistry Departmental Office* (<https://science.uottawa.ca/Chemistry/>)

The Departmental Office is in the STEM Complex, Room 342. The staff are friendly, and enjoy interacting with and helping grad students in the department. (Make sure you introduce yourself to Annette Campeau, in particular – she is our Admin Officer, who does all the contracts, and she misses interacting with grad students since the department office moved to STEM). They will give you information related to teaching assistantships (TAs), reimbursements, stipends, room bookings, etc. This is also where you go to get your lab/office keys and building keycard. I repeat, they love you and are happy to help.

*Graduate Studies Office* (<https://science.uottawa.ca/en/programs-of-study/graduate-studies>)

The Grad Office is in Gendron Hall, Room 181. We have a wonderful Academic Officer, Chloé Lagacé, who handles much of the grad admin work for CBS. Here you can ask questions about academic requirements, courses, course registration, scholarships, comprehensive exams, defenses, seminars, etc.

### *Mental Health Resources*

Via the university: <https://www2.uottawa.ca/campus-life/health-wellness>

Via the uO Grad Society: <https://gsaed.ca/en/services/> and <https://gsaed.ca/en/mentalhealth/>

Many mental health resources are available to grad students, and most of them are free: see webpage links above. If you, a friend, or a family member are experiencing a mental health crisis, the Ottawa Mental Health Crisis Line can be reached 24 hours a day at 613-722-6914 or 1-866-996-0991.

*University of Ottawa Human Rights Office* at <https://www.uottawa.ca/respect/en>

We have a Human Rights office on campus at 1 Steward St., close to Tabaret. They're here to help if you need them, and will accept appointments by email or phone. Reach them at: [respect@uOttawa.ca](mailto:respect@uOttawa.ca) or 613-562-5800 extension 5222. They will also consult informally.

*University of Ottawa Health Services* (<https://www.uottawa.ca/health/>)

There is a clinic on campus at 100 Marie Curie, close to the Chemistry buildings. The clinic accepts walk-ins, although the wait can be long if you don't make an appointment. You can also register with a primary care physician on the website above. Also at that link is a list of health services offered by the university beyond primary care.

*Academic Writing Help Center* (<https://uottawa.saea-tlss.ca/en/academic-gps>)

The University's Academic Writing Help Center provides appointments with professional writing advisors, who can help you learn to identify and correct writing mistakes in French or English.

*Fitness Centres* (<https://www2.uottawa.ca/campus-life/athletics-recreation>)

There are 2 gyms on campus, one in Montpetit Hall and the other in the Minto Sports Complex. Grad students have access to both, including the Olympic-sized swimming pool in Montpetit. All full-time students have memberships that permit them to use the fitness centers and sports facilities free of charge (included in tuition).

*CUPE Grievances* (<http://www.2626.ca/get-help/grievances/>)

If you believe your employer has violated your rights as a worker, you may file a grievance through CUPE 2626. They can help you to decide whether to file a grievance and support you through the process. Grievances can pertain to candidate selection, exceeding the allotted number of work hours in your contract, harassment, discrimination, evaluation procedures, health and safety, employment entitlements, and many other rights and privileges established by Canadian laws and the CUPE 2626 collective agreement with the University of Ottawa.

*Foot Patrol* (<https://www.seuo-uosu.com/services/foot-patrol/>)

Foot patrol is a student-run, volunteer-based safe walk service offered to all students and members of the university community. The Foot Patrol will accompany you anywhere within a 45 minute walking radius of campus, including along several bus routes.

*Finding Housing (On campus and off)*

The University provides some student housing for upper-year students, including graduate students. While this can be convenient, it is also much more expensive than most off-campus housing. Ask your labmates for suggestions about good areas and opportunities. Common sites for searching for off-campus housing include kijiji.ca (<https://www.kijiji.ca/h-ottawa/1700185> - arguably the most popular), craigslist (<https://ottawa.craigslist.org/>); uOttawa also has a Student Housing billboard (<https://web5.uottawa.ca/rezweb/search.php>).

### **U-Pass**

See (<https://www2.uottawa.ca/current-students/upass>)

The student transit pass (U-Pass) gives you unlimited use of OCTranspo buses (Ottawa), STO buses (Gatineau), ParaTranspo shuttles, and the LRT or O-train. A U-Pass fee is automatically charged to your account twice a year: once in September, for the fall and winter semesters, and once in May, for the summer semester. When you arrive, get your pass at the UCU Student Lounge in the basement of the University Centre. Twice a year, in fall and summer, reactivate your pass at the recharging station kiosks across from the book store in the University Centre.

You can opt out of the U-Pass program for a period if you cannot use the transit system. For example, students who live outside the OCTranspo & STO service area, cannot ride the bus for medical reasons, or

are conducting research outside the Ottawa-Gatineau region for at least 60 days can opt out. For more information, see <https://www2.uottawa.ca/current-students/upass/exemptions>

Grad students who submit their thesis between the start of term and Sept. 30 can have their U-Pass fee refunded, but this is not automatic: fill out an exemption form (above) to get your refund.

### ***Green Shield Health Insurance***

See <https://www.greenshield.ca/en-ca/student-centre>

In addition to any provincial or private insurance of their own, grad students are provided health insurance by GSAÉD and CUPE 2626. This insurance plan, through Green Shield Canada, covers various medical needs, including contraceptives, dental services, and eyeglasses. For the full range of benefits, see the website above. Green Shield insurance fees are charged to your student account each September. You may opt out of this insurance plan on uoZone (via the Finances and Jobs tab) if you can demonstrate that you have comparable coverage from another source (not including OHIP, QHIP, or UHIP).

### ***Grad student café***

Here's hoping Café Nostalgica is back this year! 601 Cumberland: <https://thefulcrum.ca/news/the-future-of-nostalgica-will-the-beloved-grad-student-cafe-be-back/>

If so, grad students get 15% off food at Café Nostalgica with a sticker available from GSAED, the grad student association (2nd floor at 601 Cumberland). See: <http://nostalgica.ca/info/>