

Graduate Studies in the Faculty of Environment

2024-25 Annual Report of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies

(with input from Cynthiya Subramaniam and Christina Pope)

Current Enrollment:

Graduate studies programs in the Faculty of Environment continue to attract high quality applications and admissions. The Dean's Doctoral Initiative (DDI) has continued into the eleventh year, serving both domestic and international students. Our research clusters continue to help students identify research areas and find potential supervisors. In Fall 2024, 130 master's and 22 doctoral students joined our faculty, bringing our student headcount to 587 (down from 636 in 2023). Of these, 223 are pursuing their doctoral degree, and 118 are international students. When weighing part-time students as 0.3 units, the total full-time equivalent (FTE) in Fall 2025 was 442 graduate students (Figure 1).

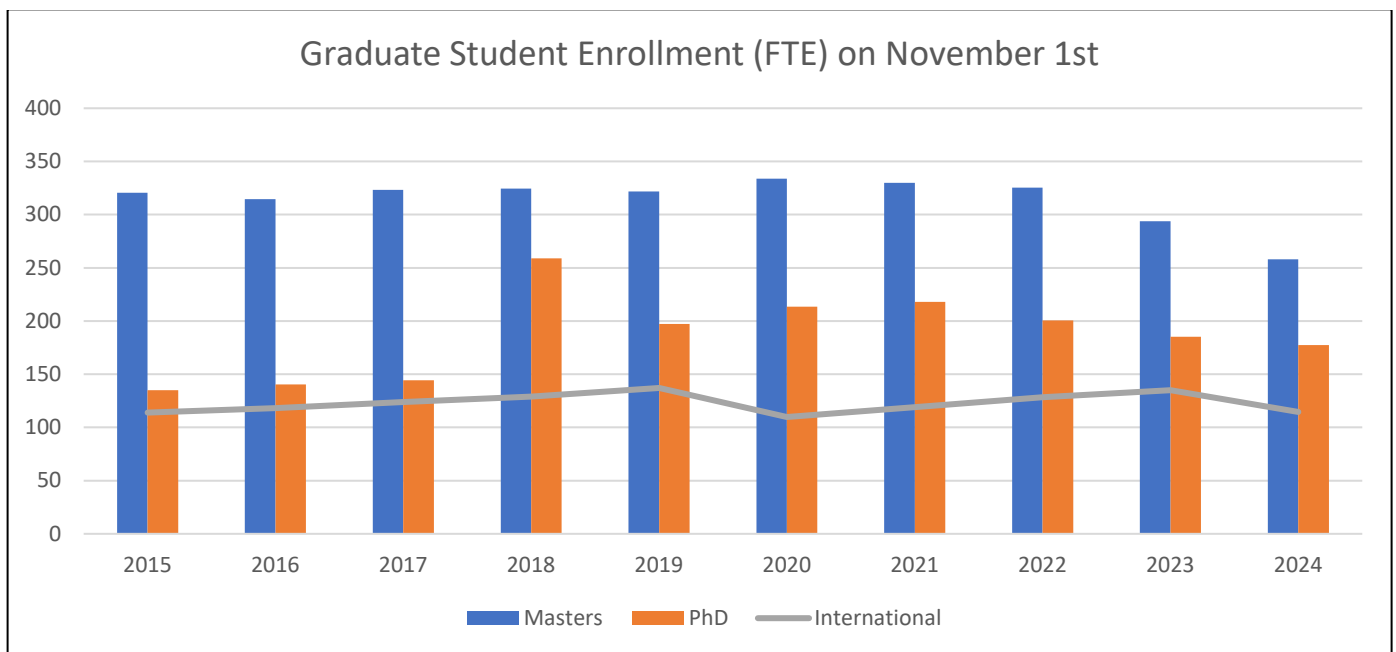


Figure 1: FTE graduate student enrolment in the Faculty of Environment; 2015 - 2024.

Demand

Applications are down from our historic high in Fall 2020 but have increased from last year. We have received 574 applications for Fall 2025 (Figure 2).

