



UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO
FACULTY OF ARTS
Department of Political Science

Ph.D. Program Student Handbook

Graduate Chair: Prof. Heather Whiteside
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I. Welcome

We are pleased to welcome you to the Department of Political Science at the University of Waterloo! We hope that you find your experience here to be rich and rewarding. This handbook provides a brief overview of some of the most important information you will need as you start on your graduate student journey.

If you have any questions, please contact:

Graduate Chair: Prof. Heather Whiteside – h2whiteside@uwaterloo.ca

Graduate Coordinator: Becca Deschamps – r2deschamps@uwaterloo.ca

II. Orientation

a) Graduate Orientation Schedule

Faculty and department-specific events will be offered early in September. The detailed Orientation schedule will be communicated to you by the Graduate Coordinator over the summer. As a new student, you now have access to [Waterloo Grad Ready](#) – a virtual program and space to support you as you begin your graduate program.

It will offer you opportunities to build connections with students, faculty, and staff; resources to help you transition to graduate life; and workshops to support your ongoing graduate experience.

Our graduate studies community has come together to support you in this new online environment and will add new information and programming throughout the coming months. Please check [Waterloo Grad Ready](#) for updates.

b) Faculty of Arts Orientation

Faculty of Arts students are encouraged to attend the barbecue hosted by the faculty on campus. Dates will be communicated to you by your Graduate Coordinator through email.

c) Political Science Department Orientation

During the Department orientation, you will have a chance to meet the Graduate Chair and Graduate Coordinator, as well as receive information on various aspects of being a graduate student, including Teaching Assistant duties, scholarships, Co-op, the library, and mental health resources. All new students are required to attend.

d) Meetings with the Graduate Chair

The Graduate Chair will be available for additional discussions after the Department's Orientation. During these meetings, you can discuss your course planning, research interests, and any questions you may have.

e) Scholarship Information Sessions

Information sessions on application procedures for the Ontario Graduate Scholarship (OGS) and Tri-Council Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Scholarships will be

available to students in mid-September. Representatives from these agencies will present and answer questions. Please check the [Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs website](#) for more information.

III. Student Responsibilities

a) Graduate Student Duties and Obligations

All graduate students are expected to perform their duties and fulfil their obligations, which include:

- Being courteous and respectful to your peers, faculty, and department staff.
- Responding to any emails promptly during your regular working hours.
- Checking your office mailbox regularly (students may receive important HR information, department notices, and inter-office mail from faculty)
- Attending department events (Orientation, Speaker Series, PSCI Awards Ceremony, PSCI Graduate Student Conference, PSCI Annual Book Launch, etc.) unless there is a conflict with a class or TA duties.
- Notifying your supervisor and the department if you will be away from the campus for more than one week.
- Regularly checking in with your supervisor in-person/online, especially during research terms.

b) Academic Integrity

The purpose of the Graduate AIM is to give all new graduate students the same, basic understanding of academic integrity at UWaterloo. This aggregation of information and resources will help students transition from the expectations of other institutions to the standards of academic integrity at the University of Waterloo.

The [Graduate Academic Integrity Module \(Graduate AIM\)](#) is an online course, managed by the Office of Academic Integrity, which students can access through [LEARN](#).

The Graduate AIM is comprised of a tutorial and a quiz. The tutorial has three primary sections:

1. Crediting Your Sources – plagiarism, citing properly
2. Collaborating with Others – inappropriate collaboration, intellectual property, patents
3. Acting with Honesty – cheating, fabrication, falsification

The quiz requires students to apply the concepts they read about in the tutorial material. Students must receive a mark of at least 75% on the quiz in order to pass the Graduate AIM. They are allowed to retake the quiz if necessary. The quiz must be successfully completed within the first 8 weeks of the student's first term.

c) Teaching Assistantships

"Being a Teaching Assistant provided new perspectives and many rewarding opportunities. Moving to the front of the classroom tested my aptitude and knowledge and allowed me to experience new and exciting facets of academia. A truly invaluable experience for early and passionate researchers."

*– Christopher Abbott, MA class of 2016-2017
TA for PSCI 283 and INTST 101*

For most students, TAs are a core component of their base funding package. TA assignments will be announced in August for the Fall term, December for the Winter term, and April for the Spring term.

[The Centre for Teaching Excellence](#) (CTE) provides graduate students with numerous resources to prepare for their classroom experience. All students who hold a teaching assistantship should review the extensive collection of [teaching tips](#) the CTE offers.

The Department encourages graduate students interested in furthering their teaching practices to enroll in one of the CTE's [teaching certificate programs](#). All completed certificates will appear as an official milestone on the student's transcript. It is also recommended that you check the teaching tips for the online classes.

TAs will also be required to read the TA Handbook and sign their Graduate Teaching Assistant Agreement, which outlines the responsibilities associated with the employment portion of the TA-ship. It must be submitted to the Graduate Program Coordinator no later than the second week of the academic term in which the TA-ship is held.

Students must have a minimum of 75% average to maintain their TA-ship.

d) Proctoring Duties

As part of their TA duties, students are sometimes required to proctor midterm and final exams (including, potentially, for other courses, as indicated in the TA contract template). It is recommended that you do not book any flights or make arrangements to leave the campus until the exam period is finished. The exam period for each term is listed in the [Academic Deadlines and Events Calendar](#).

Once the exam schedule is released, please check with the instructor you TA for to see when you will be needed for marking. Please note that you may be assigned to proctor a course for which you are not the usual TA.

e) Payroll and Workday

Students hired as Teaching Assistants or Research Assistants are required to complete an onboarding process through Workday, the University of Waterloo's HR system.

Steps to complete the onboarding process

1. Once you are hired into Workday, you will receive an email to claim/confirm your WatIAM system identity from watiam@uwaterloo.ca.
2. Using your WatIAM, log in to Workday to complete the onboarding items in your inbox. View the [Workday User Guides](#) (New Employees > Onboarding) for step-by-step instructions.
3. You will need to enter your personal information, tax forms, SIN number, and banking information in order to be paid through direct deposit.

