



Medical Biophysics  
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

# **Graduate Student Handbook 2024-2025**

<http://medbio.utoronto.ca>

# WELCOME TO MEDICAL BIOPHYSICS

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I am delighted to welcome you to the Department of Medical Biophysics in the Temerty Faculty of Medicine at the University of Toronto. You are now part of a vibrant, multidisciplinary graduate program in medical research, whose size and diversity can be somewhat daunting to the newly arrived. Although your graduate research will be undertaken in a laboratory in one of the University affiliated teaching hospitals, your academic home is Medical Biophysics, and it is through this program that you will earn your degree. This Handbook holds much of the important information that you will need to complete your degree successfully, so please refer to it often as you progress through your studies. The Academic Officers and Administrative Staff are listed on the following page. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or concerns. I wish you a happy, stimulating, and successful time in Medical Biophysics.

Laurie Ailles  
Chair of Medical Biophysics  
University of Toronto

*\*Note: This document was last updated on March 14, 2025. Some information may have been altered since that time. To download the most up-to-date version, please visit: <https://medbio.utoronto.ca/handbook>*

# Table of Contents

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<b>HOW TO CONTACT US.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<i>MBP Office Addresses.....</i>	7
<i>Department Officers and Staff.....</i>	7
<i>School of Graduate Studies.....</i>	8
<i>Other Contacts.....</i>	8
<b>IMPORTANT DATES AND DEADLINES .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<i>Fall Session 2024 .....</i>	9
<i>Winter Session 2025.....</i>	11
<i>Dates and Deadlines for Rotations Students .....</i>	14
<b>NEW AND CONTINUING STUDENTS .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<i>Rotation Supervisors and Your First Day.....</i>	15
<i>For All New Students.....</i>	15
<i>For All Returning Students.....</i>	15
<i>New Students Downtown.....</i>	16
<i>New Students at Sunnybrook Research Institute.....</i>	16
<i>Using ACORN (the Student Web Service).....</i>	16
<i>Multi-Factor Authentication (UTORMFA) .....</i>	16
<i>Services Available on Student Web Services (aka ACORN).....</i>	17
<i>T-Cards (Student ID/Library card).....</i>	17
<i>E-mail Accounts/Correspondence with Students.....</i>	17
<i>GO Transit.....</i>	18
<i>TTC Discount.....</i>	18
<i>Shuttle Bus.....</i>	18
<i>Graduate Student Union Health and Dental Plans.....</i>	18
<b>REGISTRATION .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<i>Continued Registration .....</i>	19
<i>SGS GradHub.....</i>	19
<i>Fee Invoices.....</i>	19
<i>VISA students .....</i>	19
<i>Financial Account Issues.....</i>	20
<i>Fee Payment.....</i>	20
<i>Registering Without Payment (Fee Deferral) .....</i>	20
<i>Failure to Register.....</i>	21
<i>Extension of Time for Completion of Degree Requirements .....</i>	21
<b>STIPENDS, AWARDS, FELLOWSHIPS AND SCHOLARSHIPS.....</b>	<b>23</b>
<i>Stipends .....</i>	23
<i>2024-2025 Student Base Funding.....</i>	23
<i>Top-Up Practices .....</i>	24
<i>Funding Term.....</i>	24
<i>Stipend Notices.....</i>	25
<i>Employment - Supervisors.....</i>	25
<i>Scholarships &amp; Awards.....</i>	25

<i>Scholarship/Awards which require application by the student</i> .....	26
<i>NSERC (Natural Science and Engineering Research Council)</i> .....	26
<i>CIHR (Canadian Institutes of Health Research)</i> .....	27
<i>OGS (Ontario Graduate Scholarship)</i> .....	27
<i>QEII-GSST Sunnybrook and Women's College Health Sciences Centre</i> .....	27
<i>OSOTF (Ontario Student Opportunity Trust Funds)</i> .....	27
<i>The Doctoral Completion Award</i> .....	27
<i>MBP Student Travel Awards</i> .....	28
<i>Scholarships/Awards which require nomination by the Department</i> .....	28
<i>Medical Biophysics Excellence Awards</i> .....	28
<i>Scholarship Payments</i> .....	28
<i>Other Awards</i> .....	29
<i>Awards Payment Activation</i> .....	29
<i>Graduate Student-Supervisor Agreement</i> .....	29
<b>PHD SPECIALIZATION IN MEDICAL PHYSICS</b> .....	<b>30</b>
<b>ROTATIONS</b> .....	<b>31</b>
<i>Opting Out of Rotations</i> .....	31
<i>Failure to Find a Permanent Lab</i> .....	31
<b>CURRICULUM &amp; COURSE CREDIT REQUIREMENTS</b> .....	<b>32</b>
<i>MSc Requirements for students starting in September 2024:</i> .....	32
<i>PhD Requirements for students starting in September 2024:</i> .....	33
<i>Medical Physics PHD Specialization Requirements</i> .....	34
<i>Withdrawing from a Module</i> .....	34
<i>Policy for Students Receiving a Failing Grade in a Module</i> .....	34
<i>Missing Exam or Assignments</i> .....	34
<i>Module availability</i> .....	35
<i>Time Limit to Complete Coursework</i> .....	35
<i>Full length courses</i> .....	35
<i>MBP1015Y Graduate Student Seminar Attendance</i> .....	36
<i>Course alternates</i> .....	36
<i>Undergraduate Courses</i> .....	37
<i>Transfer Credit Policy</i> .....	37
<i>Auditing a Course</i> .....	37
<i>CAMPEP Courses</i> .....	37
<b>COURSE ENROLMENT</b> .....	<b>38</b>
<b>RESEARCH SAFETY AND ETHICS</b> .....	<b>38</b>
<i>Graduate Research Integrity workshop</i> .....	38
<b>SAFETY ABROAD</b> .....	<b>39</b>
<b>COLLABORATIVE PROGRAMS</b> .....	<b>39</b>
<b>THE SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE</b> .....	<b>41</b>
<i>General Conditions of Supervision</i> .....	41
<i>Co-Supervision</i> .....	41
<i>Supervisor's Responsibilities</i> .....	41
<i>Student's Responsibilities</i> .....	41
<i>Purpose of Supervisory Committee</i> .....	42

<i>Composition of Supervisory Committee</i> .....	42
<i>Frequency of Meetings</i> .....	43
<i>Scheduling Supervisory Committee Meetings</i> .....	44
<i>Before the meeting</i> .....	45
<i>What to Expect During Your First Committee Meeting</i> .....	45
<i>Committee Meeting Reports</i> .....	46
<i>MSc Students in Program for More than Two Years</i> .....	47
<i>PhD Students in Program for More than Four Years</i> .....	47
<i>Permission to Write</i> .....	47
<i>After the Committee Meeting</i> .....	47
<b>CONFLICTS BETWEEN STUDENTS AND SUPERVISORS/OTHER LAB MEMBERS</b> .....	<b>48</b>
<i>Grounds for Terminating Registration and Candidacy of Student</i> .....	49
<i>Grounds for Sanctioning a Supervisor</i> .....	49
<b>EXAMINATIONS</b> .....	<b>50</b>
<i>Departmental policy on virtual examinations</i> .....	50
<b>GUIDELINES FOR THE MSC FINAL EXAMINATION</b> .....	<b>50</b>
<i>The MSc Timeline</i> .....	52
<i>Restrict Thesis Release Date</i> .....	53
<b>GUIDELINES FOR THE RECLASSIFICATION EXAMINATION</b> .....	<b>53</b>
<i>Overview</i> .....	53
<i>The Reclassification Process and Degree Timeline</i> .....	53
<i>Written Reclassification Proposal</i> .....	54
<i>Oral Reclassification Defense</i> .....	55
<i>Possible Outcomes of the Reclassification Examination</i> .....	56
<i>After the Reclassification Examination</i> .....	56
<b>GUIDELINES FOR THE PHD QUALIFYING EXAMINATION</b> .....	<b>57</b>
<i>Overview</i> .....	57
<i>The Qualifying Process and Degree Timeline</i> .....	57
<i>The Qualifying Proposal</i> .....	59
<i>Oral Qualifying Defense</i> .....	59
<i>Possible Outcomes of a Qualifying Examination</i> .....	59
<i>After the Qualifying Examination</i> .....	60
<b>GUIDELINES FOR THE PHD FINAL EXAMINATION</b> .....	<b>61</b>
<i>The Thesis</i> .....	61
<i>The PhD Examination Committee</i> .....	61
<i>Composition of the Examination Committee</i> .....	62
<i>Procedure and Timelines</i> .....	62
<i>The Day of Examination</i> .....	63
<i>Immediately after the Examination</i> .....	64
<i>Possible outcomes of a PhD Examination</i> .....	64
<i>Restrict Thesis Release Date</i> .....	64
<b>TUITION FEES FOR FINAL YEAR DOCTORAL STUDENTS</b> .....	<b>65</b>
<b>CONFIRMATION OF DEGREE &amp; CONFIRMATION OF REGISTRATION LETTERS</b> .....	<b>65</b>

<b>MBP RETREAT .....</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>MBP GRADUATE STUDENT EXECUTIVE.....</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>ILLNESS, COMPASSIONATE LEAVE, MATERNITY LEAVE.....</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES FOR MBP STUDENTS .....</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND WRITING SUPPORT.....</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>PLAGIARISM .....</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>CRISIS AND SUPPORT SERVICES FOR STUDENTS .....</b>	<b>79</b>

# Appendices

Appendix A – Course Modules 2024-2025

Appendix B – Research Summary Report

Appendix C – Student Supervisory Committee Meeting Report

Appendix D – Faculty Research Themes

Appendix E – Form 100

Appendix F – Final Committee Meeting Report for PhD Oral

Appendix G – PhD Thesis Defense Form

Appendix H – Degree Completion Guidelines

Appendix I – Time to Completion Plan for MBP PhD Students at End of Year 4

# HOW TO CONTACT US

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## MBP Office Addresses

Princess Margaret Cancer Research Tower 101 College Street, 15-701 Toronto, ON M5G 1L7	Sunnybrook Research Institute (SRI) 2075 Bayview Avenue, S670 Toronto, ON M4N 3M5 Fax: 416-480-5714
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## Department Officers and Staff

	LOCATION	TELEPHONE	E-MAIL
Dr. Laurie Ailles Chair	PMCRT, 12-305	416-581-7868	laurie.ailles@utoronto.ca
Dr. Charles Cunningham Vice-Chair (Sunnybrook)	SRI, M326A	416-480-5021	charles.cunningham@utoronto.ca
Dr. John G. Sled Vice-Chair (Sick Kids)	TCP, 25 Orde St.	416-813-7654 x 309557	john.sled@utoronto.ca
Dr. David Malkin Associate Chair	PGCRL, 686 Bay St. 18-9705	416-813-5348	david.malkin@sickkids.ca
Dr. Igor Jurisica Graduate Coordinator – Academic Advisor Downtown Students	KDT 5KD-407	416-581-7437	igor.jurisica@utoronto.ca
Dr. Shane Harding Graduate Coordinator - Student/Faculty Relations Downtown Students	PMCRT, 12-313	416-634-8076	shane.harding@uhn.ca
Dr. Greg Stanisz Graduate Coordinator Uptown Students	SRI, S672	416-480-5725	stanisz@sri.utoronto.ca
Ms. Merle Casci Administrator & Business Manager	SRI, S670 PMCRT, 15-706	416-480-5741 416-634-8752	merle.casci@utoronto.ca



Ms. Chau Dang Graduate Program & Special Projects Coordinator	PMCRT, 15-707	416-634-8750	chau.dang@utoronto.ca
Ms. Annette Chan Graduate Assistant Downtown Students	PMCRT, 15-708	416-634-8751	acw.chan@utoronto.ca
Ms. Donna-Marie Lobo Graduate Assistant Uptown Students	SRI, S655	416-480-5496	donnamarie.lobo@utoronto.ca
Mr. Charlie Berger Recruitment and Communication Officer	PMCRT, 15-306	416-634-8753	charlie.berger@utoronto.ca
Ms. Daphne Sears Secretary	PMCRT, 15-701	416-634-8755	daphne.sears@utoronto.ca

**School of Graduate Studies <http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca>**

General Inquiries – Student Services	416-978-6614 graduate.information@utoronto.ca graduate.awards@utoronto.ca
MSc Examination Office	416-978-2377 sgs.masters@utoronto.ca
PhD Examination Office	416-978-5258 sgs.doctoral@utoronto.ca

**Other Contacts**

<u>Convocation/Student Records Information</u>	416-978-3629 / 416-978-7070 convocation.office@utoronto.ca
<u>Student Accounts Information/Fees</u>	416-978-2142 Info.studentaccount@utoronto.ca
<u>Graduate Students' Union</u>	416-978-2391 info@utgsu.ca
<u>Centre for International Experience</u>	416-978-2564 Cie.information@utoronto.ca

# IMPORTANT DATES AND DEADLINES

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## Fall Session 2024

### July

Mon Jul 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Registration for September session begins.</li></ul>
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### August

Mon Aug 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Civic Holiday, University closed.</li></ul>
Late Aug	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Vanier Scholarships deadline.</li></ul>
Fri Aug 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Recommended tuition fee payment deadline for students registering or starting their program in the Fall session to ensure payment is received by the registration deadline of September 15, and to avoid cancellation of registration and course enrolment. International students must make a payment by this date to ensure they are covered by UHIP at the beginning of September.</li></ul>
Thurs Aug 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>SGS Graduate Orientation 2024 for new students. For details, please see: <a href="https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/orientation/">https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/orientation/</a></li></ul>

### September

Sep 1 – Oct 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>New students starting in Fall 2024, and current students who wish to opt out of the supplementary health and dental plans, must do so before October 1.</li></ul>
Mon Sep 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Labour Day; University closed.</li></ul>
Wed Sep 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b><u>MBP Student Orientation</u></b> at 9:00 – 11:00 am, Princess Margaret Auditorium, 610 University Ave, Rm 6-604, followed by lunch.</li></ul>
Thurs Sep 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Rotations market downtown – 10:00 am to noon in PMCRT.</li></ul>

Fri Sep 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rotations market uptown – 10:00 am to noon at Sunnybrook S-Wing.</li> </ul>
TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scholarship workshop</li> </ul>
Fri Sep 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registration deadline for students registering or starting their program in the Fall (September to December) session; after this date a late registration fee will be assessed. Minimum required payment due (unpaid fees from previous session(s) + 100% of current Fall tuition fee charges).</li> <li>• <u>CGS Doctoral Awards (CIHR/NSERC) applications due.</u> Electronic application submission due Sept 13.</li> </ul>
Mon Sep 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final date to submit final doctoral theses to SGS to avoid fee charges for 2024-25.</li> </ul>
Mon Sept 16- Wed Sep 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MBP Retreat</li> </ul>
Wed Sep 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final date to add full-year and Fall session courses.</li> </ul>
Mon Sep 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final date to submit final doctoral thesis for Fall Convocation.</li> <li>• Final date for receipt of degree recommendations and submission of any required theses for master's degrees for Fall Convocation without fees being charged for the Fall session.</li> </ul>
Mon Sep 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Payment deadline to avoid service charges on unpaid Fall session (September to December) tuition and non-tuition fee amounts for all students registered in the Fall session only, except for those who have successfully registered without payment because they are receiving a full funding package via a research stipend, a major award or scholarship, teaching assistantships, tuition waiver, and/or sponsorships. Monthly service charges will incur starting October 15.</li> </ul>

## October

Mon Oct 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thanksgiving Day (University closed)</li> </ul>
Oct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GLSE Grad Student Research Integrity Workshop 1 - Mandatory for First Year, Doctoral Stream MSc and PhD students. <a href="https://glse.utoronto.ca/graduate-research-integrity-workshop">https://glse.utoronto.ca/graduate-research-integrity-workshop</a></li> </ul>

Mon Oct 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Final date to drop fall session full or half courses without academic penalty.</li> </ul>
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## November

November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fall Convocation: Information and dates posted at: <a href="http://www.convocation.utoronto.ca">www.convocation.utoronto.ca</a></li> </ul>
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GLSE Grad Student Research Integrity Workshop 2 - Mandatory for First Year, Doctoral Stream MSc and PhD students. <a href="https://glse.utoronto.ca/graduate-research-integrity-workshop">https://glse.utoronto.ca/graduate-research-integrity-workshop</a></li> </ul>
Sat Nov 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Payment deadline to avoid service charges on unpaid Winter session (January to April) tuition and non-tuition fee amounts for all students registered in both Fall and Winter sessions, except for those who have successfully registered without payment because they are receiving a full funding package via a research stipend, a major award or scholarship, teaching assistantships, tuition waiver, and/or sponsorships. Monthly service charges will incur starting December 15.</li> </ul>

## December

Early Dec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CGS Masters Scholarship (CIHR/NSERC) deadline.</li> </ul>
<b>Tues Dec 24 – Fri Jan 3</b> (inclusive)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>U of T, including the MBP Administrative offices, will be closed for the holidays. The office will re-open on Wednesday, January 3, 2025.</li> </ul>

## Winter Session 2025

### January

Jan 1 – Jan 31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New students who are starting in Winter 2025 who wish to opt out of the supplementary health and dental plans must do so before January 31<sup>st</sup>. Not applicable to current students.</li> </ul>
Mon Jan 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>U of T, including the MBP Administrative offices re-opens.</li> </ul>
Wed Jan 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fall session grades available for viewing by students on the Student Web Service (ACORN).</li> </ul>