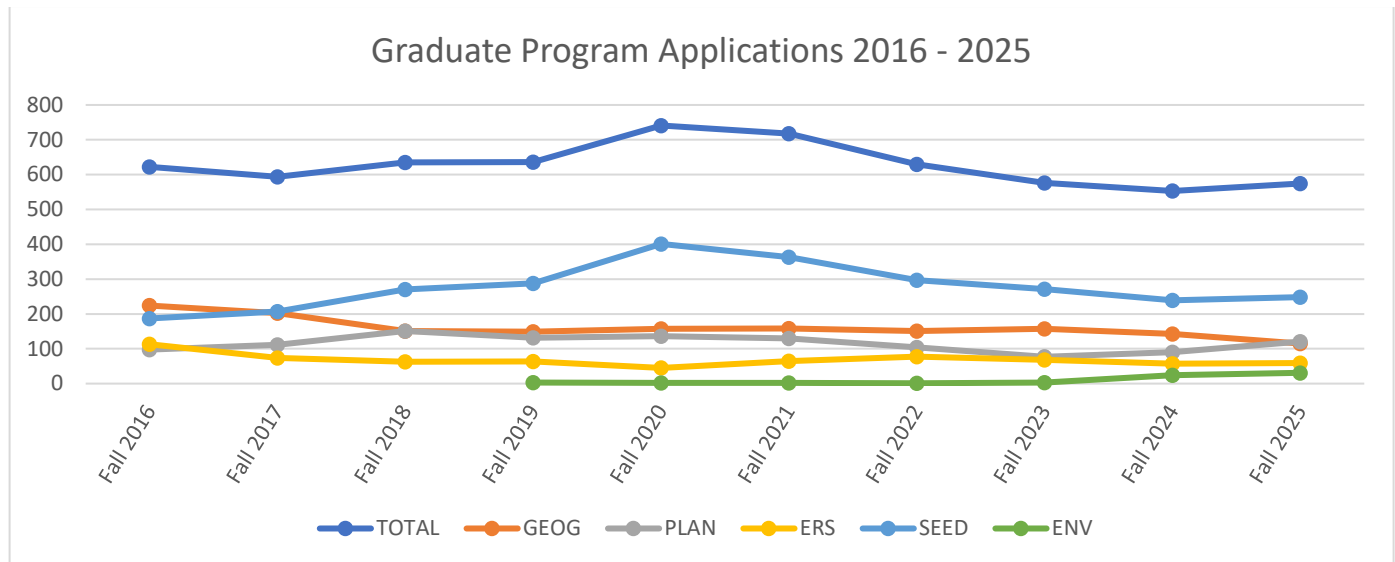


Figure 2: Number of Graduate Program Applications, by unit, Fall 2016 - 2025.

Doctoral recruitment: We continue to attract high quality applicants. The Dean's Doctoral Initiative guarantees funding of \$113,404 for students across the four years. This year, the Dean's Doctoral Initiative offered 10 awards to domestic students and 5 awards to international students. Environment offers five entrance awards worth \$10,000 for exceptional doctoral students. These award recipients were selected from a strong pool of applicants. Seven domestic and nine international DDI students entered our programs in Fall 2024.

Total doctoral applications for Fall 2024 were 83 (26 domestic), down from 103 for Fall 2023 (33 domestic). As of May 6, total doctoral applications for Fall 2025 are 107 (33 are domestic).

- Domestic applications account for approximately 30%, similar to previous years.
- As of May 6, we have made 32 offers (14 domestic), and this is ongoing. This is the same as Fall 2024 when we had made 32 offers (14 domestic) by this time.
- As of May 6, we have 22 offers accepted (13 domestic). By comparison, in Fall 2024 we had 25 offers accepted (11 domestic).
 - Of the 9 offers accepted by international applicants, 8 of them have applied for (or are exempt from) the Provincial Attestation Letter (PAL).

Masters recruitment: For 2025, funding packages for domestic research masters students were adjusted and are worth approximately \$17,849 to up to \$31,773. Non-thesis or professional masters students with high academic averages were eligible for entrance awards worth \$2,000 to up to \$4,000. Last year, we offered 8 IMAE awards to incoming international master's students, with 6 students entering our programs last fall.

Total masters' applications for Fall 2024 were 465 (238 domestic), down from 473 for Fall 2023 (202 domestic). As of May 6, total master's application for Fall 2025 is 467 (250 domestic). The highlights are as follows:

- Domestic applications account for 54%, which is higher than previous years (2024 = 49%, 2023 = 43%)
- As of May 6, we have made 267 offers (178 domestic), and this is ongoing. In comparison, in

Fall 2023 we made 238 (165 domestic) at this time.

- As of May 6, we have 170 (110 domestic) offers accepted, compared to 142 at this time last year (99 domestic)
 - Of the 60 offers accepted by international applicants, 25 of them have applied for (or are exempt from) the Provincial Attestation Letter (PAL).

Environment 2035

Work is continuing towards the building of a Graduate School of Environment (GSE). To date, we have:

- Undertaken broad consultation within the Faculty of Environment, the GSPA, and the Secretariat regarding the structure of the Graduate School of Environment and the services it would provide. This has included preliminary discussions, including town hall events with students, regarding the elements that would be included in a space for the school, as well as a preliminary budget for renovations and potential fundraising activities associated with the upcoming campaign. This would eventually lead to a formal launch event.
- Undertaken a review of existing graduate programs. This has included a discussion and update of coursework masters programs (specifically the climate change and sustainability management degrees), and the discussion of options for greater sharing of courses and resources at the doctoral level.