Graduate students who have completed onboarding in a previous term will be prompted to verify or update their information. If you need assistance, please contact hrhelp@uwaterloo.ca or 519-888-4567 ext. 45935.

Important note: Two-factor authentication (2FA) is now mandatory for most central services. You must sign up for 2FA to gain access to Workday and if you are not, you will see an error message. Learn how to sign up on the 2FA website.

TA and RA positions are considered employment by UWaterloo and therefore positions are subject to Federal and Provincial income tax regulations.

f) Mandatory TA Training

Your online TA training will be completed in the [Teaching Assistant Training](#) site in LEARN. TAs are asked to complete the following mandatory modules:

- Preparing to TA at Waterloo
- Supporting Student Mental Health
- Giving and Receiving Feedback

You must complete the TA training modules by September 15. Your completion records will be shared with your department. Please submit proof of completion of each module to your Graduate Programs Coordinator by email.

Please contact cte-grad@uwaterloo.ca if you encounter any trouble accessing the LEARN site.

g) Mandatory Safety Training

The training modules below are required for compliance with the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act](#) (AODA). All employees, whether full-time, part-time or contract are required to take this training.

For compliance with Ontario's Occupational Health and Safety Act, the following online training is considered mandatory for all employees:

Employee Safety Orientation

- Go to the [LEARN](#) home page.
- Login using your University of Waterloo nexus username and password (same as WatIAM).
- Click the "Self Registration" link at top of page
- Select "Employee safety orientation (SO1001)" from the list.
- Note: if you receive a "not authorized" error, contact [LEARN support](#) to have your User ID added to LEARN.

Accessibility Training

- Go to the [LEARN](#) home page.
- Login using your University of Waterloo nexus username and password (same as WatIAM).
- Click the "Self Registration" link at the top of the page

- Select “Accessibility Training” from the list – you have the choice of reviewing the transcript for all sessions or completing the interactive modules online

Employee WHMIS 2015

- Go to the [LEARN](#) home page.
- Login using your University of Waterloo nexus username and password (same as WatIAM).
- Click the "Self Registration" link at top of page
- Select "Employee WHMIS 2015" from the list.

Workplace Violence Awareness

- Go to the [LEARN](#) home page.
- Login using your University of Waterloo nexus username and password (same as WatIAM).
- Click the "Self Registration" link at top of page
- Select "Workplace Violence Awareness (SO1081)" from the list.

Note: if you receive a "not authorized" error, contact [LEARN support](#) to have your User ID added to LEARN.

Once you have completed the above training, please provide the Graduate Program Coordinator with proof of completion. A screenshot from your Workday account (go to *Learning* in the application menu, then *More* under the Progress menu, then *Learning History*) or LEARN account showing you have completed the training is sufficient. You will not be able to begin your TA duties until all 4 modules have been completed.

h) Tuition Payment | Fee Arrangement

Student Financial Services will post your tuition fees on [QUEST](#) approximately one month prior to the beginning of each term. Payment/fee arrangements can be made through an online banking payment, by certified cheque, through payroll deduction (with a promissory note) for Teaching Assistant (TA)/Research Assistant (RA) earnings, and from scholarship/bursary payments. For more information about tuition fees, fee arrangements, promissory note, and payment deadlines refer to the [Student Financial Services](#) website.

If you require a confirmation of funding letter for TA/RA earnings, please contact the Graduate Program Coordinator once you have received a notice from Student Financial Services regarding Fee deadlines. Confirmation of funding letters is only required if your funding does not appear as *anticipated aid* in Quest.

i) Email

All students are required to set up their [UWaterloo email account](#). All program-related messages will be sent to your UWaterloo email account only. *Any problems arising from the failure of a student to check their email in this account will be the full responsibility of the student.* If you would rather use another account, please set up your UWaterloo account to forward to your personal account.

IV. Getting Started

a) WatIAM Student Account

Students set up their [WatIAM account](#) during the application process. This username and password give you access to all UWaterloo applications, such as email, computer network and wireless internet access, LEARN, and [Quest](#) (information system for student registration, financial aid, and personal information).

b) Student Card (WatCard)

Visit the [WatCard Office](#) (located within The Centre, in Needles Hall (NH) at the beginning of the term to pick up your student card. You will need to show a valid piece of photo ID. The WatCard is your one card to access many facilities and services both on and off campus. You will use it daily for food purchases, photocopying, Physical Activities Complex access, libraries, Grand River Transit access and computer labs.

c) Graduate Student Association (GSA)

University of Waterloo students are members of the [Graduate Student Association](#) and are encouraged to contact them for information regarding related services and events.

d) Political Science GSA (PSGSA)

In addition to the GSA, Political Science students have the opportunity to join the PSGSA. The PSGSA is entirely student-organized and run; elections occur each year for the position of President, Vice President, Treasurer, and, if there is enough interest in the cohort, an executive committee.

There are usually at least three Department of Political Science-related responsibilities the PSGSA runs/organizes each year:

- Meet the Professor night (usually hosted at the Grad House in October)
- [Graduate Student Conference](#) (usually held in April, organized by the PSGSA)
- [Inquiry and Insight Graduate Student Journal](#) (this can include papers presented at the Graduate Student Conference, or can be its own entity — to be completed by the end of the cohort's third term)

The PSGSA is also responsible for hosting social events for Political Science graduate students throughout the year. Social events should be inclusive for all PSCI grad students to attend.

The Treasurer will be given access to the PSGSA RBC bank account. Funding for the PSGSA is provided on a term basis by the GSA. Additional funding can be requested through the Faculty of Arts, PSCI Department, or the GSA [Graduate Studies Endowment Fund](#).