Fri Jan 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registration deadline for students registering or starting their program in the Winter (January to April) session; after this date, a late registration fee will be assessed. Minimum Required Payment due (unpaid fees from previous session(s) + 100% of current Winter session tuition fee charges).</li> </ul>
Mon Jan 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final date to add Winter session courses</li> </ul>
Fri Jan 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final date to submit doctoral theses without fee payment for Winter session.</li> </ul>
Fri Jan 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final date for receipt of degree recommendations and submission of any required theses for March or June graduation for master's students without fees being charged for the winter session.</li> <li>• Final date for all students to request their degrees be conferred in absentia in March.</li> <li>• Final Date to submit final doctoral theses for March Convocation in absentia.</li> <li>• Students dually registered in the Fall session must be recommended for the master's degree by this date to maintain their PhD registration.</li> </ul>
Fri Jan 31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Payment deadline to avoid service charges on unpaid Winter session (January to April) tuition and non-tuition fee amounts for all students registered in the Winter session only, except for those who have successfully registered without payment because they are receiving a full funding package via a research stipend, a major award or scholarship, teaching assistantships, tuition waiver, and/or sponsorships. Monthly service charges will incur starting February 15.</li> </ul>

## February

Fri Feb 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students who started in September 2024 and joined their lab in January 2025 should form their Supervisory Committee and submit the names to the MBP Office for approval.</li> </ul>
Mon Feb 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family Day (University closed).</li> </ul>
Tues Feb 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final date to drop full-year or Winter session courses without academic penalty.</li> </ul>

## March

March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• March Graduation in Absentia Information is posted at: <a href="http://www.convocation.utoronto.ca">www.convocation.utoronto.ca</a></li><li>• Students admitted into the PhD program in September 2023 must have their Qualifying Exam by the end of March.</li></ul>
Fri Mar 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• OGS deadline for Domestic and Visa students.</li></ul>
Fri Mar 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Deadline for students who started in September 2024 and joined their lab in January 2025 to have their first Supervisory Committee Meeting.</li></ul>

## April

Fri Apr 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• For students obtaining degrees at June convocation, course work must be completed, and grades submitted for full-year and Winter session courses.</li><li>• Final date for receipt of degree recommendations and submission of any required theses for master's degree for June Convocation.</li><li>• Final date for submission of final doctoral thesis for students whose degrees are to be conferred at the June Convocation.*</li><li>• Students dually registered in the Winter session must be recommended for the master's degree by this date to maintain their PhD registration.</li></ul>
Fri Apr 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Good Friday (University closed)</li></ul>
Wed Apr 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Payment deadline to avoid service charges on unpaid Fall/Winter session (September to April) tuition and non-tuition fee amounts for all students who have successfully registered without payment. Monthly service charges will incur starting May 15.</li></ul>

## May

May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All M.Sc. students who started in September 2023 and wish to reclassify into the Ph.D. program must reclassify by the end of May.</li></ul>
Mon May 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Final date to enroll in May-June or May-August session courses.</li></ul>
Wed May 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Winter session grades available for viewing by students on the Student Web Service (ACORN).</li></ul>
Mon May 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Victoria Day, University closed.</li></ul>

## June

June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students admitted into the PhD program in January 2024 must have their Qualifying Exam by the end of June.</li><li>• June convocation information and dates are posted at: <a href="http://www.convocation.utoronto.ca">www.convocation.utoronto.ca</a></li></ul>
Mon Jun 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Final date to drop May-June F section courses without academic penalty.</li></ul>
Mon Jun 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Final date to drop May-August session Y section courses without academic penalty.</li></ul>

## July

Mon Jul 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Final date to enroll in July-August courses.</li></ul>
Wed July 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Grades for May/June F section courses available for viewing by students on the Student Web Service (ACORN).</li></ul>
Mon Jul 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Final date to drop July-August S section courses without academic penalty.</li></ul>

\*A final thesis is the corrected, approved version of thesis which is submitted to ProQuest (formerly T-Space)

## Dates and Deadlines for Rotations Students

Sept 9 – Oct 9, 2024	First Rotation
Sept. 25	Students to advise Annette or Donna their second rotation choices
Oct 10 – Nov 8, 2024	Second Rotation
Oct. 28	Students to advise Annette or Donna their third rotation choices
Nov 11 – Dec 6, 2024	Third Rotation
Dec 13, 2024	Students to advise Annette or Donna of permanent lab placement selections
By Dec 20, 2024	Students will be advised of their permanent lab placement
Jan 6, 2025	Placement with permanent supervisor begins
Jan 6 – Jan 31, 2025	Fourth rotation for students who have not received a permanent lab assignment

## NEW AND CONTINUING STUDENTS

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### Rotation Supervisors and Your First Day

All entering students (Biology, Physics, MSc and direct entry PhD) participate in the Rotations program. First year students should have been informed of their first rotation supervisors during the summer. Students will choose the supervisor for their second rotation after the MBP Retreat and will be able to choose their third rotation during their second rotation. Students must be present in the lab for the duration of each rotation.

If the rotation is at SRI, please see Donna in room S655. If the student is at any other location, the student should go directly to the rotation lab/supervisor or the administrative assistant, who will help with the necessary paperwork on the first day. At Princess Margaret/PMCRT, the administrative assistant will help students obtain their Photo ID card, computer account, Occupational Health Assessment and Safety Training, key, elevator access card and any additional training that may be necessary. Students should keep in mind that when they complete each rotation, they will need to hand in their keys and access card and obtain new access materials at the next rotation.

Rotation students will receive a payment covering their stipend from September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024 to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024 which is paid by the Department in monthly installments. This is paid out from the University of Toronto Fellowship fund via their ACORN account with the University of Toronto. In order to receive the payment by direct deposit, it is important that both the student's mailing address and banking information is current in ACORN.

### For All New Students

If students received other offers of admission from the University of Toronto, it is their responsibility to cancel those offers, as fees will be assessed for those programs. The *Cancel Program of Study* function is available on ACORN ([www.acorn.utoronto.ca](http://www.acorn.utoronto.ca)).

September registrants will receive information on registration procedures in mid-July from the School of Graduate Studies (SGS). Graduate Students Information booklets will not be mailed for January registrants or current students. Please refer to <http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca> for instructions.

All students must attend General Lab Safety, Fire Safety and Radiation Safety seminars offered by their respective research institutes.

### For All Returning Students

MBP Student Orientation, Scholarship Workshop. There will be a Medical Biophysics New Student Orientation Session on Wednesday, September 4, 2024, at 9:00 am. **All new students must attend.** Returning students are also welcome to attend the session. A Scholarship Workshop will also be held



in the fall. All new students should attend the Scholarship Workshop, which is open to all MBP students. Returning students are encouraged to attend.

### **New Students Downtown**

When students are assigned an email address, the student should send an email to Donna-Marie Lobo ([donnamarie.lobo@utoronto.ca](mailto:donnamarie.lobo@utoronto.ca)) to update the student email distribution list. The Department encourages students to use their U of T account, or the email account assigned by the research institute, rather than a personal account. Students are responsible for checking their UToronto email account regularly. Once the student's permanent supervisor/lab has been confirmed, the student should ensure that they see their supervisor's administrative assistant for the New Hire package, keys (they may still have these from an earlier rotation in the lab), ID badge (students will need to hand in their old ID badge to the respective administrative assistant), new email accounts (unless the student uses their U of T account), etc. This is especially important if the student's permanent lab is at a different location from the one in which they started.

### **New Students at Sunnybrook Research Institute**

Upon arrival in the Department, please see Donna Lobo, S-wing, S655. Please email Donna ([donnamarie.lobo@utoronto.ca](mailto:donnamarie.lobo@utoronto.ca)) with the UToronto or institute email address as soon it has been assigned, so that it can be added to the departmental email distribution list.

### **Using ACORN (the Student Web Service)**

Accessible Campus Online Resource Network (ACORN) is the student web interface to the University's student information system. ACORN can be accessed at <http://www.acorn.utoronto.ca/> with a UTORid and password.

### **Multi-Factor Authentication (UTORMFA)**

All students must set up multi-factor authentication (UTORMFA) to log into their accounts. Students who have already signed up for UTORMFA will be prompted to use multi-factor authentication when logging in to ACORN along with their UTORid.

New students who have not enrolled in UTORMFA within the 14-day period after setting up their UTORid will be blocked from all U of T applications, including ACORN, until they complete their enrolment.

Alumni and new students who have not yet converted their JOINid to UTORid can continue to access ACORN using their JOINid without UTORMFA authentication.

For more information about this policy please visit: <https://isea.utoronto.ca/services/utormfa/policy/>

UTORMFA FAQ: <https://isea.utoronto.ca/services/utormfa/faq/>

## Services Available on Student Web Services (aka ACORN)

- view/change both mailing and permanent addresses, telephone number, e-mail addresses (NOTE: It is the student's responsibility to keep this information up to date on ACORN)
- view final grades
- view academic history
- add/request/drop courses
- view current courses or course request status
- view fees account
- defer tuition fees
- set up direct deposit
- order transcripts (For more information about transcript services, including how to order, delivery times, and fees, please visit: <https://registrar.utoronto.ca/transcripts/>)
- order graduation tickets
- print T2202A tuition tax slips

## T-Cards (Student ID/Library card)

All students are required to have a T-Card, which serves as student identification as well as a library card. Cards can be obtained at Koffler Student Services Centre, 214 College Street, Room 102. Students will need to show two pieces of identification: 1. student number or Letter of Admission or your UTOR/JOINID, 2. valid government issued photo ID (e.g., Driver's License) and 3. citizenship documents. Note, if the student already has a T-Card from their undergraduate program here at U of T, they do not need to obtain another T-Card. For further information and hours of service, please refer to: <http://tcard.utoronto.ca/>

## E-mail Accounts/Correspondence with Students

The university offices will send students important information by email. Only email addresses ending in 'utoronto.ca' and 'toronto.edu' are accepted on ACORN. All other addresses (e.g., sickkids.ca, sunnybrook.ca, hotmail.com, gmail.com, etc.) are not accepted on ACORN. Students can obtain a university-based email account through <https://www.utorid.utoronto.ca/>.

The Department will also communicate essential and timely information to MBP students through their official utoronto.ca email accounts. Because of this, **all MBP students are required to read and respond (where applicable) to all email correspondence sent by the Department to their official student email accounts.** Students have the right to forward their University-issued electronic mail account to another email address but remain responsible for ensuring that all University electronic communications sent to the official University-issued account is received and read.

Students are also responsible for verifying and ensuring that all personal contact information in ACORN is correct and up-to-date at all times. This includes activated UTmail+ email address,

mailing/permanent addresses, phone numbers and legal status. The University and Department only use the information entered in ACORN to contact students.

For the complete policy on Correspondence with Students, please go to

<https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/correspondence-students-policy-official-september-1-2006>

### **GO Transit**

Post-secondary students can receive up to a 40% discount on GO Transit. Students must apply for at:

[https://studentid.gotransit.com/Metrolinx.StudentIDRequest/en/studentid/Home/IDRequest?utm\\_campaign=studentid&utm\\_medium=referral&utm\\_source=tripplanning&utm\\_content=studentid2](https://studentid.gotransit.com/Metrolinx.StudentIDRequest/en/studentid/Home/IDRequest?utm_campaign=studentid&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=tripplanning&utm_content=studentid2)

### **TTC Discount**

Students can obtain a TTC Post-Secondary Photo\_ID card at Bathurst Station. The hours of operation of the Bathurst subway station can be found at <https://www.ttc.ca/customer-service/TTC-Bathurst-Station-Photo-ID-Office>. This card is required to use the TTC Post-Secondary Monthly Pass.

### **Shuttle Bus**

A shuttle bus routinely runs between Sunnybrook Hospital and Women's College. This service is available to students who hold a Sunnybrook ID Badge. Students without a Sunnybrook ID Badge who need to attend courses, seminars, etc., held at Sunnybrook, can contact Donna (Sunnybrook) or Annette Chan (PMCRT) for a shuttle pass.

### **Graduate Student Union Health and Dental Plans**

The Graduate Student' Union, University of Toronto (UTGSU) Health Plan automatically covers all full-time graduate students. The plan was designed to provide many important services and cover expenses not covered by basic health-care plans (OHIP, UHIP) such as prescription drugs, health practitioners, medical equipment, and travel health coverage. For more information on the benefits plan, please visit: [www.ihaveaplan.ca](http://www.ihaveaplan.ca). Students may opt out of the health and dental plans if they are covered by another comparable plan. Please visit

[https://studentcare.ca/rte/en/IHaveAPlan\\_UniversityofTorontoGraduateStudentsUnionUTGSU\\_ChangeofCoverage\\_OptOuts](https://studentcare.ca/rte/en/IHaveAPlan_UniversityofTorontoGraduateStudentsUnionUTGSU_ChangeofCoverage_OptOuts)

## REGISTRATION

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All new and continuing students **MUST REGISTER** at the beginning of each academic year. Registration must be completed before students can attend classes or otherwise make use of university facilities. A student is considered to be registered as soon as all tuition and incidental fees have been paid, or appropriate arrangements for deferral of payment have been made. For more information on deferral of payment, please refer to the Fee Deferral Section of the handbook.

A late registration fee of \$44 will be charged for students registering after the September 15<sup>th</sup> deadline. Students will be required to register and pay the late fee at SGS after this date. Note, students who did not register by the deadline will not receive T2202A tuition credit for the month of September.

### Continued Registration

All students in MBP must have a supervisor to continue their registration within our program. If students do not have a supervisor upon completion of lab rotations, their candidacy may be terminated / cancelled.

### SGS GradHub

To prepare for your graduate experience at the University of Toronto, please explore the *SGS GradHub* (<https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/gradhub/>)

### Fee Invoices

Students will be reminded by email of their account balance on ACORN and other important information that is required for registration. Students should be aware that they will still receive these emails even if their fees have been deferred.

### VISA students

VISA students are responsible for paying from their stipend only the portion equivalent to the domestic student tuition fee\*. The difference between the visa and domestic tuition fee (known as the visa tuition differential) is paid by the supervisor. The supervisor is also responsible for paying the student's health insurance premium (UHIP). It is the student's responsibility to pay their tuition from their stipend.

*\*At no time will the student be responsible for more than the current Domestic tuition fee unless the student is the recipient of the **Ontario Trillium Scholarship** valued at \$40,000. This scholarship is awarded to international students and explicitly states that students must pay their international tuition fees from this scholarship.*

All VISA students must apply for an Ontario Graduate Scholarship (OGS). Their applications will be ranked by the MBP Scholarship Ranking Committee, which will also give the VISA student the opportunity to be considered for an MBP Excellence Award.

## Financial Account Issues

By the end of July, if a student's financial account does not reflect the amount owed for tuition, it may be due to one of the following reasons:

- The student's mailing address (both current and permanent) are not up-to-date or are incorrect in ACORN (fees accounts may be viewed in ACORN) [www.acorn.utoronto.ca/](http://www.acorn.utoronto.ca/)
- The student is continuing, and the conditions have not been cleared from the previous year.
- The student is continuing and entering the 4<sup>th</sup> year of a PhD and has not completed all required courses.
- The student is continuing, and their registration has lapsed because they have reached the registration time limit.
- The student is new, and the conditions of admission have not been cleared.

## Fee Payment

It is recommended that students pay fees or make fees arrangements by **September 1<sup>st</sup>** ensure that the payment or fees arrangement is processed by the deadline of September 13<sup>th</sup>. Instead of being asked to complete a paper form to be submitted in person or by email to SGS, students are now able to complete an online form and submit the \$44.00 late fee electronically using their credit card.

Students may access the SGS Portal through the following link: <https://apps.sgs.utoronto.ca>. Once there, students will be asked to login using their UTORid and start a new form which will be pre-populated with their degree information from ACORN. Once submitted, the SGS academic student services team will electronically receive the request and change the student's registration status from "FINCA" to "INVIT".

## Registering Without Payment (Fee Deferral)

All MBP students may register without payment (fee deferral) through ACORN if the student has no outstanding fees from a previous session.

Please note the following information from Student Accounts:

- Students must make a payment to receive the tuition credit for income tax purposes. The Income Tax Act requires that the University receipt the payments for the tax year in which the registration took place, so payments applied to the fall 2024 session will be receipted on a T2202A for 2024 and payments applied to winter 2025 session charges will be receipted on a T2202A for 2025. If students make a payment to cover the fall session charges by December 2024, they will receive the tax credit on their T2202A for 2024 which will be issued in mid-February.

- All accounts must be paid in full by April 30, 2025. Effective May 1, 2025, academic sanctions are applied for outstanding accounts, which means transcripts are blocked. Service charges will also begin in May (consider that it takes anywhere between 3-7 business days for the payment to reach the university).
- Students are encouraged to make monthly installments towards their account to spread the financial impact of fees.
- Students will periodically receive email notices from Student Accounts regarding an outstanding balance until the balance is paid in full even if the fees are deferred.

### **Failure to Register**

Students will not receive credit for work completed during a session in which they have not registered.

Students who fail to register during a program requiring continuity of registration and who do not have an approved leave may only apply to re-register if, at the time of application, they are still within the maximum allowable time for the degree program (normal time limit plus maximum extension years). A student wishing to re-register must apply to the relevant graduate unit. Reinstatement requires approval from both the graduate unit and SGS. The program's normal requirements and time limits will apply to reinstated students as if they had been continuously registered; **reinstated students must pay fees owing for any session(s) in which they did not register**. Non-registered students forfeit any funding that would have been available had they been registered.