Next Steps:

During the 2025-26 academic year, work will continue on the following initiatives:

- Make refinements to the organizational structure of the GSE. Continue to evolve the conceptual design for the GSE space. Refine a fundraising plan for the GSE.
- Explore options for finding greater commonality in the PhD programs within Environment. Possible options here include the development of common core courses (methods and theory), and a detailed discussion of a possible common PhD in Environment, encompassing some or all of the units within the faculty.

Changes in the Grad team:

- SEED welcomed Janine Graham as the Graduate Program Administrator for the research programs to cover Anastasiya Saparaliyeva's extended leave.

Other highlights:

- Recruitment events in the fall included six informational webinars, one in-person graduate information night and three university fairs.
- The Faculty of Environment was well represented at this year's GRADflix. Kate Manninger (GEM), Bhargav Singh Thakur (SEED), Jake E. Ferguson (GEM) and Adwoa Appiah (SEED) represented Environment in the final showcase.
- Natasha Serrao, PhD candidate in the School of Environment, Resources and Sustainability, was selected as a finalist in the 2025 SSHRC's Storytellers Challenge
- Alexa Bennett (PhD Candidate, GEM) and Celeste Morínigo Báez (PhD Candidate, SEED) were both recipients of the Flight 302 Legacy Award.
- Satveer Dhillon and Richard Adeleke (both GEM) were both recipients of 2024-25 Vanier Scholarships
- Michelle Anagnostou (GEM) is a recipient of the 2025 Governor General's Gold Medal.

Special thanks to the graduate team for the collaborative work and their efforts to contribute to the Faculty's vision of delivering high quality education and enrich student experience.

Scholarship Recipients:

Congratulations to the following scholarship recipients:

| Award Name | First Name | Last Name | Department | Program |
|---------------------|-------------------|----------------|------------|-------------|
| NSERC - PGS D | Julie | DePauw | GEOG | PhD - Water |
| SSHRC - CGS | Vriezen | Rachael | GGOV | PhD |
| | Lok | Ryan | PLAN | PhD |
| SSHRC - Doctoral | Arriagada Oyarzun | Nayadeth | SERS | PhD |
| | Feor | Leah | SEED | PhD |
| Tri-agency - NSERC | Santia | Veronica | GEOG | MSc |
| | Shannon | Kristie Marie | GEOG | MSc |
| Tri-agency - SSHRC | El-shayeb | Farah | GEOG | MES |
| | Simoes | Kyara | GEOG | MES |
| | Yeung | Yuki Ching Yee | GEOG | PhD |
| | Gatti | Nathalie | GGOV | MA |
| | Chan | Matthew | PLAN | MA |
| | Hydesmith | Eliza | PLAN | MA |
| | Chen | Karen | SEED | MES |
| | Kooshna | Prashansa | SEED | MES |
| | Scarfone | Joseph | SEED | MES |
| | Willis | Duncan | SEED | MES |
| OGS - Domestic | Bennett | Alexa | GEOG | PhD |
| | Bird | Melanie | GEOG | MSc |
| | Carpenter | Aidan | GEOG | MA |
| | Chen | Tara | GEOG | PhD |
| | Cottar | Shaierree | GEOG | PhD |
| | Davis | Fran | GEOG | PhD |
| | Gospodyn | Larissa | GEOG | PhD |
| | Hunter | Miranda Louise | GEOG | PhD - Water |
| | Kanda | Neha | GEOG | PhD - Water |
| | Malhas | Saif | GEOG | PhD |
| | Riddoch | Bronwyn | GEOG | PhD |
| | Stebalj | Victoria | GEOG | PhD |
| | Cortinovis | Stephanie | GGOV | PhD |
| | Tracey | Hope Elizabeth | GGOV | PhD |
| | Abdalla | Salma | PLAN | PhD |
| | Swanson | Kayleigh | PLAN | PhD |
| | Huneke | McKenzie | SEED | PhD |
| | Reid | Brady | SEED | PhD |
| | Coggins | Shaugn | SERS | MES |
| | Sherlock | Cassandra | SERS | PhD - Water |
| OGS - International | Stuart | Savannah | SERS | PhD |
| | Romero Pereira | Carolina | SEED | PhD |

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|-----------|-----------|------|-------------|
| MacKenzie | Carissa | GEOG | PhD - Water |
| Marchant | Tamara | GEOG | MSc |
| Jones | Mackenzie | SERS | PhD |
| Kidd | Jess | SERS | PhD - Water |