The PSGSA is also tasked with electing a student representative to attend most* Graduate Committee meetings. This student must commit to Graduate Committee meetings for the full academic year (three terms). They are responsible for keeping the cohort informed of relevant updates, and for reporting any questions/concerns they may have about the Conference and Journal to the Graduate Committee or the Graduate Coordinator.

** Due to the sensitive and confidential information shared during the admission process, the student representative will not attend any Graduate Committee meetings pertaining to admissions. Similarly, the student representative does not attend any meetings that might deal with disciplinary matters or specific student files, etc.*

e) Office Space

All graduate students in the Department of Political Science have access to the Graduate Student Office (HH 346). The Graduate Program Coordinator will provide you with your key code access for the room. Please remember that the office is a shared space intended for *graduate student use only*.

PSCI graduate students will have access to two additional office spaces: HH 350 and HH 351. TAs may book HH 351 for their office hours and appointments with students. Bookings can be made through the Outlook calendar as one event or recurring meetings. Outside of TA office hours, undergraduate students should not be in the office. For security reasons, please make sure the door is shut and locked if you are the last one to leave. HH 350 is another bookable space for PSCI graduate students that must be booked through the Outlook calendar.

f) Mailboxes

Each student will be assigned a mailbox in HH 346. *Please be sure to check it at least once a week.* The mailboxes are categorized according to the first letter of your last name.

g) Computing Facilities

Graduate students have access to the computer labs managed by the [Arts Computing Office](#).

h) Printing & Copying

Dana Porter Library and David Centre Library offer [printing resources](#) for students. [W Print](#) also offers printing options. A copier that is available 24 hours is located in the Student Life Centre on the first floor.

V. Registration and Enrolment

a) Quest (Student Information System)

You will use Quest to register for classes, update your address, view your tuition account, and your unofficial transcript.

New students only have access to [Quest](#) *after* they have been issued an Offer of Admission and their status is listed as 'Matriculated'. Students who have outstanding admission conditions do not have access.

Having difficulties using Quest?

- [How do I...? instructions for using Quest](#)
- Email support: gsquest@uwaterloo.ca

b) Course Enrolment Period

Course enrolment at the University of Waterloo is done on a term-by-term basis and will begin approximately one month prior to the start of each term. During the course enrolment period, graduate students can add and drop classes using Quest. Given that the Faculty of Arts imposes enrolment minimums, we ask that you register for your classes as soon as possible.

Please note the following important details:

- Email the Graduate Coordinator for permission to enroll in graduate classes labelled *Instructor/Department Consent Required*.
- Graduate students who are not fee-arranged and have enrolled in classes will have their classes dropped at the end of the third week of classes (end of class enrolment period).
- Graduate students who wish to drop a class after the enrolment period ends may do so, but a grade of *Withdrawn, no credit granted (WD)* will be applied and the class will remain on the transcript. Note that WD is not an academic penalty.
- Please see the [Graduate Studies Academic Calendar](#) for a complete list of important academic dates, including open course enrolment for graduate students.
- Outside of the course enrolment periods listed in the Graduate Studies Academic Calendar, students with special circumstances can petition to drop or add a class using a [course drop add form](#) ([Graduate Studies forms website](#))

If you are unsure which courses you would like to take, students are encouraged to discuss their options with their faculty supervisor, the Graduate Coordinator, or the Graduate Chair. You can also consult the [Schedule of Graduate Classes](#) for information on courses offered each term.

c) Declare Supervisor Form

If you change supervisors at any point in time during your studies, you need to obtain signatures from both your current and new supervisors using the [Change of Supervisor](#) form and submit the signed copy to your Graduate Program Coordinator.

d) Drop-Add Form

Complete the [Drop-Add form](#) when adding, dropping, or making course changes after the registration deadline; auditing a course; or enrolling for undergraduate courses. You will need to sign it, have the instructor sign it, and submit it to the Graduate Program Coordinator.

Students are encouraged to finalize all course changes within the first week of the term. Once a course starts, any course assignments (and associated grades) missed prior to enrolling in the course will be forfeited.

e) Reading Courses

Reading courses may occasionally supplement regular offerings in the program, although it is understood that they will be approved at the discretion of the Graduate Chair. Due to faculty workload commitments, not all requests, even when otherwise justified, can be accepted. Students will normally be permitted to take one reading course as part of their PhD degree. Arrangements and faculty approval must be completed no later than two weeks after the beginning of the term.

Formal Approval

Once you and the faculty member agree to a reading course, you will need to fill out a [Reading Course form](#). When the faculty member is satisfied with the reading course proposal, the form is signed and submitted to the Graduate Program Coordinator.

Registration in a Reading Course

Once the reading course proposal has been approved, the Graduate Program Coordinator will email you a permission number. Please register ASAP after receiving this number.

Adding a reading course on Quest is the same as adding an in-class course:

1. Enter the four-digit class number in the field box provided
2. TAB out of the field (do not use the enter key)
3. This will prompt a blue link (subject name and number) beside the field box, select this
4. This will open the page where you will enter the permission number
5. Submit the request

f) OVGS Courses

An [Ontario Visiting Graduate Student](#) (OVGS) form must be submitted to the Graduate Program Coordinator if you wish to take a course at another Ontario university (such as Wilfrid Laurier University). You will indicate the course(s) to be taken and the term during which the course(s) is/are offered at the host university.

Enrolment is only finalized once the form has been approved by the Department Chair and Graduate Dean of both the home university and host university. PhD students will normally be allowed to register for one OVGS course during their program.

Course(s) selected must be at the graduate level and there must be no comparable course(s) offered at the University of Waterloo. The course(s) selected must be required for your degree program. Courses may not be taken as "extras" or "audits". Students must obtain at least a 75% (B) in any course taken at another university.