### **Extension of Time for Completion of Degree Requirements**

#### **Master's Students**

In exceptional circumstances, a master's student who has not completed all the requirements for the degree within the program time limit specified in the degree regulations may be considered for a program extension. A maximum of three one-year extensions for master's students may be requested. Students submit requests to their graduate unit for review and approval. To apply for a program extension, students must present to their graduate unit a brief explanation for the delay as well as a detailed plan including a realistic timeline for completion that is supported by the supervisor and the supervisory committee.

To apply for an extension, the student must complete the Program Extension form and submit it to Annette (downtown students) or Donna (uptown students). Third (FINAL) program extension requests for a master's students require additional SGS approval. To obtain this approval, the student, supervisor, and graduate coordinator/chair must provide additional information in a separate letter of support to SGS. This can be a single letter co-signed by all parties, or separate letters, outlining the following: a reflection on the progress to date, including progress in the previous extension periods, detailed plan/timeline for completion, a confirmation that the degree requirements can be met within

one year of the final program extension, and a confirmation that the student has been made aware of support services that are available to help the student complete their thesis. Once approved by the graduate unit, the graduate administrator will submit the form and supporting documents to SGS for final review and approval. No registration beyond the extension period will be permitted.

## **Doctoral Students**

In exceptional circumstances, a doctoral student who has not completed all the requirements for the degree within the program time limit specified in the degree regulations may be considered for a program extension. A maximum of four one-year extensions for doctoral students may be requested. Students submit requests to their graduate unit for review and approval. To apply for a program extension, students must present to their graduate unit a brief explanation for the delay as well as a detailed plan including a realistic timeline for completion that is supported by the supervisor and the supervisory committee.

To qualify for an extension, the student must complete the Program Extension form and submit it to Annette (downtown students) or Donna (uptown students).

Fourth (FINAL) program extension requests for doctoral students require additional approval. To obtain this approval, the student, supervisor, and graduate coordinator/chair must provide additional information in a separate letter of support to SGS. This can be a single letter co-signed by all parties, or separate letters, outlining the following: a reflection on the progress to date, including progress in the previous extension periods, detailed plan/timeline for completion, a confirmation that the degree requirements can be met within one year of the final program extension, and a confirmation that the student has been made aware of support services that are available to help the student complete their thesis. Once approved by the graduate unit, the graduate administrator will submit the form and supporting documents to SGS for final review and approval. No registration beyond the four-year extension period will be permitted.

## STIPENDS, AWARDS, FELLOWSHIPS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

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### Stipends

All graduate students in MBP are guaranteed a minimum stipend. The minimum stipend is comprised of living allowance and tuition. The supervisor is responsible for ensuring that this support is received. The student living allowance is increased by 10.0% in 2024-2025.

### 2024-2025 Student Base Funding

Domestic				International	
MSc (May 2024 & prior)	MSc	PhD		MSc	PhD
29,235.18	29,235.18	32,265.18	Living Allowance	29,235.18	32,265.18
8,841.53	9,001.53	8,351.53	2024-25 Tuition Fees	32,491.63	*8,351.53
N/A	N/A	N/A	UHIP	756.00	756.00
38,076.71	38,236.71	40,616.71	Total (Base Funding)	62,482.71	41,372.71

\*Effective Fall 2018, International PhD students were subject to the same tuition fees as domestic PhD students.

### All paid as T4A income.

The stipend for students who are in program extension will be:

- MSc - \$33,753.95 (\$29,235.18 living allowance plus 50% domestic tuition and incidental fees)
- PhD - \$36,440.95 (\$32,265.18 living allowance plus 50% domestic tuition and incidental fees)

All students are expected to apply for external and internal scholarships to offset the cost of their stipend to their supervisor. Those who are successful in obtaining certain competitive external awards (e.g., OGS, QEII-GSST, CIHR and NSERC) will receive an additional 'top-up' to their stipend, currently set at up to \$4,000 maximum. If, however, the scholarship (e.g., a Canada Graduate Doctoral Scholarship) is of greater value than the minimum stipend plus the top-up, the student will keep the full value of the award as stipend. At present, the highest award stipend is the Vanier Scholarship at \$50,000 per year.



## Top-Up Practices

Most awards that require student applications are eligible for a top-up from their supervisor. For a list of Awards Eligible for Top-up, please go to <http://glse.utoronto.ca/graduate-student-financial-support>

The top-up amounts are as follows:

Award Amount	Top-Up*
\$0.00 to \$2,000	There will be no top-up but the student gets to keep the award(s), up to a combined maximum of \$2,000. The amount of the award will not be deducted from the base funding.
<b>Between \$2,001 to \$9,999 (cumulative awards)</b>	Award goes towards the base funding and the student receives a \$2,000 top-up over their base funding.
Between \$10,000 to \$15,000 (cumulative awards)	Award goes towards the base funding and the student receives a \$3,000 top-up over their base funding.
Over \$15,000 (cumulative awards \$15,001 and up)	Award goes towards the base funding and student receives a \$4,000 top-up over their base funding.

\*Note:

- Within an academic year (or 12 months period), the total cumulative top-up maximum is \$4,000. That is, if a student holds an award of \$5,000 and another award of \$17,500, their total top-up is \$4,000.
- The top-up is only provided in amounts of \$2,000, \$3,000 or \$4,000 per year (does not exceed 12 months) and is added above the base funding amount.
- A student, who receives award(s) exceeding the amount equivalent to the base funding and maximum top-up of \$4,000, will not be eligible to receive a top-up for these award(s).
- Payment of top-ups will occur annually for the duration of the award. Thereafter, the student will revert back to the appropriate base graduate student funding package amount.
- Top-up eligibility excludes University of Toronto Fellowship (e.g, UTF Open), Doctoral Completion Awards, travel awards, and bursaries.

## Funding Term

In general, a student who remains “in good standing” will be funded for the duration of the program. MSc students are normally expected to complete and defend their thesis within 2-3 years. PhD students are expected to complete and defend their thesis within 5-6 years. If a student accepts full-time employment, the stipend is terminated. Tuition continues until the student has completed all requirements for the degree. As well, students are expected to be present full-time in their lab unless special permission is granted from the supervisor.

Awards (OGS, CIHR, NSERC, etc.). Please check the requirements of the funding agency. Once the supervisory committee has agreed that the student has completed all necessary laboratory experiments needed for writing their thesis, MSc students will have a maximum of 4 months and PhD students a maximum of 6 months in which to write the thesis and schedule the defense. The stipend will continue to be paid to the student during this period. If the thesis is not completed within the four (for MSc) or six (for PhD) months, as described above, student funding will cease at the end of the defined period. The continuation of stipend payments is not guaranteed and is at the discretion of the supervisor and approval of the Department. In the event that the stipend payment continued until the examination, the student can expect the stipend to terminate one month after the examination.

### **Stipend Notices**

In August every year, the MBP Departmental office sends out stipend notices via email to all students, with copies to their supervisors, and administrators, indicating their stipend and explaining its sources.

### **Employment - Supervisors**

A student cannot be an employee of their supervisor or member of the supervisory committee before completing their degree. A degree is considered complete when the student has successfully defended and submitted a final thesis to ProQuest.

### **Scholarships & Awards**

All MBP students are encouraged and expected to apply for external and internal scholarships for which they qualify: please check each award for its eligibility criteria. External awards both offset the Department's and the supervisor's support of the stipend and can also result in an increase to the student's stipend, which is quite substantial.

Note that internal awards granted by the Department are based on a ranking of the OGS, CGS Masters and CGS Doctoral applications. ALL ELIGIBLE students for OGS, CGS Masters and CGS Doctoral must apply. Students who are not successful in obtaining these competitive awards are automatically considered for an internal award such as the MBP Excellence Award. Students who do not apply for OGS, CGS Master's or CGS Doctoral 's awards are not ranked and are not eligible for these internal awards. It is therefore very important to apply to OGS, CGS Masters and CGS Doctoral.

Most awards are for the full academic year (Sept 1 – Aug 31) and are paid in three installments. Students should seek awards for this period. If the student completes the program early (before Aug. 31) or leaves the program, the student will be required to pay back a partial or full amount of the award.

## Scholarship/Awards which require application by the student

Agency	Deadline	Where	Website
Vanier	Mon Aug 19	ResearchNet	<a href="https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/awards/vanier-canada-graduate-scholarship/">https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/awards/vanier-canada-graduate-scholarship/</a>
CGS Doctoral Awards (CIHR, NSERC)	Fri Sep 13	CIHR ResearchNet	<a href="http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Students-Etudiants/PG-CS/CGSD-BESCD_eng.asp">http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Students-Etudiants/PG-CS/CGSD-BESCD_eng.asp</a>
CGS Masters Award (CIHR/NSERC)	Early Dec	ResearchNet	<a href="https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/awards/canada-graduate-scholarships-cgs-m-program/">https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/awards/canada-graduate-scholarships-cgs-m-program/</a>
OGS (Visa Students)	Fri March 14	Online Submission	<a href="https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/awards/ontario-graduate-scholarship/">https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/awards/ontario-graduate-scholarship/</a>
OGS (Domestic Students)	Fri March 14	Online Submission	<a href="https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/awards/ontario-graduate-scholarship/">https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/awards/ontario-graduate-scholarship/</a>
QEII-GSST (formerly OGSST)	April 2025	GLSE	<a href="http://glse.utoronto.ca/fom-qeii-gsst-competition">http://glse.utoronto.ca/fom-qeii-gsst-competition</a>
SGS University-wide Scholarships	April 2025	MBP Office	<a href="https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/awards/university-wide-awards/">https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/awards/university-wide-awards/</a>
GLSE OSOTF and Other Endowed Awards Competition	April 2025	GLSE	<a href="https://www.glse.utoronto.ca/faculty-wide-osotf-and-other-endowed-awards">https://www.glse.utoronto.ca/faculty-wide-osotf-and-other-endowed-awards</a>

SGS offers scholarship workshops for OGS, NSERC and CIHR. When these workshops are announced, emails will be sent to all students.

### NSERC (Natural Science and Engineering Research Council)

Postgraduate scholarships are available to students in three categories: CGS M, PGS D and CGS D. CGS M scholarships (valued \$17,500) are for a maximum duration of 12 months and must be held during either the first or second years of graduate study. PGS D scholarships (valued at \$21,000 / year) are for a maximum duration of 36 months and must be held during either the third and fourth years of graduate study or the fourth and fifth years of graduate study. Current NSERC CGS D awards are for \$35,000 / year.

### **CIHR (Canadian Institutes of Health Research)**

Applicants must be Canadian citizens or permanent residents and have been registered for no more than ten months at the Master's level, and/or have been registered for no more than ten months as a full-time PhD student if admitted to the PhD program directly from an undergraduate degree.

Applicants may not have already held an award from SSHRC, NSERC, CIHR or any other federal source for MSc or PhD degree. For the PhD awards, the maximum duration of award funding from all federal sources to undertake graduate studies is four years, including a maximum one year at the Master's level. Current CIHR CGS D awards are for \$35,000, with some additional funding for travel and laboratory expenses.

### **OGS (Ontario Graduate Scholarship)**

MBP students are eligible to hold an OGS award during their first three years of MSc studies and during their first six years of PhD studies. Doctoral students who are beyond their 5-6<sup>th</sup> year cannot hold an OGS award in MBP.

### **QEII-GSST Sunnybrook and Women's College Health Sciences Centre**

(Formerly OGSST) This award is available to students *located at Sunnybrook*. Students who applied for an OGS will be considered automatically. Details of eligibility are the same as for an OGS. QEII-GSST is eligible for top-up money.

### **OSOTF (Ontario Student Opportunity Trust Funds)**

This is a class of awards which have resulted from Ontario government's "matching" program, under which endowments for student assistance have been matched by the government as well as the University. Recipients must be Ontario residents and demonstrate financial need.

### **The Doctoral Completion Award**

The Doctoral Completion Award (DCA) is available to help meritorious PhD students who are beyond the normal funding period to complete their degree program within the degree time limit. Students may receive a Doctoral Completion Award only once during their program. To be eligible, a student must be granted permission to "write-up" their thesis as indicated on supervisory committee report. Other criteria include academic merit and quality of research, the availability of alternative funding, and, if appropriate, special aspects of the research program that require more time than usual. As MBP provides a guaranteed stipend from Years 1-5, only students in Year 6 of their PhD studies are eligible for a Doctoral Completion Award and cannot be concurrently holding a paid continuing professional position. Students who are on an approved program extension are NOT eligible for DCA awards.

Students who have experienced a delay in their program due to special personal circumstances are referred to the Emergency Grant program at the School of Graduate Studies. The application form is available on the SGS website [www.sgs.utoronto.ca](http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca).

## **MBP Student Travel Awards**

The Department of Medical Biophysics has established the Student Travel Award. All students studying for a degree in Medical Biophysics whose supervisor's graduate appointment is in Medical Biophysics are eligible to apply. The department will sponsor a maximum of 10 awards per year (a maximum of 5 awards every six months: July 1 to Dec 31 and Jan 1 to June 30). In cases where multiple students are from the same lab, only one can be awarded (i.e. one award/lab/year). A student can only hold the award once during their degree program.

The MBP Student Travel Award supports MBP students to travel to academic meetings that will enhance their research training. Reimbursement will be awarded for expenses related to travel to national or international conferences at which the student presents their work. For more information, please refer to <http://medbio.utoronto.ca/handbook-and-forms>

## **Scholarships/Awards which require nomination by the Department**

- Connaught Scholarships
- Ontario Trillium Scholarships

## **Medical Biophysics Excellence Awards**

All MBP students who applied for a competitive scholarship are eligible for MBP Excellence Awards. Eligible students are considered by the MBP Scholarship Committee on the basis of the ranking of their OGS application. All students are therefore strongly recommended to apply for an OGS award each year, so that they may be eligible for an MBP Excellence Award.

## **Scholarship Payments**

- Award payments (for internal and external awards) will be directly deposited into the student's bank account upon registration via the Student Web Service (<http://www.acorn.utoronto.ca>) or, if the student chooses not to have direct deposit, a cheque will be mailed to the student by Student Accounts.
- To ensure that the student receives their award payments in a timely fashion, please be reminded of the following:
  - Students must have a status of REG on ACORN.
  - Students must have BOTH their Mailing Address and Permanent Address up-to-date on ACORN.

ACORN will NOT process a student's award installment unless the student's ACORN "Mailing Address" is active.

Please NOTE:

**September installments** will be paid directly to the student. **January and May installments** will have outstanding tuition fees deducted first, and the remaining amount will be paid to the student.

For more updates on awards information, please visit <https://medbio.utoronto.ca/awards-and-scholarships>

### **Other Awards**

SGS Restricted Awards are posted online at the SGS website: <https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/awards/>

OSOTF'S, e.g., the Joseph Bazyewicz Fellowship, the Agnes M. Freland Award, and the Kwok Sau Po Scholarship, are only available to students with Canadian citizenship or permanent residence status.

### ***GLSE OSOTF and Other Endowed Awards Competition***

Applications will be made by electronic submission via an online application system

Information is available at: <http://www.glse.utoronto.ca/faculty-wide-osotf-and-other-endowed-awards>.

These awards include the Dr. Joe A. Connolly Memorial Award, The Frank Fletcher Memorial Fund, Peterborough K.M. Hunter Graduate Scholarships, etc.

### ***Temerty Faculty of Medicine QEII-GSST Competition***

There are generally 2 lists of QEII-GSST awards

(1) List A consists of QEII-GSST's open to everyone. Applications are sent directly to the Temerty Faculty of Medicine. The deadline is March 2025.

(2) List B consists of Departmental QEII-GSST (OGSST) awards. These are only available to students at SRI. MBP Students who applied for OGS will automatically be considered for this award.

Students must submit a complete OGS application by March 3, 2025. More information is available at <http://glse.utoronto.ca/fom-qeii-gsst-competition>.

Students cannot hold an OGS award and any other government-funded award at the same time.

### **Awards Payment Activation**

NSERC PGS D and CGS D recipients must submit their Request for First Instalment Form and a copy of their award letter to Merle Casci ([merle.casci@utoronto.ca](mailto:merle.casci@utoronto.ca)).

Connaught, OGS, Vanier, QEII-GSST and CGS Masters Award recipients must submit the online SGS Award payment activation form at <https://forms.provost.utoronto.ca/login>

### **Graduate Student-Supervisor Agreement**

Completion of the Graduate Student-Supervisor Agreement is required annually, prior to initial and annual enrollment, for all graduate (MSc or PhD) students admitted to Graduate Departments in the Temerty Faculty of Medicine. The Agreement outlines the following policies:

- General Conditions of Supervision

- Research Safety and Ethics
- Intellectual Property
- Graduate Student Stipend

In September students will receive an email inviting them to complete their agreement at <http://www.glse.utoronto.ca/graduate-education-management-system-gems>. It is very important for students to review the policies in this agreement with their supervisor.

## PHD SPECIALIZATION IN MEDICAL PHYSICS

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In addition to our *graduate programs*, the Department of Medical Biophysics offers a CAMPEP-accredited specialization for PhD students interested in a Medical Physics career. Medical Physics spans research, development, and clinical trials involving medical imaging and radiotherapy technologies.

In this specialization within our PhD program, students complete a thesis-based PhD, while completing a structured medical physics course curriculum. The specialized program provides a research-intensive environment that immerses students in clinical technologies pertinent to medical imaging, such as computed tomography, magnetic resonance imaging and nuclear medicine, and radiation therapy. Cutting edge research involving machine learning, theranostics, and heavy particle therapy are ongoing. Students gain skills to pursue the production of high-quality research and develop leadership skills.

Upon completion of their PhD, the official university transcript will declare “CAMPEP-accredited Medical Physics Specialization”.

More information about the program can be found on the Medical Physics Specialization website: [https://medbio.utoronto.ca/medical\\_physics\\_phd](https://medbio.utoronto.ca/medical_physics_phd)

## ROTATIONS

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New students must rotate through at least three laboratories before choosing a permanent laboratory supervisor. In rare occasions where a student does not find a permanent lab after the first three rotations, a fourth rotation is permitted. This allows students to sample different research areas and thus to make well-informed choices of research topics, laboratories and supervisors. Students are not allowed to make an official commitment to permanently join a lab until the rotation period is over.

After the rotation period all students in MBP must have a supervisor to continue their registration within our program. If students do not have a supervisor upon completion of lab rotations, their candidacy may be terminated / cancelled.

The first rotation for each student is arranged before they start the program. This is accomplished by a process of communications and interviews between students and potential supervisors after their admission. The second and third rotation choices are entirely up to the student, with consent from the selected laboratory and approval from the MBP Office. Students should make second and third rotation choices only after starting in the program in September and attending the annual retreat and rotations market.

### **Opting Out of Rotations**

Students may opt out of rotations only under extremely rare circumstances. Students who have a substantive previous relationship with a specific supervisor (e.g at least 2 summers spent in the supervisors' lab, or completed a MSc degree in the supervisor's lab), or must be in an MD/PhD program.

### **Failure to Find a Permanent Lab**

If a student cannot find a permanent thesis supervisor after four rotations, their enrollment in the program may be terminated. Admission to our program does not guarantee that a student will be accepted into a laboratory for their thesis work. However, it is extremely rare for an admitted student not to find a suitable laboratory to join.



# CURRICULUM & COURSE CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

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The curriculum is structured as course modules and full-length courses. A course module is 7 weeks in duration and will typically have one 2-hour lecture per week for 6 consecutive weeks. Some modules will also include a written exam (in week 7), seminar presentation, or a lab.

Overview of requirements:

MSc: 6 modules (0.25 credit) + MBP1015Y Biophysics Seminar course (1 credit) = 2.5 credits

PhD: MSc requirements plus an additional 4 modules (0.25 credits x 4 = 1 credit) = 3.5 credits

PhD students who completed an MSc in MBP: 6 modules (1.5 equivalent credits) + MBP1015Y Biophysics Seminar course (1 credit) = 2.5 credits.

Course enrollment and grading:

Each course module completed is worth 0.25 credit and will appear on the student's transcript as a 0.25 credit course. It is essential that a student enroll using ACORN for their module selection. Please note that students can only add a course if no more than 15% of the course has been completed.

## MSc Requirements for students starting in September 2024:

- MBP 1015Y Biophysics Seminar (this is a continuous course which students must attend until their degree is completed)
- 6 modules selected as follows:
  - Introductory Biostatistics (MBP 1201H or MSC1030H) is required
  - Scientific Exposition & Ethics (MBP 1200H) is required.
  - Choose one *biology stream course module* (see Appendix A) or 0.5 or 1 credit graduate course chosen in consultation with the department that provides a foundation in biology. One such substitute is *JNR1444Y - Fundamentals of Neuroscience: Cellular and Molecular* (see course alternates section below). Students whose undergraduate training is not in the biological sciences may choose the course module Basics of Cell and Molecular Biology (MBP1404H; referred to as "*Cell & Molecular Biology for Physicists – Introduction*" in ACORN) to fulfil this requirement.
  - Choose the balance from: MBP physics or biology course modules; or department approved graduate courses in another department.

For example, an MSc student with an interest in cancer biology might choose to complete the required and elective course requirements as follows:

MBP1015Y Biophysics Seminar Course - 1.0 credit (enroll 2024-2025)

MBP 1200H Scientific Exposition & Ethics (0.25 credit) required (offered in fall, enroll 2024-2025)  
MBP 1201H Biostatistics (0.25 credit) required (offered in fall, enroll 2024-2025)  
MBP 1300H Quantitative Cancer Genomics (0.25 credit, offered 2024-25)  
MBP 1305H Experimental Models for Cancer Research (0.25 credit, offered 2024-25)

MBP 1303H Cell Signaling & Metabolism (offered every other year; enroll 2025-26)  
MBP 1304H Predictive Oncology & Therapeutics (offered every other year; enroll 2025-26)

Similarly, a MSc student with an interest in medical imaging might choose to complete the required and elective course requirements as follows:

MBP1015Y Biophysics Seminar Course - 1.0 credit (enroll 2024-2025)

MBP1200H Scientific Exposition & Ethics (0.25 credit) required (offered in fall, enroll 2024-2025)  
MBP1201H Biostatistics (0.25 credit) required (offered in fall, enroll 2024-25)

MBP1411H Overview of Medical Imaging (0.25 credit, offered every year, enroll 2024-25)  
MBP1404H Basics of Cell and Molecular Biology (Cell and Molecular Biology for Physicists – Introduction) (0.25 credit, offered every year, enroll 2024-25)

MBP1412H Ultrasound Overview (0.25 credit, offered every year, enroll 2025-26)  
MBP1400H Advanced Magnetic Resonance Imaging (0.25 credit, offered every other year; enroll 2025-26)

### **PhD Requirements for students starting in September 2024:**

Requirements for the PhD include the course requirements of the MSc plus one full credit which is the equivalent of 4 modules selected from the following:

- MBP biology or physics course modules
- Department approved graduate courses in another department (0.5 credit = 2 modules)
- MBP1023H Clinical Radiation Physics and Dosimetry (0.5 credit = 2 modules)

### **For PhD students who completed an MSc in MBP**

PhD students who have completed the MSc degree in the Department will need to complete the equivalent of 2.5 course credits in the PhD program. 1 of these course credits is the mandatory MBP1015Y Seminar course which will be graded in year two. Students will be required to take an additional 1.5 equivalent credits in course modules to complete the PhD course requirement.

## Medical Physics PHD Specialization Requirements

MBP PhD students must apply to the Medical Physics Specialization within 1 year of beginning their PhD program, ideally within the first six months.

An official application to the MBP Medical Physics Specialization includes two main components:

1. A completed **MBP Medical Physics Specialization Application Form**.
2. Submission of post-secondary transcripts from all undergraduate and graduate programs taken, including your most up-to-date MBP transcript. Please note, any transcripts written in a language other than English must include an English translation.

Once completed, the application form and transcripts are to be emailed to [Renata.Czech@uhn.ca](mailto:Renata.Czech@uhn.ca). Please be advised that an application may take several weeks to process. Should you have any questions during this time, please direct them to [Renata.Czech@uhn.ca](mailto:Renata.Czech@uhn.ca).

## Withdrawing from a Module

Students can withdraw from a module up until the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> class, or if no more than 50% of the module has been completed. While many instructors and programs consider it best practice to provide students with an interim evaluation of their performance in the course prior to the drop date, this is not a requirement for graduate courses (as per the [University Assessment and Grading Practices Policy 2020](#)). To request withdrawal from a module, please email the respective Module Coordinator and withdraw from the course in ACORN and cc Annette Chan ([acw.chan@utoronto.ca](mailto:acw.chan@utoronto.ca)). **If students are unable to withdraw in ACORN, they must complete the Drop Course form and email it to Annette Chan.**

## Policy for Students Receiving a Failing Grade in a Module

In the case where a student receives a failing grade in a module (less than 70%), the failing grade will appear on the student's transcript. If the module is one of the required modules MBP1200H, or MBP1201H, the student will need to retake the module the following year. A passing grade is required for a module to count toward the graduation requirements.

## Missing Exam or Assignments

Medical Biophysics follows the SGS policy as follows:

*Exceptional Circumstances Affecting Student Performance* - Students with health problems or other personal circumstances which may adversely affect their performance in, or their ability to complete coursework, examinations, or other departmental or graduate program assessments may request special consideration. Written requests, supported by a medical certificate or other appropriate evidence, must be submitted to the instructor or the Coordinator of Graduate Studies as soon as possible or no later than two business days following the deadline or date of assessment. If a medical

certificate is submitted, it must confirm the student was adversely affected by health problems and must show the dates of illness and that the physician was consulted at the time of the illness. If a student is affected by health problems or other personal circumstances during an examination that impact the completion of the examination, the student must notify the instructor or invigilator immediately; that is, the student should not wait until the end of the examination. Such notification must be followed up with a written request for special consideration as above.

### **Module availability**

All biology course modules will be offered in alternate years. A core set of physics course modules is offered every year while more specialized topics will be offered in alternate years or based on student and faculty response to the new curriculum.

### **Time Limit to Complete Coursework**

Direct entry PhD students must complete all required courses by the end of their fourth year in the program. For example, students who started in September 2024 must complete course requirements by August 2028. Those whose coursework is not completed by this time are required to complete the “Request for Extension to Achieve Candidacy” form. Failure to do so may result in termination of registration by the School of Graduate Studies.

Students who reclassified into the PhD Program have 4 years to complete the required coursework. Those whose coursework is not completed by this time are required to complete the “Request for Extension to Achieve Candidacy” form. Failure to do so may result in termination of registration by the School of Graduate Studies.

### **Full length courses**

#### *MBP 1015Y Biophysics Seminar Course*

- The Medical Biophysics Graduate Student Seminar Course is a core course for all students and continues throughout the program. It is held at two locations (students must attend one per week). Credit is given on the basis of a graded seminar and on attendance of the student at the weekly seminars. Student attendance is expected: students should note that failing this course through lack of attendance in the series may result in failure to obtain a degree.
- MSc and direct entry PhD students are required to give a seminar in both their first and second years. However, only the second-year seminar will be graded. The Course Coordinator will give critical feedback from faculty to the student following all seminars. PhD students will give an additional seminar in their 4<sup>th</sup> year.
- Students are asked to complete an online evaluation form when they attend the seminar. This form includes space for feedback, which is compiled and given to the presenter.
- MSc students must be registered in MBP1015Y for the duration of their degree studies.

- All MBP students will receive a credit for MBP1015Y, including direct entry PhD students.
- Students who have reclassified to the PhD program, no longer need to enroll in MBP1015Y, but are required to attend all seminars and give at least one seminar themselves.
- PhD students who are Direct Entry (who do not yet have a credit for this course) need to enroll.

### **MBP1015Y Graduate Student Seminar Attendance**

It is expected that MBP students attend all student seminars. In years where a student is required to present (usually years 1 and 2 of the student's MBP graduate studies, and year 4 if they are a PhD student), the student is required to be available for any assigned presentation date unless they are on a department-approved leave of absence. In years 5 or above the student is required to be available for any assigned date to review 1st year seminars unless they are on a department-approved leave of absence.

On other dates, students are required to attend a minimum of 80% of seminars for 2 years of their MSc and 4 years of their PhD. Students must attend seminars in person and complete an online evaluation form for each speaker. No student is to complete an evaluation form on behalf of another student or without attending the seminar.

### **Course alternates**

Graduate students at the University of Toronto can take graduate courses offered in any department, subject to availability and approval of their home department; the latter is given by the MBP graduate coordinators on a case-by-case basis with approval of the student's supervisor and the course coordinator. Please provide Annette (Downtown Students) or Donna (Uptown Students) with a copy of the required approvals. If the student misses the deadline for course registration online, they will need to fill out an Add/Drop Course form: <https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/253/2019/06/AddDropCourses.pdf>

Some examples of courses that may be of interest to MBP graduate students are listed below. Courses that fulfill specific requirements of the curriculum such as [biology foundation] are noted.

1. IMM1431H – Immunotherapy
2. JNR1444Y – Fundamentals of Neuroscience: Cellular and Molecular [biology foundation]
3. JEB1365H – Ultrasound: Theory and Applications in Biology and Medicine
4. BME1460H – Quantitative Fluorescence Microscopy: Theory and Application to Live Cell Imaging
5. JYG1555H – Advanced Topics: Cellular and Molecular Neurobiology
6. PSL1026H – Advanced Topics: Experimental Cell Physiology
7. CSC2515H – Introduction to Machine Learning

8. PSY5110H – Advanced Topics in Behavioural Neuroscience: Imaging Techniques in Preclinical Research
9. MSC1006H - Neuroanatomy – Introduction to Anatomical Organization of the Brain
10. PSY4706HS - Human Brain Anatomy
11. MSC1087H - Neuroimaging Methods using Magnetic Resonance Imaging
12. STA2005H - Applied multivariate analysis
13. STA4273H – Large Scale Machine Learning

### **Undergraduate Courses**

Graduate students may take undergraduate courses with the approval of their supervisor. These courses cannot interfere with research work. Students do not need to fill out an "Add/Drop Course Form". Undergraduate courses will not be counted towards the credit requirements for the student's degree. These grades will be recorded as an extra course on the student's transcript and the grades will be applied toward the student's GPA. As with graduate level courses, any grade below 70% is considered a fail.

### **Transfer Credit Policy**

Incoming students will not be granted credit for coursework completed at another university. Students who are transferring from another institution may apply for a credit transfer of up to 1.0 credit. Students will need to complete the Transfer Credit/Course Exemption form found at the URL below and forward to the Graduate Coordinator for approval.

<https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/253/2020/01/TransferCredit.pdf>

### **Auditing a Course**

Graduate students who wish to audit a course outside of the department must complete a "Course Audit Request Form" and submit it to the Graduate Unit offering the course for an approval. An auditor may attend lecturers and other class meetings, take part in class discussions, and receive written confirmation of attendance. An auditor will not receive evaluations of participation, be allowed to submit assignments or write examinations and tests, except by special and express permission.

### **CAMPEP Courses**

Students wishing to take these courses must be enrolled in the CAMPEP-accredited Medical Physics Specialization program.

## COURSE ENROLMENT

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To enroll in courses, students must request courses on ACORN. Instructions are available at <http://medbio.utoronto.ca/content/course-enrolment>. Students who do not register (pay or defer fees) by the deadline will be removed from their course registration. Courses such as RST9999Y and the seminar course MBP1015Y are pre-loaded and requests are not necessary. Students should check ACORN to make sure they are enrolled in these two courses.

If students encounter difficulty when enrolling in their courses, they should contact either Donna (uptown students) or Annette (downtown students).

## RESEARCH SAFETY AND ETHICS

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Research involving human subjects, experimental animals, radioisotopes and/or bio-hazardous agents must have formal protocol approved by the research institution (University or affiliated teaching hospital). These protocols must be available to and adhered to by the student.

Research Involving Human Subjects: See

<https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/policies-guidelines/research-involving-human-subjects/>

Ethics in Animal Research and Teaching: See <https://research.utoronto.ca/ethics-animal-research-teaching/ethics-animal-research-teaching>

### **Graduate Research Integrity workshop**

The Office of Graduate and Life Sciences Education (GLSE) will hold an annual Research Integrity Workshop for first year research stream MSc and PhD students. It is mandatory for all students to attend an ethics workshop during the student academic career. Two separate sessions will be offered in 2024/2025; you are only required to attend one session.

- Workshop 1 – Early November, 2024
- Workshop 2 – Early March, 2025

**More information:** <https://glse.utoronto.ca/graduate-research-integrity-workshop>

## SAFETY ABROAD

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The University of Toronto considers activities to be sponsored by the institution when students are conducting research or gaining credit, obtaining funding for their time abroad, or if the activity is sanctioned by the University. Registration with the Safety Abroad Office is a mandatory condition of your participation in U of T travel. Please make sure that you have completed the following steps at least 1 month prior to departure:

- Attend a Safety Abroad Workshop (valid for 18 months)
- Obtain or confirm travel health insurance coverage
- Fill in or update your profile on the Safety Abroad Database

For more information, visit the Safety Abroad Office website at <https://learningabroad.utoronto.ca/safety-abroad/>

## COLLABORATIVE PROGRAMS

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The department participates in several collaborative programs designed to develop and integrate graduate training in multidisciplinary fields across various departments. Students who enroll in a collaborative program are expected to fulfill the course requirements of both the collaborative program and the home department. However, it is anticipated that in most cases, coursework required by the collaborative program will serve to fulfill, in part, departmental requirements. For example, a neuroscience course offered as part of the CPIN program could fulfill for the requirement that a student complete at least one MBP module with a biology focus. Enrolling in a collaborative program increases the total number of course credits required, as students need to complete the required MBP credits in addition to those required for the collaborative program. Students will receive a notation on their transcript upon successful completion of the program. For more information regarding eligibility and enrollment procedures, please refer to the websites below.

Collaborative program in Biomedical Engineering:

<https://ibbme.utoronto.ca/prospective-students/collaborative-specialization>

Collaborative program in Cardiovascular Sciences:

<http://www.cscp.utoronto.ca/>. Participating faculty within MBP:

- C. Macgowan
- P. Marsden
- A. Moody
- G. Wright



Collaborative program in Genome Biology & Bioinformatics:

<http://gbb.utoronto.ca/>. Participating faculty within MBP:

- C. Arrowsmith
- B. Haibe-Kains
- I. Jurisica
- M. Taylor
- L. Attisano
- M. Hoffman
- L. Lilge
- J. Woodgett
- A. Edwards
- M. Ikura
- G. Privé

Collaborative program in Human Development

[https://www.oise.utoronto.ca/aphd/Home/Future\\_Students/Collaborative\\_Specializations.html](https://www.oise.utoronto.ca/aphd/Home/Future_Students/Collaborative_Specializations.html)

Collaborative program in Neuroscience:

<http://www.neuroscience.utoronto.ca/>. Participating faculty within MBP:

- J. Chen
- L. Lilge
- B. Stefanovic
- P. Fraser
- B. MacIntosh
- S. Strother
- S. Graham
- B. Nieman
- U. Tabori
- K. Hynynen
- J. Sled
- J. Woodgett
- J. Lerch
- G. Stanisiz
- S. Wong

# THE SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE

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## General Conditions of Supervision

Both supervisor and student are required to read their Graduate Department's policies pertaining to their degree program, supervision, and student funding.