VI. PhD in Political Science at the University of Waterloo

The PhD in Political Science is a relatively new research program that integrates rigorous requirements and training consistent with disciplinary norms while offering innovative features, flexibility, and professional development designed to prepare students for both traditional academic careers and non-academic career paths.

a) Core Program Options

I. Regular Stream

All students enter the program in the Regular Stream, which features the completion of six graduate-level courses (0.5 credit weight), a comprehensive exam in the student's major field and either a 2nd comprehensive exam (if doing a second field) or the completion of an analytical essay (if doing a custom concentration), mandatory professional development milestones, a thesis proposal and oral defence, and a thesis and oral defence. These are the requirements for all students whether or not they opt into one of the add-on streams.

II. Experiential Stream add-on

Students have the option to take the Experiential Stream which features either the co-op option or an internship (such as a job through Mitacs), and additional professional development modules. Students in the co-op program will complete 12 months of work experience which is on top of the traditional four-year academic program. An alternative to the co-op program is an internship of 4-8 months. Students must be officially enrolled in the co-op program before securing a job for the position to be approved for co-op credit. Students must also take WIL 601 in advance of the work term.

III. Teaching Stream add-on

Students can also opt into the Teaching Stream, featuring additional professional development requirements and a mentored teaching experience (normally this will include the opportunity to teach a course at the University of Waterloo, although be advised that this depends on departmental needs and available resources).

b) Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Statement

The University of Waterloo seeks to reflect diversity in its student population, teaching, and training. Applications are welcome from qualified individuals of all ages, gender identities, cultural, racial, ethnic, and religious backgrounds, sexual orientations, and abilities. We believe in creating a departmental culture that embraces unique individual attributes and fosters a diverse and inclusive environment. To do so, we plan to engage in continuous and active efforts to remove barriers, address inequities, and promote reconciliation.

For more information on human rights, equity, and inclusion at the University of Waterloo, please visit the [Equity Office Website](#). If you are in need of support, or you wish to increase your knowledge, skills, or capacity on equity issues, please explore the [University of Waterloo Equity Office's Resources and Tools](#).

VII. Overview of the Program

a) Program Timeline

(Note: co-op/internship work terms do not count towards the four-year academic timeline)

Full-time students				
	PhD, Political Science, Regular Program	PhD, Political Science, Teaching Stream add-on	PhD, Political Science, Experiential Stream add-on (internship)	PhD, Political Science, Experiential Stream add-on (Co-op)
YEAR 1	<p>Fall & Winter: Six graduate-level courses (PSCI 600, PSCI 601, plus at least one course in the student's major field and at least one in their second field/concentration).</p> <p>Spring: Comprehensive exam prep</p>			
YEAR 2	<p>Fall: <u>Comprehensive Examination</u> primary field, (September) and secondary field comprehensive exam or custom concentration essay (October)</p> <p>Winter: <u>Thesis Proposal</u> defence (by end of April)</p>			
			<p>WIL 601 (taken ahead of the internship, i.e., Fall term)</p> <p>Spring term Year 2 is the earliest term a student may start an internship job (normally a minimum 4-month internship will be required).</p> <p>Internship students must complete certain mandatory professional development workshops counted toward the <u>PhD Experiential Seminar</u> prior to their internship job (See section 4.4 for details.)</p>	<p>WIL 601 (taken ahead of the work term, i.e., Fall term)</p> <p>Spring term Year 2 is the earliest term a student may start work-terms (12 months of work-term required).</p> <p>Co-op students must complete certain mandatory professional development workshops counted toward the <u>PhD Experiential Seminar</u> prior to their work-term. (See section 4.4 for details.)</p>

Full-time students				
	PhD, Political Science, Regular Program	PhD, Political Science, Teaching Stream add-on	PhD, Political Science, Experiential Stream add-on (internship)	PhD, Political Science, Experiential Stream add-on (Co-op)
YEAR 3	<p>All terms:</p> <p>Research and writing of dissertation</p> <p>Three elective professional development modules for completion of <u>PhD Professional Development Seminar</u> (See section 4.4 for a list of options).</p>	<p>All terms:</p> <p>Research and writing of dissertation</p> <p>Completion of mandatory professional development modules counted toward <u>PhD Teaching Seminar</u>: Centre for Teaching Excellence Fundamentals of University Teaching program. Guest Lectures in Political Science (students will receive automatic credit if they have the opportunity to teach their own course as a sessional instructor).</p> <p>Develop a syllabus for a (real or prospective) political science course.</p>	<p>Fall:</p> <p>Research and writing of dissertation</p> <p>Completion of mandatory professional development workshops counted toward <u>PhD Experiential Seminar</u>: Reflective practices in experiential learning Writing resumes Workshop on parallel career planning One or more modules offered by MITACS or other campus partners (see section 4.4 for details).</p> <p>Winter:</p> <p>Internship experience</p> <p>Spring:</p> <p>Internship experience</p>	<p>Fall:</p> <p>Research and writing of dissertation</p> <p>Completion of mandatory professional development workshops counted toward <u>PhD Experiential Seminar</u>: Reflective practices in experiential learning Writing resumes Workshop on parallel career planning One or more modules offered by MITACS or other campus partners (see section 4.4 for details).</p> <p>Winter:</p> <p>Research and writing of dissertation</p> <p>Spring:</p> <p>Work-term</p>
YEAR 4	<p>Fall:</p> <p>Research and writing of dissertation</p> <p>Winter:</p> <p>Research and writing of dissertation</p> <p>Spring:</p> <p>Thesis defence</p>	<p>Fall:</p> <p>Research and writing of dissertation</p> <p>Winter:</p> <p>Research and writing of dissertation</p> <p>Spring:</p> <p>Thesis defence</p>	<p>Fall:</p> <p><u>Internship Report</u> (to be submitted one month after end of job) Research and writing of dissertation</p> <p>Winter:</p> <p>Research and writing of dissertation</p> <p>Spring:</p> <p>Research and writing of dissertation</p>	<p>Fall:</p> <p>Work-term</p> <p>Winter:</p> <p>Work-term</p> <p>Spring:</p> <p>Return to academic programming <u>Work-term Report</u> (to be submitted to the Graduate Coordinator one month after return from work-term)</p>

Full-time students				
	PhD, Political Science, Regular Program	PhD, Political Science, Teaching Stream add-on	PhD, Political Science, Experiential Stream add-on (internship)	PhD, Political Science, Experiential Stream add-on (Co-op)
YEAR 5			Fall: Research and writing of dissertation Winter: Thesis defence	Fall: Research and writing of dissertation Winter: Research and writing of dissertation Spring: Thesis defence

Part-time students		
	PhD, Political Science, Regular Program	PhD, Political Science, Teaching Stream
YEAR 1	Fall & Winter: Up to 4 graduate-level courses (part-time students can take 1-2 courses per term).	
YEAR 2	Fall & Winter: Up to 4 graduate-level courses (part-time students can take 1-2 courses per term) Part-time students must complete their coursework by the end of their fifth term. Part-time students may elect to participate in some professional development workshops during their second year. Spring: Comprehensive exam prep.	
YEAR 3	Fall: <u>Comprehensive Examination</u> (September) Winter: <u>Thesis Proposal</u> defence (by end of April) Spring: Research and writing of dissertation	

Part-time students		
	PhD, Political Science, Regular Program	PhD, Political Science, Teaching Stream
YEAR 4	Fall & Winter: Three elective professional development modules for completion of <u>PhD Professional Development Seminar</u> (see section 4.4 for a list of options) All terms: Research and writing of dissertation	Fall & Winter: Completion of mandatory <u>PhD Professional Development Seminar</u> : Centre for Teaching Excellence Fundamentals of University Teaching program. Two Guest Lectures in Political Science (students will receive automatic credit if they have the opportunity to teach their own course as a sessional instructor). Develop a syllabus for a (real or prospective) Political Science course. All terms: Research and writing of dissertation
YEAR 5	Fall: Research and writing of dissertation Winter: Research and writing of dissertation Spring: Research and writing of dissertation	Fall: Research and writing of dissertation Winter: Research and writing of dissertation Spring: Research and writing of dissertation
YEAR 6	Fall or Winter: <u>Thesis Defence</u>	Fall or Winter: <u>Thesis Defence</u>

b) Major Fields

There are currently three major fields all students must select from: Canadian Politics, International Relations, and Political Economy. Students must take a core course in their major field.

c) Secondary Fields

For their secondary field, students may complete either a 2nd major field or a ‘custom concentration’ based on coursework in a designated area of the discipline (comparative politics, democratic theory, public policy, gender and politics, etc.) or a subfield of their major field (security, rights, etc.). Students must take a course that ‘fits’ their custom concentration, subject to the approval of the Graduate Chair and the student’s supervisor.

d) Degree Requirements

I. Course requirements

All students take six PSCI graduate courses in their first year. All courses offered by the Department are ‘graduate only’ (limited to MA and PhD students). These include ‘core’ courses in the program’s major fields, courses in the student’s second area (which may be another of the three major fields or a custom concentration based on existing electives), PSCI 600 (Political Science Methods), and PSCI 601 (Research and Writing in Political Science).

Core courses: Core courses are designed to help prepare students for comprehensive field examinations in their major field by instilling the advanced theoretical and empirical

foundations of Canadian Politics (PSCI 661 Canadian Political Institutions and PSCI 662 Canadian Political Process), International Relations (PSCI 610 International Relations Theory and PSCI 611 Current Issues in International Relations), or Political Economy (PSCI 690 Theories of Political Economy and PSCI 691 Developments in Political Economy or PSCI 688 Governance of Global Economy).

Elective courses: A suite of electives will be offered each year. These courses will enable students choosing to do their second field as a custom concentration to tailor the content based on coursework. Electives will also help students to fill background gaps for proposed research, provide a more detailed understanding of an important area of study, or broaden students' base of advanced understanding. (For example, PSCI 633 Canadian Public Policy).

II. Milestone requirements

i. PhD Elective Modules for Professional Development

Students in the regular program will complete 3 elective modules from the following list in order to complete the PhD Professional Development Seminar milestone:

1. Practice job talk/job interview
2. Workshops or courses providing additional training in social science methods (with approval by the Graduate Chair)
3. Completion of CTE workshop aimed at graduate students (with approval by the Graduate Chair)
4. Completion of a relevant MITACS Edge workshop/course (with approval by the Graduate Chair)
5. Completion of a relevant Writing and Communications Centre workshop (with approval by the Graduate Chair)
6. Completion of a relevant Centre for Career Action workshop (with approval by the Graduate Chair)
7. Completion of a Counselling Services workshop on mindfulness, cognitive therapy, or practical skills to reduce anxiety
8. Completion of any course or workshop relevant to professional development offered by a campus partner (with approval by the Graduate Chair)

PhD Teaching Seminar for Teaching Stream

Students in the teaching stream will complete the PhD Teaching Seminar milestone, composed of the following modules:

1. Complete the Centre for Teaching Excellence Fundamentals of University Teaching Program.
2. 2 Guest Lectures in Political Science (students will receive automatic credit if they have the opportunity to teach their own course).
3. Develop a syllabus for a (real or prospective) political science course.