## Co-Supervision

If the supervisor holds Associate SGS status (e.g. if they are a new Assistant Professor), the student will need a co-supervisor who is a senior member of the Department who has a full SGS membership. A co-supervisor may also be desired for a multidisciplinary project where the co-supervisor's expertise is needed. Should it be necessary for a student to be co-supervised, both the supervisor and the co-supervisor must have an MBP faculty appointment. All requests for co-supervision must be approved by a Graduate Coordinator.

## Supervisor's Responsibilities

- The supervisor will direct the graduate program of the student, facilitating timely completion of research writing and defense in accordance with Department guidelines.
- The supervisor is expected to provide mentorship and serve as an academic role model.
- The supervisor and student together will recruit appropriate members for the graduate program supervisory committee.
- The supervisor will ensure appropriate continuing supervision of the student during any leave of absence by the supervisor from the University, e.g., sabbatical.
- For more information, please refer to the School of Graduate School Graduate Supervision Guidelines

## Student's Responsibilities

The student is responsible for becoming familiar with and adhering to the rules, policies and procedures of the Department, the School of Graduate Studies and the University.

<https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/resources-supports/supervision-guidelines/supervision-guidelines-for-students-section-1-introduction/>

- The student is responsible for preparing a research plan in consultation with their supervisor, and meeting and reporting to the supervisor regularly.
- The student must continue to make adequate progress toward degree completion, documented by reports from the Supervisory Committee.
- In the Department of Medical Biophysics, the recommended time to completion of the MSc is 2 years and for the PhD (including time before reclassification) the recommended time is 5 years, including the time for thesis preparation and the final thesis defense.

## **Purpose of Supervisory Committee**

The Supervisory Committee assists in the recommendation of courses, advises on the proposed research project and monitors the progress of the student in the project. In addition to advising the student, the Committee has the responsibility of protecting the student's interests in completing their degree in a timely manner. Should, for example, a research project not progress satisfactorily, the Supervisory Committee may recommend a shift in scientific direction or a new approach to the supervisor and the student. Students are encouraged to communicate informally on a regular basis with the members of their Supervisory Committee. It is also encouraged, especially in later stages of the program, for the Committee to discuss the student's career aspirations.

The Committee has the responsibility of ensuring that the student completes the program in a timely manner. Committee meetings should take place on a regular basis: at least once every 6 months for MSc students and once every 12 months for PhD students, and once every 6 months for PhD students who have been in the program for more than 4 years. For students who have re-classified to the PhD Program, the 4 years include time spent in the Masters' Program.

A supervisory committee could recommend a meeting at an earlier time, in which case, the student will schedule an earlier supervisory committee meeting accordingly. If a meeting has not been held in the past 6 months for an MSc student or the past 12 months for a PhD student, the Committee must note the reason for the delay on the Supervisory Committee Report. Students should note that they are responsible for holding regular meetings of their Supervisory Committee. In extreme cases where a meeting is more than one year overdue, the student may be denied registration.

Should problems arise in a project, the Supervisory Committee may follow one of several routes, such as:

- Requesting that another meeting be held within a short interval of time, such as three months.
- A recommendation that the student change projects, or even supervisor.
- Enlargement of the Committee to include additional member(s) with specific expertise to evaluate the progress and problems associated with the project.

## **Composition of Supervisory Committee**

The supervisor and at least two additional faculty members are chosen by agreement of the supervisor and student. The Supervisory Committee members must be U of T graduate faculty members; at least one (other than the supervisor) must have a primary appointment in MBP. One member must be at arm's length and not a collaborator with the supervisor. Please check the School of Graduate Studies website: <https://sgs.calendar.utoronto.ca/search-sgs-faculty> for a list of appointed faculty. A member of the committee who is outside MBP must have a University of Toronto, School of Graduate Studies (SGS) graduate appointment. Please indicate the department of the non-MBP faculty member. It is recommended not to have a Committee (including supervisor) larger than 3 as it can be very difficult to schedule committee meetings with all the members present. Faculty outside the

University of Toronto may participate in student Supervisory Committees, but only in an advisory capacity. They will have no voting privileges at examinations.

A Chair or Graduate Coordinator must approve all Supervisory Committees prior to the first meeting. Please send an email to Annette (Downtown students) or Donna (Uptown students) with the following information:

- **Program**
- **Thesis Title**
- **Supervisor**
- **Committee Member Names**
  - Do they have an appointment to SGS?
  - What department are they with?
  - Link to their website
  - A brief paragraph describing the expertise they will bring to the committee

Co-supervised students must have 4 committee members (including their supervisor and co-supervisor), and the 4<sup>th</sup> member must be at arm's length and not a collaborator with the supervisor or co-supervisor. The co-supervisor must also have a primary appointment in MBP.

It is the student's responsibility to provide confirmation that the 4th supervisory committee member is at arm's length and has not collaborated/published with the supervisor or co-supervisor.

### **Frequency of Meetings**

It is imperative that all students have their first committee meeting within 3 months of assignment to a permanent lab. This introductory meeting is very important, as its primary objective is to define a research project and agree on an experimental plan.

Subsequent meetings should take place on a regular basis: at least once every 6 months for MSc students, once every 12 months for PhD students, and once every 6 months for PhD students who have been in the program for more than 4 years. For students who have re-classified to the PhD Program, the 4 years includes time spent in the Masters' Program. A supervisory committee could recommend a meeting at an earlier time, in which case, the student will schedule an earlier supervisory committee meeting accordingly.

A student who, through their own neglect, fails to meet with the supervisory committee in a given year will be considered to have received an unsatisfactory progress report from the committee (<https://sgs.calendar.utoronto.ca/general-regulations#7>) In extreme cases where a meeting is more than one year overdue, the student may be denied registration.

If a meeting has not been held in the past 6 months for an MSc student or the past 12 months for a PhD student, the Committee must note the reason for the delay on the Supervisory Committee Report.

Students should note that they are responsible for holding regular meetings with their Supervisory Committee. If there is a problem scheduling a meeting due to committee members' availability, the student may proceed with the meeting with one member absent and meet separately with the absent member.

After receiving two outstanding committee meeting reminders from the Department, a student must meet with the Chair. Failure to have at least one Supervisory Committee meeting per year may result in loss of good academic standing.

### **Scheduling Supervisory Committee Meetings**

The purpose of Supervisory Committee Meetings is not only to evaluate student progress, but also to guide the student, help them to address difficulties they may encounter during the course of their research, and ensure that they stay on track. Please be reminded of the following points:

- Committee meetings should not be delayed for the purpose of trying to gather more data or to have some completed goals to show.
- Students should not be penalized or given a grade of “unsatisfactory” for lack of data, if they have demonstrated a genuine and concerted effort to overcome any difficulties they may be having.
- If there has been lack of progress in the student's project, this is the most important time to have a committee meeting. Committee meetings can be called early by students or supervisors if there is a desire to consult with the committee on possible solutions.

In order to help students hold supervisory committee meetings in a timely and consistent manner, we are asking that whenever a Committee meeting is held, the exact date and time of the next meeting should be confirmed. When the date and time are confirmed, the secretary for the meeting should enter the full date in Section 1 of the Supervisory Committee Meeting Report and all committee members should put the date in their calendars.

If all committee members are not available to meet, the student may have the meeting with one member missing and meet with that member separately to get their feedback. All Committee meetings are to be held in person, however, if there are extenuating circumstances, committee members may also participate in meetings virtually.

Please be reminded that in cases where committee meetings are excessively overdue (>6 months) students will risk remedial action, such as an assessment of “unsatisfactory progress” in the graduate program. In extreme cases where a meeting is more than one year overdue, the student may be denied registration.

## **Before the meeting**

Once the meeting is scheduled, the student is to complete a Research Summary Report (RSR) form - Appendix B. Completion of this report is mandatory for all students once a Supervisory Committee Meeting has been scheduled. The student is to complete the report and distribute it to the Supervisory Committee members *via* e-mail at least 1 week before the committee meeting.

Structure of Research Summary Report form (RSR):

- 1-page research summary. This is designed to provide committee members with the necessary background of the students' project, providing more time for discussion of ongoing research.
- 1-page response to committee recommendations from the last meeting. This is designed to provide committee members with a quick summary of how recommendations were implemented, again leaving more time for discussion of ongoing research.
- At the end of their 4<sup>th</sup> year, PhD students year must submit a detailed 1 page "plan to completion", which includes a Gantt chart outlining the timeframes for each phase of the plan. This plan will allow PhD candidates to have a clear plan of how to complete a successful thesis within a reasonable time frame.

In addition to the RSR, the student is also to download a Supervisory Committee Meeting report form (Appendix C) from the MBP website. Complete the areas shaded in gray, then e-mail it to the Committee along with your RSR Form (and if not your first committee meeting, include the Supervisory Committee Meeting report from the previous meeting in the e-mail). The Committee is to appoint a member to act as Secretary and complete the remaining areas of the form to document the meeting. The Secretary should have an MBP Faculty appointment. If the secretary is signing the form on behalf of all committee members, they should state this on the form.

In summary, 1 week prior to the committee meeting, the following should be emailed to your committee members:

- A completed Research Summary Report form (Appendix B)
- A Supervisory Committee Meeting report form (Appendix C) with shaded gray areas filled in
- The Supervisory Committee Meeting report from the previous committee meeting.
- An unofficial copy of the student's transcript showing all completed graduate courses.
- A Time to Completion Plan (Appendix I; only for PhD students at end of Year 4 or beyond)

Printed out copies of all these documents should be brought to the meeting as well.

## **What to Expect During Your First Committee Meeting**

The purpose of the first Committee Meeting is to acquaint the Supervisory Committee with the student and the project, and to assess the trajectory of the project. At the start of the meeting, the student will

be asked to leave the room. The Committee will have a brief discussion about the student and the project, after which the student will return.

At the start of the meeting, the committee will determine who will be the secretary. The Secretary is responsible for completion of the Supervisory Committee Report form and obtaining signatures from the committee members. The secretary should have a Faculty Appointment with MBP.

Students should give a short presentation (~15-20 minutes) outlining the project motivation, desired aims, and proposed research methods. Optionally, students may prepare a slide introducing themselves and their educational/employment background. Any preliminary data gathered may be presented. **It is not a requirement to have obtained concrete data by the first Committee Meeting.**

The Supervisory Committee members may ask questions throughout the presentation. Following the presentation, the student and the Committee will discuss the work presented, the research/experiment plan, and the student's current knowledge of the related research fields. Supervisory Committee Meetings are NOT exams. Students are encouraged to ask questions themselves and highlight areas of the project for which they need clarification and/or guidance.

At the end of the meeting, the student's primary supervisor(s) will be asked to leave the room. At this point, any issues the student would like to bring forward about their supervisor(s) may be privately discussed with the other members of the Committee. Students should download the Supervisory Experience Feedback Form (Appendix C2) and fill it out prior to the meeting. This form does not need to be emailed to the committee prior to the meeting, but can be used as a tool or guideline if needed at the end of the meeting, when the supervisor leaves the room.

### **Committee Meeting Reports**

Students should ensure that they bring the most recent version of the Supervisory Committee Report form (Appendix C) to their meeting. After each meeting, the Committee must complete this report, which summarizes the progress of a student, recommendations for next steps and the predicted time to completion. The secretary of the committee, who must be an MBP faculty member, but cannot be the student's supervisor, must complete the report.

When completing the form, please note the following:

- The reverse of the form has room for additional comments from the student.
- The committee members and the student must sign the report.
- General knowledge of the student must be assessed during the meeting and the corresponding evaluation noted. Supervisory Committee Report forms stating that general knowledge was not tested are not acceptable.

- When Section 12 on the Supervisory Committee Report form (Student-supervisor relationship) is being discussed, the committee meeting chair must ask the Supervisor to leave the room.

### **MSc Students in Program for More than Two Years**

If a student has been in the program for more than two years, the first committee meeting after the 2-year mark should occur within 3 months. At this time, the plan for degree completion must be discussed and put into place with the supervisor and the committee. If the student is experiencing difficulties, they should contact their Graduate Coordinator.

### **PhD Students in Program for More than Four Years**

PhD students who have been in the program for more than 4 years must have a committee meeting every 6 months. For PhD students who have re-classified from the MSc program, the 4-year period begins from the time they started the MSc program.

At the end of year four, each PhD student continuing into year five is expected to complete the actions outlined in Section A of the '*Time to Completion Plan for PhD Students at End of Year 4*' form (Appendix I) and provide the document to the advisory committee for evaluation at their committee meeting. This document should be approximately 1 page and contain a Gantt chart for evaluation. The document also contains a form (Section B) that is expected to be updated at consecutive committee meetings (every 6 months) until the student graduates. 'Appendix I' provides a simple form for student and committee to evaluate if the project is on track for a reasonable time to completion. If a thesis cannot be completed by year 6, a short justification must be provided and approved by the committee.

### **Permission to Write**

One of the questions on the Supervisory Committee Report form asks, "Has the student completed all laboratory experiments required to write thesis?" If the answer is yes, an MSc student has a maximum of 4 months and a PhD student a maximum of 6 months in which to prepare the thesis and present signed Form 100 (Appendix E for qualifying, reclass and MSc exams) or Final Committee Meeting Report (Appendix F for PhD students) to the Department. If students do not present the Form 100 or the Final Committee Meeting Report within the four or six months, as described above, student funding will cease at the end of the defined period. If the write-up time exceeds the 4- or 6-month periods, the student is expected to continue holding committee meetings.

### **After the Committee Meeting**

The student is to distribute copies of the completed Supervisory Committee Meeting Report form to all members of their committee.

In addition, they should e-mail the following to the MBP office (Donna for uptown students; Daphne for downtown students):

- The completed Research Summary Report Form (Appendix B)
- The Supervisory Committee Meeting Report Form (Appendix C)



- The Student Supervisory Experience Form (Appendix C2)\*.

**\*Note:** this form can also be sent to the graduate coordinators or the Chair, if the student has concerns that they would like to be addressed. This form can also be used at any time, not only when there is a committee meeting.

Should a Supervisory Committee answer “Unsatisfactory” to either Question 5 or 6 on the Supervisory Committee meeting form, it will be necessary for the Graduate Coordinator to attend the next Supervisory Committee meeting. If a student obtains an “Unsatisfactory” score to Questions 5 or 6 on the Supervisory Committee Meeting form for two consecutive meetings, they will risk remedial action, such as an assessment of “unsatisfactory progress” in the graduate program. In this case, the student may be denied registration.

### **Departmental policy on virtual meetings**

The Department is encouraging students to hold supervisory committee meetings in-person. However, if one member cannot attend in-person, the Committee can proceed with a hybrid meeting. It is the preference of the Department that the student should proceed with a hybrid meeting, rather than the meeting being canceled to accommodate schedules.

## **CONFLICTS BETWEEN STUDENTS AND SUPERVISORS/OTHER LAB MEMBERS**

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Supervision of a graduate student comes with responsibilities both for the supervisor and the student that are covered by the SGS faculty Graduate Supervision Guidelines, the SGS student Graduate Supervision Guidelines, as well as a funding agreement administered by the Temerty Faculty of Medicine and signed by the student and supervisor each year. This agreement establishes conditions on general supervision, research safety and ethics, intellectual property, and student funding. While conflicts between supervisors and students are rare, it is important that they be addressed in a manner that is consistent with the terms of this agreement.

If a student encounters difficulty in the lab; for example, the student or supervisor believes the relationship is not working, or the student’s project seems not suitable for an MSc or PhD thesis, it should be first discussed with the other members of the student supervisory committee. **Students are also encouraged to use the Supervisory Experience Feedback form (Appendix C2) should**

**they wish to discuss any difficulties they encounter. The form should be sent to either Daphne Sears at the Downtown MBP office or to Donna-Marie Lobo at Sunnybrook.** It is also recommended that the student speak with one of our Graduate Coordinators (Dr. Shane Harding or Dr. Greg Stanisz), the Vice-Chairs (Dr. Chuck Cunningham or Dr. John Sled), the Chair (Dr. Laurie Ailles), or anyone in the MBP administrative offices, as soon as possible. It may also be helpful for the student to contact the MBPGSA for advice.

If a supervisor encounters difficulty with a student, similar steps should be taken, including meeting with the student to address the concerns, engaging the assistance of the student supervisory committee, and speaking with one of our Graduate Coordinators, the Vice-Chairs, the Chair, or anyone in the administrative offices.

When such conflicts arise, the department will work with the student and supervisor to address their concerns. In rare circumstances where a resolution cannot be found within the current lab, the student or supervisor can request to change supervisor. Approval to change supervisor must come from the department in consultation with all parties. Under no circumstance can a student or supervisor unilaterally make such a change in the supervision arrangements.

### **Grounds for Terminating Registration and Candidacy of Student**

- The student has two or more unacceptable grades in modules/courses (FZ, INC);
- The student has shown sustained lack of progress as documented on Supervisory Committee reports. (Two committee meetings which report unsatisfactory progress);
- The student is not present full-time in their lab without special arrangements being made with the supervisor;
- Inactivity, including failure to provide timely responses to departmental email inquiries

### **Grounds for Sanctioning a Supervisor**

Status-only faculty appointments in the Department of Medical Biophysics are renewed annually and conditional on satisfactory performance as well as contributions to the department, as outlined in the workload agreement. Failure to fulfill the responsibilities of a graduate supervisor could lead to sanctions including suspension of privileges to recruit new graduate students or in extreme cases termination of status within the department.

## EXAMINATIONS

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### Departmental policy on virtual examinations

Please note that PhD Final Oral Examinations are permitted to be conducted virtually. The Department is recommending that PhD examinations be hosted in-person, but the university is allowing students defending their PhD the option of conducting the examination in person or virtually. Doctoral exams can also be hybrid with the external examiner and/or exam Chair attending remotely.

For more information, please see the updated [FOE Guidelines](#) on the SGS Program Completion page.

Please note that all other types of examinations (reclassification, MSc and qualifying exams) are expected to be conducted in person, unless there are extenuating circumstances.

## GUIDELINES FOR THE MSc FINAL EXAMINATION

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An MSc thesis usually consists of one piece of research of publishable quality. In addition to the thesis, the Department requires a defense of the thesis at an oral examination. Besides evaluating both the thesis and the knowledge of the student, this examination committee will also evaluate the suitability of the student as a PhD candidate. It is strongly recommended that the candidate use an SGS Thesis Template available at <https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/current-students/program-completion/producing-your-thesis/>. In most circumstances, an MSc thesis should be no longer than 50-75 pages in length (excluding references and figures). The following steps must be taken to prepare for an MSc exam:

- The student should provide the Supervisory Committee with a printed copy of the thesis for approval. Students should provide at least two weeks' notice to Supervisory Committee members prior to a thesis being submitted for review. The review of the thesis should take no longer than 2-3 weeks by the Supervisory Committee member.
- When the Supervisor and Supervisory Committee have approved the written thesis, a final committee meeting should be held to prepare the student for defense. The student should practice the 20-minute presentation and answer questions posed by the supervisor and committee members that will be typical of questions asked during the final defense. The supervisor and committee members confirm that the student is ready to defend by signing Form 100 (Appendix E).
- By signing this form, the members of the Supervisory Committee indicate that they have read the thesis, have passed their comments on to the student, and that they agree the student is ready to defend the thesis. The examination cannot be scheduled until this form is received with the required Supervisory Committee signatures.
- The Supervisory Committee (usually at the same meeting at which Form 100 is signed) must suggest at least two additional examiners who meet the following criteria:

- All must hold an SGS appointment at University of Toronto
  - All must be at arm's length from the supervisor, for example not close collaborators, former trainees or mentors.
  - At least one must be a member of MBP.
  - One must have expertise in the area of the student's research.
  - One must be sufficiently far from the thesis work to establish the following: (i) the student can address a non-specialist scientific audience; (ii) the student has an adequate breadth of knowledge to position and defend their work in the broader context of scientific endeavour.
- If a student has a supervisory committee with 4 members including the supervisor, only 3 members can vote at the examination. The supervisor will decide which member will be the non-voting member. Every exam, therefore, has 6 voting members (including the exam chair).
  - Once suggestions for the composition of the examining committee is complete and the form is signed by all members of the Supervisory Committee, the student submits it to the MBP office (Annette at PMCRT or Donna at SRI). The examining committee must be approved by the Graduate Coordinator or MBP Chair before scheduling the exam. The student needs to make sure this form is complete with the title of the thesis. After the form is approved, the student will find a date with a two-hour time period when these examining committee members are available. The MBP office is available to help if necessary. The MBP office will be responsible for appointing the Chair for the examination. The Chair will also be an examining committee member.

The student will distribute an electronic copy of the thesis to all members of the examination committee including the Exam Chair at least two weeks prior to the examination (printed copies should be provided if requested). Failure to do so will result in postponement of the examination. Students are responsible for ensuring that they have the appropriate equipment they need on the day of their examination.

During the examination, the student will be asked to provide a 20-minute overview of the thesis. The student will then be questioned extensively on the thesis, peripheral topics related to the thesis and other topics in Medical Biophysics at the MSc degree level.

Upon satisfactory completion of the examination, the students will be required to submit their final theses to the School of Graduate Studies ProQuest Digital Library Repository. Please refer to the SGS website <https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/current-students/program-completion/producing-your-thesis/> for guidelines and checklists for thesis preparation.

Under exceptional circumstances, the Examining Committee may choose to adjourn the exam. If this occurs, the Committee must reconvene within 6 months, otherwise the examination will be recorded as a fail. Only one adjournment is allowed.

If students need to make changes to their theses before uploading the final version to ProQuest, please remember that the Department will not send in the *Recommendation for Degree* until the

Department has been notified by the student’s supervisor that the changes are complete. This notification should be sent by email to either Donna or Annette (depending on the student’s location). If a student intends to continue in the PhD program in the same lab, the email should also indicate that the supervisor accepts the student as a PhD student. If the student intends to continue in the PhD program in a different lab within MBP, the new supervisor must hold a full School of Graduate Studies appointment and the Department must be informed of the change in supervisors. If the new supervisor holds Associate SGS status, the student will need a co-supervisor who is a senior member of the Department. Annette or Donna will inform SGS that the changes are complete and will attach the *Recommendation for the Degree*.

Note: MSc students who plan to defend and submit the final thesis to SGS in order to avoid Fall fees should not register for the Fall (i.e., pay fees or arrange for fee deferral). It is strongly recommended that the defense date is scheduled at least two weeks prior to the SGS deadline. This will allow time for the student to make any corrections to the thesis recommended by the examination committee. However, if the student thinks that they will not be able to meet the deadline and will defend shortly after, the student should register and be sure to apply for the SGS Master Tuition Fees Bursary (<https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/awards/%e2%80%8bmasters-completion-bursary-mcb/>).

### The MSc Timeline

Event	Date/Deadline	Notes
Start program	Sept 2024	
Rotations	Sept to Dec 2024	
Start in permanent lab	January 2025	
First committee meeting	Before end of March 2025	
Second committee meeting	Before end of Sept 2025	
Third committee meeting	Before end of March 2026	Plans for MSc degree completion should be discussed. Ideally permission to write thesis will be given at this meeting.
Continue having committee meetings every 6 months until permission to write thesis is obtained.		

### How to Transition from MSc to PhD Program

Students who did not reclassify but have successfully defended their MSc thesis and now intend to enter the PhD program, need to apply for admission on-line at the SGS website found at <https://admissions.sgs.utoronto.ca/apply/>. An application fee applies. Student should apply as soon as they know that they wish to continue in the PhD program (students can be registered in both MSc & PhD program simultaneously).

## Restrict Thesis Release Date

It is the intention of the University of Toronto that there be no restriction on the distribution and publication of theses. However, in exceptional cases, the student, in consultation with the thesis supervisor, may request to postpone public access for a period of 1-2 years from the date of the student's convocation. The restriction may be renewed at the discretion of the Chair. Students must submit the Restrict Thesis form to the MBP office.

## GUIDELINES FOR THE RECLASSIFICATION EXAMINATION

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### Overview

The Reclassification Examination is an accelerated route into the PhD program for suitable students enrolled in the MSc program. Students who choose to reclassify must submit an outline of the proposed research to be completed in the PhD program, which is followed by an oral defense of the research proposal at the reclassification examination. Students who successfully reclassify will immediately transfer into the PhD program and will not receive a MSc degree. Students must have obtained an A- average in courses to date in order to be eligible for reclassification. If no graduate courses have been completed, the final undergraduate year will be considered. Note that courses required for the MSc need not be completed before reclassification.

### The Reclassification Process and Degree Timeline

Event	Date/Deadline	Notes
Start program	Sept 2024	
Rotations	Sept to Dec 2024	
Start in permanent lab	January 2025	
First committee meeting	Before end of March 2025	
Second committee meeting	Before end of Sept 2025	
Circulate Research Proposal to committee and receive feedback; and get Form 100 filled, signed and submitted to Department	March-April	A student may call a committee meeting prior to the reclass exam to discuss their proposal and/or get the Form 100 completed if they wish, but it is not mandatory.

RECLASSIFICATION EXAM	Before end of May 2026	
3 <sup>rd</sup> committee meeting	Before end of Sept 2026	To follow-up after reclass exam
4 <sup>th</sup> committee meeting	Before end of Sept 2027	
5 <sup>th</sup> committee meeting	Before end of Sept 2028	Committee meetings to be held every 6 months after 4 years in program
6 <sup>th</sup> committee meeting	Before end of March 2029	An ideal timeline would be to obtain permission to write thesis at this meeting or sooner
Continue having committee meetings every 6 months until permission to write thesis is obtained.		

Students in the rotations program must have their reclassification examination scheduled within 21 months. It should be noted, however, there is no reason that a reclassification exam cannot be held within 6 months to a year of the student entering the program.

If there are extenuating circumstances and an exam occurs in August 2026 or beyond, the department will have to seek approval from SGS for the transfer to occur. The student will require a rationale letter from the supervisor as to why the exam is taking place after the deadline. SGS will not approve the transfer until the exam has occurred at which time the MBP office will submit the transfer paperwork with the rationale letter. The student must participate in the reclassification exam prior to SGS determining transfer approval.

If approval by SGS is not granted, the student will remain in the MSc program.

### **Written Reclassification Proposal**

To prepare for the examination, the student must distribute a research proposal to all of the committee members. The proposal should contain a brief summary of current knowledge relative to the proposed research, including results bearing on the project by other investigators with a list of relevant references; a brief description of the research accomplished so far, and a description of the proposed research. It is important that the research be feasible, even though successful outcome at this stage may not be guaranteed. The written proposal is limited to 20 pages (12-point size and 1" margins) double-spaced (23 lines per page), references and figures excluded, and must be presented to the student's Supervisory Committee for approval before scheduling the exam.

### **Composition of Reclassification Exam Committee**

The exam committee will consist of the supervisory committee, plus two additional examiners who meet the following criteria:

- All must hold an SGS appointment at University of Toronto
- All must be at arm's length from the supervisor, for example not close collaborators, former trainees or mentors.
- At least one must be a member of MBP.
- One must have expertise in the area of the student's research.
- One must be sufficiently far from the thesis work to establish the following: (i) the student can address a non-specialist scientific audience; (ii) the student has an adequate breadth of knowledge to position and defend their work in the broader context of scientific endeavour.

If a student has a supervisory committee with 4 members including the supervisor, only 3 members can vote at the examination. The supervisor will decide who will be the non-voting member. Every examination, therefore, has 6 voting members (including the exam chair).

Once suggestions for the composition of the examining committee is complete and the Form 100 is signed by all members of the Supervisory Committee, the student submits it to the MBP office (Annette at PMCRT or Donna at SRI). The examining committee must be approved by the Graduate Coordinator or MBP Chair before scheduling the exam. The student needs to make sure this form is complete with the title of the proposal. After the form is approved, the student will find a date and a two-hour time frame when these examining committee members are available. The MBP office is available to help if necessary. The MBP office will be responsible for appointing the Chair for the examination. The Chair will also be an examining committee member.

After Annette or Donna has informed the student who will Chair the exam, the student will distribute an electronic copy of the proposal to all members of the examination committee at least two weeks prior to the examination. Students should be prepared to distribute hard copies, if requested by an examiner. Failure to distribute copies in time will result in postponement of the examination.

Students are responsible for ensuring that they have the appropriate equipment they need on the day of their examination.

### **Oral Reclassification Defense**

The student is judged on the proposal and its defense, not on the quality or quantity of the work achieved to-date. At the examination, the student will be asked to give a brief 20-minute summary of the research proposal. They will then be questioned on the proposal and on peripheral knowledge related to the project. The questioning is likely to be free flowing and less focused on work done: it can range from the actual detail of experiments proposed to speculative ideas of potential scientific approaches in the field of the proposal and its related areas. In general, examinations are two hours. The committee will evaluate the student in three areas:

- i) the proposed research and defense of its feasibility;
- ii) technical competence;
- iii) scientific knowledge in the area of the proposed research.



The primary criterion for success is that the examination committee feels that the candidate is likely to be a successful independent investigator at the end of a PhD program.

### **Possible Outcomes of the Reclassification Examination**

#### **i) Successfully reclassify (pass)**

After the examination, the student should complete a “Program Transfer Request Form” (fill in the top section only). These forms can be printed from the Graduate Student Handbook section of the MBP website (<http://medbio.utoronto.ca/handbook-and-forms>) and should be returned to Annette or Donna. This transfer request form will transfer the courses taken during the MSc to the PhD program. Students will be transferred into the second year of the PhD program. The stipend increase is effective from the date of the successful reclassification examination.

#### **ii) Continue in MSc program**

If a student receives more than one negative vote, they cannot reclassify. Students who are not reclassified at this examination continue in the MSc program. They will be reconsidered for PhD candidacy at their MSc examination.

#### **iii) Adjourn**

If a student is not likely to pass the examination because of a minor deficiency, the examination committee can adjourn and reconvene at a later date to determine if the deficiency has been corrected. The committee must reconvene within 3 months; otherwise, the examination outcome will be recorded as “Continue in MSc program”.

### **After the Reclassification Examination**

Students are required to have a Supervisory Committee meeting within 3 months of the reclassification examination to discuss next steps.

# GUIDELINES FOR THE PHD QUALIFYING EXAMINATION

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## Overview

All students who enter a PhD program in the Department of Medical Biophysics must prepare a research proposal and pass a Qualifying Examination within 18 months of their start date to continue their studies in the Department. This includes students who have obtained their MSc from MBP (effective September 2008). A student who entered the Department in September 2024 will have the qualifying exam by March 2026. Should an extension be necessary due to serious extenuating circumstances, please contact the MBP office for next steps.

## The Qualifying Process and Degree Timeline

Event	Date/Deadline	Notes
Start program	Sept 2024	
Rotations	Sept to Dec 2024	
Start in permanent lab	January 2025	
First committee meeting	Before end of March 2025	
Circulate qualifying exam proposal to committee and get Form 100 filled, signed and submitted to department	Jan/Feb 2026	A student may call a committee meeting prior to the qualifying exam to discuss their proposal and/or get the Form 100 completed if they wish, but it is not mandatory.
QUALIFYING EXAM	Before end of March 2026	
2 <sup>nd</sup> committee meeting	Before end of Sept 2026	To follow-up after qualifying exam
3 <sup>rd</sup> committee meeting	Before end of Sept 2027	
4 <sup>th</sup> committee meeting	Before end of Sept 2028	Committee meetings to be held every 6 months after 4 years in program
5 <sup>th</sup> committee meeting	Before end of March 2029	An ideal timeline would be to obtain permission to write thesis at this meeting or sooner

Continue having committee meetings every 6 months until permission to write thesis is obtained.

The following steps must be taken to prepare for a Qualifying Examination:

- The student should provide the Supervisory Committee with a printed copy of the qualifying proposal for the intended PhD project (see *Qualifying Proposal* next page). The review of the proposal should take no longer than 2-3 weeks by the Supervisory Committee member.
- The Supervisory Committee must suggest at least two additional examiners who meet the following criteria:
  - All must hold an SGS appointment at University of Toronto
  - All must be at arms-length from the supervisor and student, for example not close collaborators, former trainees or mentors.
  - At least one must be a member of MBP.
  - One must have expertise in the area of the student's research.
  - One must be sufficiently far from the thesis work to establish the following: (i) the student can address a non-specialist scientific audience; (ii) the student has an adequate breadth of knowledge to position and defend their work in the broader context of scientific endeavour.
- If a student has a supervisory committee with 4 members including the supervisor, only 3 members can vote at the examination. The supervisor will decide which member will be the non-voting member. Every exam, therefore, has 6 voting members (including the exam chair).
- The student completes Form 100 (Appendix E) and obtains signatures from their supervisory committee members. Please ensure this form is complete with the title of the proposal. By signing this form, the Supervisory Committee indicates that they have read the proposal, have passed their comments on to the student, and that they agree the student is ready to defend the proposal. Once Form 100 is signed and the supervisory committee has provided suggestions for the composition of the examining committee, the student submits the completed form to the MBP office (Annette at PMCRT or Donna at SRI). Please note: the examining committee must be approved by the Graduate Coordinator or MBP Chair prior to scheduling the exam. After the committee is approved, the student will find a date and a two-hour time frame when these examining committee members are available. The MBP office is available to help if necessary. The MBP office will be responsible for appointing the Chair for the examination. The Chair will also be an examining committee member.
- Students who first enrolled in September 2024, should submit Form 100 to Annette or Donna by February 2026, to ensure that the exam can take place before the end of March 2026.
- After Annette or Donna has informed the student who will Chair the exam, the student will distribute an electronic copy of the proposal to all members of the examination committee at least two weeks prior to the examination. Students should be prepared to distribute hard copies, if requested by an examiner. Failure to distribute copies in time will result in postponement of the examination.

- Students are responsible for ensuring that they have the equipment they need on the day of their examination.