PhD Experiential Seminar for Experiential Stream

Students in the experiential stream will complete the PhD Experiential Seminar milestone, composed of the following modules:

1. WIL 601

2. Writing resumes (workshop offered by the Career Centre, to be completed prior to the co-op term or internship work term)
3. Workshop on parallel career planning (offered by the Career Centre)
4. One or more modules offered by MITACS or other campus partners, such as those featuring networking skills, foundations of project management, writing strategic business reports, or any seminar or workshop with the approval of the Graduate Chair.

ii. PhD Comprehensive Examinations

Students will complete a written comprehensive field examination in their first (major) field, followed by a mandatory oral defence before a committee of three faculty members (usually taking place 1-2 weeks after the written exam). The written exam will be based on coursework as well as a reading list determined by relevant faculty. The reading list will be distributed by the beginning of the Spring term. It will be a sit-down, closed-book, 4-hour exam consisting of two to three essay questions. For students on a standard full-time schedule, this comprehensive exam will normally be written early in the fall semester of the 2nd year of the program. Students will also complete an exam on their second field, scheduled at least two weeks after the first exam, or if doing a custom concentration, an analytical review essay broadly addressing the major theoretical debates, methodological hurdles, or substantive problems posed by existing scholarship in the relevant field/subfield. The analytical review essay, of approximately 3,500-5,000 words, will be assessed by two faculty members (on a pass/revisions/fail basis). A custom concentration essay form will be completed at the beginning of the Spring term that outlines a framing question, as agreed upon by the student and the two faculty readers.

Preparing for the Core Exams

Students will receive sample question(s) in the Spring term so that they have a sense of the general tone/structure of the questions. Students will also receive a full copy of the written exam 24 hours in advance of sitting so that they can decide on which questions to answer prior to sitting the exam (as noted, there will be options for each question).

Different field committees may decide to put forward a different number of questions. This should NOT change how you study/prepare for the exam. The difference here is, to some degree, balancing breadth versus depth in a way that perhaps reflects the composition of knowledge in the different fields. The amount of work/writing expected will be the same across fields regardless of whether you are asked to answer two questions or three (i.e. if you are asked to write two answers those will be proportionally longer than if you are asked to write three). Nor would such a distinction change time management advice: if you are asked to answer three questions, we strongly suggest spending one hour on each question, using the final hour to read over, make revisions/additions, etc. Similarly, if you are asked to answer two questions, we'd suggest spending one and a half hours on each question and having an hour left to read over/revise, etc.

Generally, the oral defence committee will be composed of three faculty members. Each faculty member will get 20 minutes to pose questions, followed by a 2nd (shorter) round of questions, if necessary. The nature of an 'oral defence' is inherently stressful, but we want to impress upon you that we do not have faculty who treat this as a hazing ritual. The purpose is NOT to "grill" students, but to have a conversation about the topics/themes emanating from their answers, and to confirm their knowledge/analytical capacities. In most cases we thus expect the oral defence

to be confirmatory, but in rare cases, an oral defence might allow a student who did poorly on the written exam to improve their standing.

In terms of outcomes, see University/Faculty of Arts guidelines to read about the 'Pass'/'Pass Conditionally'/Re-examination options: [Minimum requirements for the PhD degree | Graduate Studies Academic Calendar | University of Waterloo \(uwaterloo.ca\)](#)

iii. PhD Thesis Proposal

Students will write a thesis proposal (approx. 25-50 pages in length) situating their research question(s) in the extant literature, outlining their approach, theory, scope, and research methodology, and explaining the original nature of their contribution, along with a timeline and proposed chapter outline. Students will consult their supervisor/co-supervisors for guidance in writing the thesis proposal. The proposal will be subject to an oral defence before a committee. Once the proposal approaches completion, the student and the supervisor decide which faculty members might serve on the proposal defence committee. The committee consists of your supervisor plus two other faculty members and is chaired by a Political Science faculty member. In cases where there is a co-supervision of two faculty members, those two faculty members will count as 'one person' on the defence committees. The composition of the committee will be approved by the Graduate Chair. The thesis proposal should ideally be defended in the Winter term of Year 2.

iv. PhD Thesis & Defence

Students will have a choice in the format of their thesis. Students may choose a traditional dissertation (ranging from 200 to 350 pages in length), or a 'publication model' consisting of at least three sole-authored works of publishable quality, at least one of which has been submitted to a traditional, peer-reviewed outlet (other publications might include research reports for think tanks, etc.), and including an original introduction, conclusion and any necessary bridging chapters to reflect a coherent project. In rare cases, and with the approval of the student's supervisor and the Department's Graduate Committee, students may opt for a non-traditional thesis that meets the standards of an original doctoral-level contribution to knowledge, but in a different form (for example, a documentary). The Department is especially cognizant of the potential for alternative approaches to knowledge generation and dissemination, such as Indigenous approaches to knowledge, as something to be accommodated on a case-by-case basis.

Students should complete and defend the dissertation within four years of starting the program. Regardless of format, the thesis will be subject to an oral defence before a committee, including the supervisor/co-supervisors, two other Political Science faculty members, an internal-external examiner from another department/program at the University of Waterloo, and an external examiner.

When a dissertation is completed to the satisfaction of the supervisor, the thesis will be referred to the other members of the supervisory committee. Committee members may be involved in the process earlier if the topic warrants it. After all committee members are satisfied with the dissertation, including the completion of revisions recommended by the committee, an oral defence will be scheduled. The Graduate Chair will recommend to the Faculty Associate Dean, Graduate Studies a PhD Thesis Examining Committee for approval. Conflict of interest rules apply to the selection of all reviewers. Guidelines are posted on the university's website

(<https://uwaterloo.ca/graduate-studies-postdoctoral-affairs/current-students/thesis/phd-thesis-examination-regulations>). A date and location for the examination will be set according to the availability of Examining Committee members. The student should be prepared to defend the thesis within 4 - 6 weeks of depositing it in the Faculty Graduate Studies Office.

v. Thesis formatting and submission

Students must review the [Thesis Regulations and Guide](#) for proper formatting. Theses formatted incorrectly *will not* be accepted.

Full Procedural Guidelines can be found on the [GSPA PhD Thesis Examination Regulations](#) website.