## **The Qualifying Proposal**

To prepare for the examination, the student must distribute a research proposal to all of the committee members. The proposal should contain a brief summary of current knowledge relative to the proposed research including results bearing on the project by other investigators with a list of relevant references; a brief description of the research accomplished so far, and a description of the proposed research. It is important that the research be feasible, even though successful outcome at this stage may not be guaranteed. The written proposal is limited to 20 pages (12-point size and 1" margins) double-spaced (23 lines per page), references and figures excluded, and must be presented to the student Supervisory Committee for approval to proceed before the exam.

## **Oral Qualifying Defense**

The student is judged on the proposal and its defense, not on the quality or quantity of the work achieved to-date. At the examination, the student will be asked to give a 20-minute summary of the research proposal. They will then be questioned on the proposal and on peripheral knowledge related to the project. The questioning is likely to be free flowing, less focused on work done and can range from the actual detail of experiments proposed to speculative ideas of potential scientific approaches in the field of the proposal and its related areas. In general, examinations last between two and three hours. The committee will evaluate the student in three areas:

- i) the proposed research and defense of its feasibility;
- ii) technical competence;
- iii) scientific knowledge in the area of proposed research.

The primary criterion for success is that the examination committee feels that the candidate is likely to be a successful independent investigator at the end of a PhD program.

## **Possible Outcomes of a Qualifying Examination**

### **i) Pass**

The student continues in the PhD program

### **ii) Fail**

If a student receives more than one negative vote, they have failed the examination. Students failing the qualifying examination may no longer continue in the graduate program in the Department.

### **iii) Adjourn**

Under exceptional circumstances, the Examining Committee may choose to adjourn the exam. The committee must reconvene within 3 months otherwise the examination will be recorded as a failure. Only one adjournment is allowed.

### **After the Qualifying Examination**

Students are required to have a Supervisory Committee meeting within 3 months of the qualifying examination to discuss next steps.

# GUIDELINES FOR THE PHD FINAL EXAMINATION

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Students are expected to complete their PhD theses within 5 years of starting their program. PhD students who have been in the program for more than 4 years *must* have a committee meeting every 6 months. For students who have reclassified from the MSc program, the 4-year period begins when the student started the MSc program.

A PhD thesis usually consists of 2 or 3 completed pieces of work, each of which could constitute a published manuscript. The research in a PhD thesis must constitute a new contribution to knowledge in the field and be of publishable quality. In most cases a PhD thesis will be no longer than 75-125 pages in length (excluding references and figures). Students should note that writing the thesis and receiving comments back may take 4-6 months. Students should double-check that they have completed all the degree requirements for the program, and/or have given any exemption letters to the Departmental office.

## The Thesis

It is expected that the PhD thesis will constitute an original contribution to knowledge in the field, and that the candidate will have demonstrated an appropriate level of scholarship in their chosen area. It is the responsibility of the Supervisory Committee to ensure that the thesis is complete and meets Departmental standards. It is strongly recommended that the candidate use an SGS Thesis Template available at <https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/academic-progress/program-completion/producing-your-thesis/>.

Students should make sure that their supervisor reviews each part of the thesis as it is written. This process will help to make corrections and changes early and help maintain continuity throughout the writing process. Feedback from the supervisor on draft chapters (or parts of chapters) should be provided within two weeks or an agreed period. Students do not normally need permission to copy previously copyrighted material unless the thesis contains an exact copy of a published entity. Copied material and its source must be identified in the thesis.

## The PhD Examination Committee

If the Supervisory Committee has four members (including the Supervisor), only 3 of the 4 members may vote at the examination, but all 4 members are expected to be present at the Examination. Usually, it is the Supervisor who does not vote, but the student should discuss this with the supervisor and supervisory committee.

The Examination Committee will include an external examiner from outside the University of Toronto. This examiner will provide a written appraisal of the thesis. SGS rules require that the external examiner's appraisal be made available to the student and the Examining Committee two weeks before the examination.

## Composition of the Examination Committee

(Limited by SGS to a maximum of 6 voting members)

- **All** members of the Supervisory Committee (**of which 3 members vote**)
- External Examiner (who must be outside of U of T, be at an Associate Professor rank or higher, and arms-length to both the student and supervisor. They must submit a written appraisal 2 weeks before the date of the exam. **(1 vote)**)
- Another MBP faculty member who must be sufficiently far from the thesis work to establish the following: (i) the student can address a non-specialist scientific audience; (ii) the student has an adequate breadth of knowledge to position and defend their work in the broader context of scientific endeavour. **(1 vote)**)
- An Internal to U of T/External to MBP Faculty member. This member must not have been closely involved in the supervision of the thesis. This member must have an Associate or Full membership with SGS and arms-length to both the student and supervisor (SGS status may be checked at <https://sgs.calendar.utoronto.ca/search-sgs-faculty>. In the event that it is difficult to appoint a suitable internal examiner outside of MBP, a Medical Biophysics faculty member can be appointed provided the arms-length criteria are met. **(1 vote)**)
- Chair of Examination, appointed by SGS and non-voting.

## Procedure and Timelines

Students are encouraged to read through the guidelines here first, and then speak with either Annette or Donna for further discussion of the procedures.

At least 10 weeks before the examination:

1. The student obtains approval from the Supervisor to distribute a complete, edited draft of the thesis to all members of the Supervisory Committee. Students should provide at least two weeks' notice to Supervisory Committee members prior to a thesis being submitted for review. The review of the thesis should take no longer than 2-3 weeks by the Supervisory Committee member.
2. After the Supervisor and Supervisory Committee members have read the thesis, they will communicate any comments and concerns they may have to the student and at the same time can propose three internal to the university and external to the department examiners and three external examiners for the Final Committee Meeting Report for PhD Oral (*Appendix F*).
3. The student submits the Final Committee Meeting Report (*Appendix F*) to Annette or Donna. The Graduate Coordinators will approve the proposed external examiners and additional examiners. Once this form has been approved, the supervisor will receive an email confirmation from Annette or Donna to contact the potential examiners for their availability for the PhD exam. **Please note that it is up to the supervisor and the student to decide the time and date for the PhD examination.** The supervisor should explain to the external

examiner that they are expected to write an appraisal of the thesis and submit it two weeks before the date of the exam.

An email will be sent together with an official appointment letter to the external examiner. The Department will outline the obligations of the external examiner as well as assist with potential travel arrangements and reimbursement procedures. Please note that the Department will reimburse the external examiner's economy airfare/transportation, plus reasonable expenses for one-night accommodation, meals and ground transportation up to \$1500. If the travel costs exceed that amount, it is expected that the supervisor will pay the difference. ***The student must not be involved in this process, nor contact any of the examiners.***

At least 6-7 weeks before the examination:

1. A completed PhD Thesis Defense Form (Appendix G) should be submitted to Annette (downtown students) or Donna (uptown students). Students must inform Annette or Donna if they would prefer to have their examination in person or remotely.
2. After the Graduate Coordinator approves Appendix G, Annette or Donna will send a confirmation email to the examining committee to confirm their participation in the exam.
3. The student provides an electronic copy of the thesis to all examiners except for the external examiner. The student will need to send an electronic copy to Annette or Donna who will email it to the external examiner directly. The SGS Exam Chair does not need a copy of the thesis.

Two weeks before the examination:

1. If the external examiner has provided the appraisal by email, the MBP office will send it to the candidate and the examination committee. If the appraisal has not been received, the Department will ask the student if they are willing to proceed despite the delay in receipt of the appraisal. If the student agrees, they will be asked to sign a waiver to this effect. If the student does not wish to proceed, the oral examination will be postponed.

## **The Day of Examination**

### **Public Oral Presentation:**

This is a departmental requirement and not considered part of the official exam by the University. The student will present a 30–40-minute seminar on their work, in the presence of the Examination Committee, open to the public. The SGS Chair is invited to attend but need not do so. The Supervisor will introduce the candidate and the lecture. A public question period is permitted, but the Examination Committee does not take part in this question period. Questions from the examining committee are reserved for the closed examination. Faculty and students are encouraged to attend the oral presentations.

### **Closed Examination:**

The Examining Committee will retire to examine the candidate. The closed portion of the examination will start not less than 10 minutes and not more than 2 hours after the public oral presentation. Please



note that the Chair of the examination will invite the PhD candidate to make a presentation at the start of the closed exam -- students may decline if they wish.

### **Immediately after the Examination**

The candidate will be told at the end of the exam of the outcome and if any corrections/modifications need to be done to the thesis. Once these have been completed, the Supervisor must email a letter to the PhD Oral Examination Office ([sgs.doctoral@utoronto.ca](mailto:sgs.doctoral@utoronto.ca)), with a copy to either Annette or Donna, certifying that the changes are complete. Once the changes are completed the student will upload their thesis to ProQuest.

*The candidates do not need to go to SGS for post examination paperwork. The post examination paperwork will be emailed to them.*

### **Possible outcomes of a PhD Examination**

- I. (AS) As it stands / in its present form; deadline for submission of the final thesis is one week from the date of this examination.
- II. (EC) Subject to editorial corrections such as typographical errors, punctuation, etc.; deadline for completion is one month from the date of this examination.
- III. (MR) Subject to minor revisions in the thesis; deadline for completion is three months from the date of this examination. (Exam chair must indicate by means of asterisks above the names of those appointed to the supervising subcommittee and double asterisks for the name of the Convenor.)
- IV. Adjourn: The candidate has one year in which to schedule a reconvened examination, otherwise the result is considered a fail.

### **Restrict Thesis Release Date**

It is the intention of the University of Toronto that there be no restriction on the distribution and publication of theses. However, in exceptional cases, the student, in consultation with the thesis supervisor, may request to postpone public access for a period of 1-2 years from the date of the student's convocation. The restriction may be renewed at the discretion of the Chair. Students must submit Restrict Thesis form to MBP office.

## TUITION FEES FOR FINAL YEAR DOCTORAL STUDENTS

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Academic fees for doctoral students in the final year of their program are prorated and based on the 12-month academic year. Incidental fees are charged on a sessional (term) basis. Doctoral candidates who complete all degree requirements (i.e., defend and submit a final thesis with all corrections and modifications approved) by September 15, 2024, do not pay fees for the Fall session. After September 16, a monthly fee will be charged for each month in which all degree requirements are not completed by the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the month. Doctoral students finishing between September 15 and January 14 will pay a one-session incidental fee and those finishing between January 15 and August 30 will pay a two-session incidental fee. Doctoral students will be billed for the annual fee but may choose to pay (1) the full fee, (2) the minimum first payment or (3) the fee based on expected date of completion. If a student pays less than the full year fee, please note that starting November 16 a monthly service charge will be applied to any outstanding balance. When degree requirements are complete, the Student Accounts Office will adjust the fees accordingly, including services charges to outstanding balances that have accrued since November 16. For final year doctoral student fee schedule, please

see:

<https://studentaccount.utoronto.ca/tuition-fees/current-fall-winter-fee-refund-schedules/2023-2024-fall-winter-session-school-of-graduate-studies/>

## CONFIRMATION OF DEGREE & CONFIRMATION OF REGISTRATION LETTERS

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Confirmation of Degree Requirements letters (confirming that all degree requirements have been met) can only be issued by the School of Graduate Studies. It is their policy that all student fees must be paid in full before a letter is issued. To request such a letter, please go to the SGS website, <https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/academic-progress/student-forms-letter-requests> and look under Confirmation Letters. SGS will confirm that all degree requirements have been met and that the student has no outstanding financial obligations to the University. There is no fee for the letter, for which 5 business days should be allowed.

Students who require a letter confirming enrolment for OSAP, immigration, and other government-related purposes must also obtain the Confirmation of Registration letter from SGS, as outlined above.

## **MBP RETREAT**

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The Department will be holding a two-day retreat from September 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> at Campfire Circle, Muskoka. Talks will be given by faculty and students. Registration for the event was sent to all incoming students in July 2024. Please check your email for the registration link.

Learn more about this event at: <https://medbio.utoronto.ca/MBP-retreat>

# MBP GRADUATE STUDENT EXECUTIVE

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Students enrolled in the department of Medical Biophysics are members of the MBP student association. A portion of the students' incidental fees goes to the Graduate Students Association (GSA), which in turn funds the MBP Graduate Student Executive.

The MBP Graduate Student Executive is an elected body of graduate students who represent student interests by participating in the standing committees of the Department, in addition to organizing academic, social and sporting events throughout the year. The MBP Graduate Student Executive meets semi-regularly over the course of the year to plan events and discuss issues of relevance to students. The MBP Graduate Student Executive is comprised of two cooperative branches – one at uptown (Sunnybrook and Rotman) and one downtown (PMCRT, HSC, OICR, Mount Sinai, St. Michael, Princess Margaret). Elections for these positions are held in September at both Sunnybrook and Princess Margaret; a listing of current representatives can be found at:

<http://www.mbpghsa.ca/policies>

## Elected Positions

Each branch has members filling the following positions:

### DOWNTOWN

#### PRESIDENT

- Advocate for MBP students at faculty and departmental levels;
- Coordinate and supervise the affairs of the GSA;
- Sit on the MBP Faculty Executive Committee as the student representative;
- Attend meetings of the interdepartmental Presidential Roundtable;
- Call and preside over meetings of the GSA;
- Appoint the Chief Returning Officer (CRO);
- Coordinate the MBP Open House, with the administration and the CRO;
- Coordinate the MBP Interview/Orientation Day, with the administration.

#### VICE-PRESIDENT

- Appoint and liaise with the head coordinators of the MBP Retreat and JLM Symposium Committees;
- Schedule and coordinate GSU representatives to attend monthly UTGSU meetings;
- Facilitate the first-year mentorship program, giving guidance to the First-Year Representatives;
- Assume the roles and responsibilities of the President should the President be unavailable;
- Act as ombudsperson;

- Address issues/conflicts raised by students through an ad-hoc feedback committee;
- In the case there is no fit candidate for Finance Representative, the Vice-President will assume the roles and responsibilities outlined.

### **FINANCE REPRESENTATIVE**

- Represent and coordinate the financial affairs of the GSA;
- Keep proper records of financial spending of the GSA and its various committees, in the case of an audit;
- Manage the budgets of the GSA and its various committees;
- Ensure the Student Initiative Fund is upheld.

### **COMMUNICATIONS REPRESENTATIVE**

- Responsible for the transcription and distribution of the agendas and/or minutes of meetings of the GSA;
- Responsible for the transcription and distribution of minutes of any town halls called by the Department Chair;
- Maintain all documentation relevant to the GSA, including but not limited to contact information of council and committee members, the Constitution, and the By-Laws.
- Maintain the various social media platforms of the GSA and, in the case there is no fit candidate for Webmaster, the GSA website;
- Coordinate the bi-weekly student newsletter, and any other communications or media initiatives.

### **SOCIAL REPRESENTATIVES**

- Maximum of 2 may be elected;
- Act as head coordinator(s) of the Social Committee;
- Organize monthly social events;
- Organize the annual MBP Holiday Party, and appoint a separate organizing committee, if necessary;
- Coordinate sports-related events, including but not limited to intramural teams, viewing events, tournaments, etc.;
- Represent MBP when organizing collaborative events with other departments.

### **FIRST-YEAR REPRESENTATIVES**

- Maximum of 2 may be elected;
- Present first-year interests and concerns to the GSA;

- Coordinate the MBP Mentorship Program, and any other first-year-related initiatives.
- Aid in the organization of the MBP Orientation Day with the President.

## **UPTOWN**

### **PRESIDENT**

- Coordinate and supervise the affairs of the GSA;
- Sit on the MBP Faculty Executive Committee as the student representative;
- Call and preside over meetings of the GSA;
- Appoint the Chief Returning Officer (CRO);
- Coordinate the MBP Open House, with the administration and the CRO;
- Coordinate the MBP Interview/Orientation Day, with the administration.

### **VICE-PRESIDENT**

- Assume the roles and responsibilities of the President should the President be unavailable;
- Represent and coordinate the financial affairs of the GSA;
- Keep proper records of financial spending of the GSA and its various committees, in the case of an audit;
- Manage the budgets of the GSA and its various committees;
- Ensure the Student Initiative Fund is upheld.

## **APPOINTED POSITIONS & COMMITTEES**

### **WEBMASTER**

- The webmaster may be from either Downtown or Uptown, but must be available by, minimum, email to both Downtown and Uptown representatives;
- Maintain and update the GSA website;
- Maintain the various social media platforms of the GSA, if necessary;
- Integral to maintaining the GSA website's elections platform during Elections.

## **DOWNTOWN**

### **CHIEF RETURNING OFFICER (CRO)**

- Must be a currently enrolled student who has previously served as MBPGSA President (at any time), or Vice-President in the case there is no fit candidate;
- Aids the President in their duties in an advisory capacity;
- Ensure the Constitution and its By-Laws are upheld;

- Act as Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) and coordinate the general elections with impartiality, with the aid of the administration and Webmaster.

### **GSU REPRESENTATIVES**

- Minimum of 2 must be appointed from the Downtown GSA;
- Attend monthly UTGSU Council meetings;
- Report all UTGSU affairs at meetings of the GSA;
- Act as liaison between the GSA and the UTGSU.

### **SOCIAL COMMITTEE**

Chaired by the Social Representatives, the MBP Social Committee organizes various events to cater to the social needs of MBP students. We plan annual events, such as the FacMed Halloween Party, Movember x MBP, the Holiday Party, and St. Patty's Day, and complement these with smaller, monthly events that are more diverse in nature, such as movie nights, summer patio nights, day trips to explore Toronto, and sports games. Every member is given the opportunity to plan and execute an event on their own, so this is a great opportunity to get involved with the MBPGSA.

### **MBP SYMPOSIUM (formerly JAMES LEPOCK MEMORIAL (JLM) SYMPOSIUM COMMITTEE)**

The James Lepock Memorial Student Symposium is an important event, which commemorates the significant contributions of the Dr. James Lepock to research and the Department of Medical Biophysics and provides an opportunity for MBP students to present their research in a conference setting. The JLM Symposium is a student-led initiative, which fosters scientific debate across disciplines, streams and institutes. MBP students have the opportunity to showcase their research in the form of either a scientific poster or oral presentation at the Symposium, and best presenters are recognized with merit awards. **It is mandatory for all first-year students to present a poster at this symposium.** This event also features keynote addresses from both local and international experts in the field of Medical Biophysics and is attended by more than 150 students and faculty members every year.

The JLM is a day-long event and is open to all graduate students, post-doctoral fellows, summer/co-op students in MBP and all faculty members in the Temerty Faculty of Medicine. Each year, the Symposium Committee plans and executes to deliver a successful JLM Symposium.

### **MBP RETREAT COMMITTEE**

The MBP Retreat Organization Committee plans and organizes the scientific programs for the annual Medical Biophysics Annual Retreat. This event occurs over three days and allows for students to meet with faculty members in Medical Biophysics and to learn about their research programs in a relaxed and bucolic setting. We have a Departmental meeting, keynote talk, spotlight talk, and an award banquet, as well as recreational time. Members of this committee connect with faculty, schedule speaker events, and plan recreational activities for students.

## **MBP CAREER DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION**

The MBP Career Development Association is a new student-run initiative aimed to connect current MBP students with alumni through panel sessions, workshops, culminating in an alumni reception. Our goal is to offer students with resources to aid in the transition from graduation to employment. Along with our alumni events, we intend to build an online network through LinkedIn to connect the MBP community. We are also collaborating with other graduate career-development associations (Molecular Genetics, Laboratory Medicine and Pathobiology, and Science Career Impact Project) to hold inter-departmental events.

## **MBP COMMUNITY OUTREACH COMMITTEE**

The MBP Community Outreach Committee is a student-run initiative with a passion for promoting scientific engagement and community-building outreach activities. We believe in equal access to STEM opportunities and partner with the MBP community, surrounding research institutes, and outreach leaders to bring cutting-edge MBP research exposure to younger generations from a variety of socioeconomic and educational backgrounds. Successfully led initiatives include a March Break Camp for high-school students, one-day hands-on scientific workshops, and an e-mentorship program between MBP graduate students and the Foundation for Student Science and Technology. We also engage MBP graduate students and faculty to participate in our non-science related outreach activities, which include partnering with FixThe6 in a 100 for the Homies event to benefit the homeless population in Toronto and partnering with Canadian Blood Services for Team Blood Drives.

## **UPTOWN**

### **CHIEF RETURNING OFFICER (CRO)**

- Must be a currently enrolled student who has previously served as MBPGSA President (at any time), or Vice-President in the case there is no fit candidate;
- Aids the President in their duties in an advisory capacity;
- Ensure the Constitution and its By-Laws are upheld;
- Act as Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) and coordinate the general elections with impartiality, with the aid of the administration and Webmaster;
- In the case that there is no eligible candidate, the Downtown CRO will assume these roles.

### **GSU REPRESENTATIVES (min. 2)**

- Minimum of 2 must be appointed from the Uptown GSA;
- Attend monthly UTGSU Council meetings;
- Report all UTGSU affairs at meetings of the GSA;
- Act as liaison between the GSA and the UTGSU.

## **MBP OLYMPICS COMMITTEE**



The MBP Olympics Committee help to organize and run our annual MBP Olympics Games held at Sunnybrook Park. This includes helping to plan the various games and competitions, recruiting teams to participate, organizing our end-of-year Olympics BBQ and more.

## **ILLNESS, COMPASSIONATE LEAVE, MATERNITY LEAVE**

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It is possible that illness may interrupt a graduate training program temporarily. Under these circumstances, the student and the supervisor should discuss the projected absence as early as possible so that the student's work may be covered (e.g. cells or animals maintained). A prolonged absence may necessitate a change in the research project, and this too needs to be discussed. In most cases, satisfactory ways of resolving research, academic and financial issues are reached between the student and the supervisor concerned. When this is not possible, the Graduate Coordinator or Department Chair should be consulted. Before or during compassionate leave for urgent family reasons, the student needs to inform the supervisor so that important aspects of their research can be attended to pending the student's return. If an extended leave is required, a Leave of Absence form should be completed. This form is available on the SGS website at: <https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/leaveofabsence/>. Students are to complete the form and submit it to the MBP office for approval by the Graduate Coordinator.

Maternity leave generally provides more opportunity for planning of the necessary absence. As early as possible, the student should discuss her work environment with the supervisor so that potential hazards to the fetus can be avoided. As well, the student and her supervisor should discuss the length of pre- and post-natal absence and plans for her research project during the absence. Depending on the length of the maternity leave, and the nature of a particular project, it may be necessary to continue the research temporarily using other laboratory personnel, or in rare cases to switch to a new project. The student's stipend will continue to be paid by her supervisor during maternity leave to a projected maximum time of 4 months. A student may apply for a one to three term leave of absence from the University. During this leave, students do not pay fees, register, make use of the University's facilities and are not eligible for any awards.

### **The School of Graduate Studies policy on leave**

Graduate students whose program requires continuous registration may apply to their Graduate Coordinator for a one session to three-session leave during their program of study for:

- Serious health or personal problems which temporarily make it impossible to continue in the program, or
- Parental leave by either parent at the time of pregnancy, birth or adoption, and/or to provide full-time care during the child's first year. Parental leave must be completed within twelve months of the date of birth or custody. Where both parents are graduate students taking leave, the combined total number of sessions may not exceed four.
- During the leave, students will not be paid stipend or receive award installments.

Once on leave, students will neither be registered, nor will they be required to pay fees for this period. In general, students on leave may not make demands upon the resources of the University, attend courses or expect advice from their supervisor. As an exception, students on leave for parental or serious health reasons who wish to consult with their supervisor or other faculty are advised to make special arrangements through their department. Students on leave will not be eligible to receive University of Toronto fellowship support. In the case of other graduate student awards, the regulations of the particular granting agency apply.

Students may make application for a leave by completing the Leave Request Form and submitting it to their Graduate Coordinator for approval. The form is then sent to the School of Graduate Studies for processing. The termination date of the degree program will be extended by the duration of the leave taken, i.e., one, two, or three sessions as appropriate. Except for parental leave or in exceptional circumstances, it is not expected that a student will be granted more than one leave under the terms of this policy. Normally the start and finish of the leave would coincide with the start and end of a session. When students require a leave to begin in mid-session, they are advised to contact the Director of Student Services at the School of Graduate Studies to make special arrangements. Leave requests that do not fall under the terms of this policy will require final approval from the School of Graduate Studies. If the student plans on taking maternal or parental leave, they should discuss this well in advance with their supervisor and the Departmental office as some of the granting agencies may assist with this. The amounts and terms vary depending on the source of the student's stipend.

### **Leave of Absence Stipendiary Fund**

The Office of Graduate and Life Sciences Education (GLSE) in partnership with the School of Graduate Studies and with support from the SGS Dean's Innovation Fund created the *Leave of Absence (LOA) Stipendiary Fund* for research-stream graduate students. The LOA is available for a one-term leave of absence due to health issues (physical and/or mental health challenges). Funding is available up to \$5,000 per student for one term on a one-time only basis. Please visit <http://www.glse.utoronto.ca/glse-leave-absence-stipendiary-fund> for additional information and application instructions.

### **Temerty Faculty of Medicine Guidelines on Graduate Student Personal Time Off**

Within the Temerty Faculty of Medicine, it is recognized that many graduate students conduct their research almost exclusively within a laboratory setting, where they may or may not have control over their hours and the flow of the research program. Students are not employees and therefore have no rights to employee benefits, including paid vacation entitlement. However, it is recognized that in order for a graduate student to reach their full potential, achieve academic excellence and maintain a healthy work life balance, they benefit from some personal time off or 'vacation'. There are SGS policies and procedures in place for students who require a leave of absence for parental, personal or medical reasons. However, there are no University or SGS policies regarding graduate student personal time off / 'vacation'. The following guidelines for faculty and graduate students provide a framework for reasonable expectations. As a general rule, students might reasonably expect up to three weeks (15 working days) per year in personal time off, plus statutory holidays, under the following conditions:

- Time off provisions should be negotiated, in a clear and transparent manner, between the supervisor and the graduate student.
- Time off should not compromise the research program and/or the student's graduate studies. Students must ensure that laboratory work, experimentation and other time sensitive activities are either completed, or arrangements made for others to continue ongoing work.
- Consideration should be given to when the building or lab is closed (i.e. winter holidays) when taking time off.
- Time sensitive deadlines (i.e. award applications, abstract submissions) must be taken into consideration.
- Time off cannot be carried forward from year to year.
- Time off should be requested as far in advance as possible.
- The student and supervisor should be able to maintain contact as appropriate if the student is away for an extended period.
- Given that students receive remuneration as a stipend, not salary, the stipend continues, unaffected by this personal time off.
- Attendance at social activities within the academic community (departmental picnic etc.) or scientific meetings do not fall under the category of personal time off.
- Sick leaves or absences for health reasons must be documented and do not fall under category of personal time off.

Learn more about SGS personal time off policies here: <https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/policies-guidelines/personal-time-off-policy/> and here <https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/policies-guidelines/personal-time-off-policy/understanding-personal-time-off/>

# MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES FOR MBP STUDENTS

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In a crisis, visit the closest Emergency Room or call 911. For a more complete list of resources, please visit: <https://medbio.utoronto.ca/mental-health-resources>

## **Counselling**

### **School of Graduate Studies Embedded Counsellors (free)**

Phone: 416-978-8030, Ext. 5.

Book an appointment for counselling by phone or walk-in at 214 College Street, Room 111

Note: Phone rarely answered; may be on hold for 30-60 minutes.

### **OISE Psychology Clinic (~\$25/session)**

Email: [oiseclinic@utoronto.ca](mailto:oiseclinic@utoronto.ca), Phone: 416-978-0620

Location: 252 Bloor Street West, Suite 7-296

**Free Walk-In Counselling Services:** List of locations at [www.utgsu.ca/insurance/walk-in-counselling/](http://www.utgsu.ca/insurance/walk-in-counselling/)

## **Community Helplines: 24-hour access to anonymous support (unless otherwise noted)**

**Good 2 Talk Student Helpline:** 1-866-925-5454

**Distress Center Hotline:** 416-408-4357

**Suicide Prevention Hotline:** 1-800-273-8255

**Gerstein Center Mental Health Crisis Line:** 416-929-5200

**Assaulted Women's Helpline:** 416-863-0511

**My SSP for International Students:** 1-844-451-9700

**Anishnawbe Health Mental Health Crisis Line for Aboriginal students:** 416-891-8606

**Drug and Alcohol Helpline:** 1-800-565-8603

**Ontario Mental Health Helpline:** 1-866-531-2600

**Ontario Problem Gambling Helpline:** 1-888-230-3505

**Sexual Assault & Domestic Violence Care Centre:** 416-323-6040

**Toronto Rape Crisis Centre:** 416-597-8808

**LGBTQ Youthline** (peer support, open Sun-Fri 4-9pm): 1-800-268-9688

## **Online Mental Health Resources**

**UTGSU Wellness Portal** (<http://uoft.me/wellnessportal>): Information hub for wellness resources at U of T.

**U of T Safety & Support** (<http://safety.utoronto.ca>): Compilation of on- or near-campus resources for crises.

**Graduate Peer Support Network** (<https://uoftgpsn.ca/>): A student-led, student-centred initiative that aims to support University of Toronto graduate students in their health and well-being.

**Identify, Assist, Refer Training** (<http://iar.utoronto.ca>): Online training module to provide tools to help a friend.

**LinkMentalHealth.com** (<http://www.linkmentalhealth.com>): Help to find local therapists specific to your needs.

**eMentalHealth.ca** (<https://www.ementalhealth.ca/>): Search engine for local mental health resources.

**TranQool** (<https://tranqool.com>): Video-based counselling and therapy.

**Be Safe** (<https://besafeapp.ca/>): App for creating a safety plan to prepare for a crisis.

**Headspace** (<https://www.headspace.com>): App to aid with mindfulness and meditation.

*Compiled by the MBPGSA Mental Health & Wellness Committee.*

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND WRITING SUPPORT

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The office of Graduate Centre for Academic Communication (formerly English Language and Writing Support) will provide professional development to graduate students who wish to improve their oral and written communication skills. The Office offers individual consultations and a range of workshops and free non-credit courses for both native and non-native speakers of English. Their aim is to teach students to express their ideas precisely, edit their work effectively, and present their research confidently. For more information and registration, please visit <https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/resources-supports/gcac/>.

## PLAGIARISM

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It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and avoid plagiarism in their work. The University's understanding of plagiarism is found in the Code of Behavior on Academic Matters and includes the following statements:

"It shall be an offence for a student knowingly ... to represent as one's own idea or expression of an idea or work of another in any academic examination or term test or in connection with any other form of academic work, i.e., to commit plagiarism."

*Wherever in the Code an offence is described as depending on "knowing", the offence shall likewise be deemed to have been committed if the person ought reasonably to have known.*

All students should consult the following website: <https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/policies-guidelines/academic-integrity-resources/>.

There is a link in this website to an article titled 'Plagiarize'; it is a very useful document.

### ***Policy on the Appropriate Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence in MBP***

For PhD theses: Students must follow the SGS Guidance on the Appropriate Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence in Graduate Theses (found here: <https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/about/guidance-on-the-use-of-generative-artificial-intelligence/>). In particular, the use of generative AI tools in any aspect of thesis research or writing must only be done with the prior approval of the supervisor and supervisory committee.

For Master's theses and proposals for qualifying/reclassification exams: students must follow the SGS Guidance on the Appropriate Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence in Graduate Theses with regards to these documents, as if they were PhD theses.

For coursework: policies for use of generative artificial intelligence must be set by course coordinators and included in the syllabus. For any uses of generative AI that are not clearly allowed in the syllabus, students must get prior approval of the course coordinator.

**Guidance:**

Adapted from: World Association of Medical Editors: <https://wame.org/page3.php?id=106>

MBP students who present material (proposal, thesis, seminar slides) which includes the output of a chatbot are responsible for the material generated by the chatbot, including its accuracy. Note that plagiarism is “the practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own”, not just the verbatim repetition of previously published text. It is the author's responsibility to ensure that the content reflects the author's data and ideas and is not plagiarism, fabrication or falsification.

## CRISIS AND SUPPORT SERVICES FOR STUDENTS

<p>Feeling Distressed? <i>Resources available to U of T students in distress</i></p>	<p><a href="http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/feeling-distressed">http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/feeling-distressed</a></p>
<p>Counselling and Psychological Services <i>Counselling for emotional or psychological problems</i> Psychiatric Service <i>Assessment and treatment of emotional or psychiatric concerns</i></p>	<p>416-978-8070</p>
<p>Student Crisis Response Program Coordinator <i>Available to consult about students in distress or difficulty</i></p>	<p>416-946-7111</p>
<p>Community Safety Office <i>Available to consult with students, staff and faculty concerned about issues of personal and community safety</i></p>	<p>416-978-1485</p>
<p>Assault Counselor/Educator <i>Available to consult with staff and faculty concerned about issues related to assault</i></p>	<p>416-978-0174</p>
<p>Campus Chaplains' Office <i>University chaplains representing major world religions available for consultation on a range of issues, from religious practice to personal concerns.</i> <a href="http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/mf/chaplains">http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/mf/chaplains</a></p>	<p>416-946-3120 or 416-946-3119</p>
<p>Sexual and Gender Diversity Office <i>Available to consult on issues of concern to the LGBTQ community</i></p>	<p>416-946-5624</p>
<p>Centre for International Experience <i>Offers consultation on issues or concerns related to culture and ethnicity</i> <a href="http://cie.utoronto.ca">http://cie.utoronto.ca</a></p>	<p>416-978-2564</p>
<p>Health &amp; Wellness Counselling Service at SGS <i>To better meet the diverse needs of the graduate student population, graduate students can access counselling services at the School of Graduate Studies, 65 St. George St.</i></p>	<p>416-978-8070</p>
<p>Counselling and Learning Skills Services <i>An hour is set aside each day to see students on an emergency basis</i></p>	<p>416-978-8070</p>



<p>Psychiatric Service  <i>Call Psychiatric Service and identify yourself and the situation to the receptionist. If it is necessary to speak to the clinician-on-call immediately, say so. The receptionist will inform the clinician-on-call, who will respond to the caller. The clinician will assess the situation and determine a course of action.</i></p>	416-978-8070
<p>Health Service  <i>Caller should tell reception the matter is urgent. Reception will immediately notify a nurse, who will screen the student for care.</i></p>	416-978-8030
<p>Good2Talk Student Helpline  <i>Professional counseling, information and referrals helpline for mental health, addictions, and student well-being.</i></p>	1-866-925-5454

#### After Hours Emergencies

<p>Gerstein Centre  <i>Free, voluntary, and confidential crisis intervention service over the phone and in-person. Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.</i></p>	416-929-5200
<p>Distress Centre  <i>Provides a 24-hour telephone crisis hotline.</i></p>	416-408-4357
<p>University of Toronto Police</p>	416-978-2222

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