Here are some helpful links to learn more:

- Examination committee members (including the external examiner): Visit the PhD thesis examination regulations section on the [PhD thesis examining committee for](#) more information about the committee members, including information about the external examiner and conflicts of interest.
- Closed thesis defences and non-disclosure agreements: Visit the PhD thesis examination regulations section on [guidelines for thesis examination without public disclosure](#) for more information about closed thesis examinations.
- Thesis defence decisions and outcomes: Visit the PhD thesis examination regulations section on [decisions](#) for additional information about decisions and outcomes.
- Thesis submission: Visit the [thesis submission webpage for](#) information about the thesis submission process, including approvals that must be obtained before submitting your thesis.
- UWSpace: Visit the [Library's UWSpace webpage](#) for information about what UWSpace is and how to submit, or deposit, your thesis to UWSpace.

Early planning considerations

Well before your defence date, there are several considerations to think about that can help make the end stages of your degree go smoothly and ensure your defence date and degree completion are not delayed:

Review the thesis formatting guidelines early

Being aware of formatting requirements will save you time on revisions later on – the last thing you want to be doing before submitting your thesis to UWSpace is updating page numbers or your table of contents! Consider using the Microsoft Word or LaTeX thesis template produced by Information Systems & Technology.

Ask about copyright, closed examinations and thesis embargoes

If you are using third-party content, including your own previously published work in your thesis, or seeking intellectual property protection (for yourself or another involved party), there may be implications for your thesis or defence. Learn more about copyright for your thesis, and email copyright@uwaterloo.ca for help with copyright questions related to your thesis.

Confirm how your thesis draft will be approved for defence

Depending on your departmental or discipline's norms, you may require approval from your entire committee, or just your supervisor. Ensure you talk with your supervisor and/or committee early on to confirm processes and timelines, so you're not surprised later.

Confirm your examining committee

Depending on your departmental or discipline's norms, your supervisor may select an external examiner themselves, or they may seek your input. Talk to your supervisor early on about this process, as in some faculties the external examiner may need to be vetted and approved as early as the term before you wish to defend. Remember that there are conflict of interest guidelines around the appointment of the external examiner, and the PhD candidate should not be in communication with the external examiner prior to the defence.

Understand the thesis submission and display period

A PhD thesis must be on display for a minimum of 4 weeks prior to the defence date. To accommodate, you may need to submit your thesis as early as 6-8 weeks prior to your defence. Review your faculty-specific backward planning tool for the thesis submission deadline in your faculty and learn more about the display period in the PhD thesis examination regulations.

Learn about defence outcomes and timelines for revisions

After your successful thesis defence, you will likely have some required revisions to your thesis. It's important to understand revision timelines, especially if you're hoping to become "degree complete" before a tuition refund or convocation deadline. Find tuition refund and convocation deadlines in the important dates calendar.

Review the UWSpace submission and approval process

Following your thesis defence, there are several steps to be taken before your final, approved thesis is accepted in UWSpace. Ensure that you're aware of these thesis submission steps and timelines in advance.

See [*Ph.D. Thesis Defence Backwards Planning Tool, Faculty of Arts*](#)

Thesis defences are open and advertised to the Department broadly. Faculty, staff, and students may attend the examination. If the protection of intellectual property is sought by the filing of a patent application, the student and supervisor(s) may request a closed thesis examination and/or a restriction on the circulation of the thesis as outlined in the [Graduate Thesis Regulations](#).

Any Faculty attendee of the defence may question the candidate and may, upon request, read the Thesis and submit a report, oral or written, to the Graduate Chair. General conclusions of the report will be given to the examination committee and considered in its final judgement unless classified as a closed/confidential Thesis.

The thesis examination

The examination opens with a short presentation (oral and/or with electronic slides) by the student (30 minutes maximum) focusing on the main contributions and conclusions of the work.

The presentation is followed by questioning. The Chair will give priority to questions from members of the PhD Thesis Examining Committee and any member of the university who has

submitted written questions in advance. The oral examination should be structured in such a way that a period is set aside at the end of the examination for questions from non-Committee members. If the Chair of the PhD Thesis Examining Committee is unsure of the appropriateness or relevance of a question, they should ask the members of the Committee whether any of them wishes to have the candidate answer the question.

At the Committee Chair's discretion, other members of the audience are given the opportunity to question the candidate at the end.

The examinee (and guests) must then exit the room and leave the committee to deliberate and reach a final ruling.

Ruling

The decision of the PhD Thesis Examining Committee is based both on the thesis and on the candidate's ability to defend it.

The decision of the Examining Committee is made by majority vote. Should the external examiner's vote differ from that of the majority, or if there is a tie vote, the decision shall be deferred and referred to the Associate Vice-President, Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs. The Associate Vice-President will consult with the Faculty Associate Deans, Graduate Studies and will make the final determination

The following decisions are open to the PhD Thesis Examining Committee:

A. Accepted

The thesis and the oral defence have been completed to the satisfaction of the examining committee. The thesis may require typographical and/or minor editorial corrections to be made to the satisfaction of the supervisor and submitted and approved in UWSpace within one month of the date of the defence. If more time is required to make these corrections, the Committee should consider whether a Category B decision is merited. If the thesis is not submitted within this timeline, the student will be withdrawn from the program.

B. Accepted Conditionally

The oral defence has been completed to the satisfaction of the examining committee. The thesis is acceptable but requires content changes which are minor enough that re-examination is not required. The PhD Thesis Examining Committee's report must include a brief outline of the nature of the changes required and must indicate the time by which the changes are to be completed. Changes must be completed to the Committee's satisfaction and submitted and approved in UWSpace within four months of the date of the defence or the student will be withdrawn from the program. At least two members of the Committee must confirm that required changes have been made.

Any extension to the time limits for A or B must be requested in writing and approved by the Graduate Chair and Faculty Associate Dean, Graduate Studies.

C. Re-examination

Re-examination is required in either of the following situations:

The oral defence is not to the satisfaction of the Examining Committee. The PhD thesis examination requires that the candidate demonstrates their mastery and expertise and engages meaningfully in scholarly discourse in their chosen area. If the candidate fails to satisfy these

requirements, the Examining Committee may require re-examination. The PhD Thesis Examining Committee's report must contain a recommended set of activities that aims to improve the candidate's abilities to present their research and respond to inquiries related to their studies.

The written thesis requires modifications of a substantial nature, the need for which makes the acceptability of the thesis questionable. The PhD Thesis Examining Committee's report must contain an outline of the modifications expected and indicate the time by which the changes are to be completed. In this case, the revised thesis must be resubmitted to the Faculty Graduate Office for re-examination.

Reexamination must occur within one year of the date of the first defence. Normally, reexamination will follow the same procedures as for the initial submission except that the display period may be reduced or eliminated at the discretion of the Associate Dean. Normally, the same PhD Thesis Examining Committee will serve, with the exception that in some circumstances, a new External Examiner can be found. A decision to re-examine is open only once for each candidate.

Final submission

After a successful thesis defence, and once final revisions have been made, students will upload their thesis to UWSpace. Theses submitted electronically will be indexed by the Library and the National Library, and will be accessible electronically.

Instructions for submission can be found on the Graduate Studies [Thesis submission](#) webpage.

Copy/Binding

Students may choose to have any personal copies of the approved thesis bound privately or through the services provided by [W Print](#) at the University of Waterloo.

VIII. Advice and Evaluation

a) Advice and Counsel

Upon entry into the program, all students receive, along with this Handbook, a series of orientation emails that contain important information regarding course registration and selection and getting started. In addition, our department's orientation (early September) will help answer any academic questions you have about the program.

Throughout their time in the program, students will also enjoy the support of their supervisor, course faculty, Graduate Coordinator, and Graduate Chair to advise on matters relating to the program and their own progress.

Advisory Committees

Each student will have an advisory committee that will support them throughout their program. The advisory committee acts as a partner with the student and the supervisor in guiding and advising the student on research issues and assisting supervisors in their monitoring functions.

Members are selected based on their complementary fields of expertise, and the nature and planning of the research project. The Advisory Committee would be composed of, at minimum, the supervisor(s) and two other faculty members but could be larger and could include faculty beyond the department. The Advisory Committee should not necessarily be the same as the committees constituted for thesis proposals and dissertation defences. Please see the [roles and responsibilities of advisory committees on](#) the GSPA website. Each student should have an Advisory Committee in place by the end of the Fall term, year 2 of the program.

b) Grades and Evaluation Practices

As with most graduate courses at the University of Waterloo, required coursework is usually formally graded on a numerical scale, out of 100. In most of these courses, the instructor also provides personalized evaluative remarks in response to oral presentations, term papers and other written submissions, and any examinations. Students are required to maintain an 80% average in all courses.

c) Year-End Review and Evaluation (Progress Reports)

Near the end of Winter term, in March, each student undergoes a year-end evaluation, meeting with their supervisor and must write a short (often 1-3 page) progress report that is emailed to the Graduate Coordinator for approval by the Graduate Chair.

Your progress reports are filed internally as evidence of your progress and standing in the program. Progress reports are crucial to obtaining program extension approvals from the Faculty of Arts should you need to extend your studies beyond term 12.

d) University Regulations on Petitions, Grievances, and Appeals

The University policies that relate directly to student petitions, grievances, and appeals are Policy 70, Policy 33, and Policy 72.

Policy 70 – Student Petitions and Grievances

A petition is a request by a student seeking an exception from a normal faculty or University rules and regulations. Examples of petitions include adding or dropping a course after the deadline or a petition to increase or reduce the course load. Policy 70 outlines the procedures for filing a petition. Policy 70 also covers student grievances. Whereas a student petition acknowledges that rules and regulations were applied fairly, and the student is asking for an exception to be made, the fundamental criterion for initiating a grievance is that a student believes that a decision of a University authority or the action of a faculty member or staff member of the University affecting some aspect of his/her University life has been unfair or unreasonable. Examples of the types of issues for a student grievance that can be reported include allegations of an error in academic judgment on the part of an instructor, or that the method of evaluation was not fair and reasonable, or that the instructor deviated substantially from the course outline without reasonable notice. Policy 70 lays out the procedures for filing a petition or a grievance and describes the processes by which such a petition and grievance would be adjudicated.

Policy 33 – Ethical Behaviour

Any grievance by students, staff, and faculty members that violates the principles of academic freedom or human rights is handled under Policy 33, rather than Policy 70. Examples include

any grievance relating to discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, or workplace harassment.

[Policy 72 – Student Appeals](#)

This policy lays out the grounds and processes for a student appeal. For example, a student can appeal a discipline penalty imposed under Policy 33 (Ethical Behaviour). The policy also lists the procedures and paperwork needed to file an appeal.

e) Funds Available

The university provides some support to help with the costs of travel to give conference presentations. See the Graduate Coordinator, for current information.

f) Presence in the Department

We expect students to commit themselves to their work in the program and to be available for classes, training sessions, supervision, meetings with supervisors and other faculty etc. Students will be assigned a Teaching Assistantship which will have requirements for availability for marking, office hours, exam proctoring, etc. The Fall and Winter terms are especially busy with these responsibilities, and we expect students to be available during these terms; vacations during these terms are discouraged.

g) Leaves of Absence

For a variety of personal reasons, students occasionally elect to take a leave of absence from the program. Students who wish to take a leave from the program should communicate their intention to their supervisor and to the Graduate Coordinator, who will advise them of steps to take. You will need to complete the [Change of Enrolment Status form](#) and submit it to your Graduate Coordinator. A personal leave of a single academic term can be arranged once during graduate school training with minimal supporting documentation. Maternity leaves are typically of 12 months duration. Other leaves longer than one term will need to be supported by official documentation and may well affect scholarship funding status. Be sure to consult with the Graduate Coordinator when considering a leave; it may be advantageous to withdraw from the program entirely for a period if the student is contemplating a lengthy leave.

h) Absence Due to a Medical Issue

As a student, should you find yourself in a situation where a [medical leave](#) (e.g. physical or mental health) is required, you are responsible for submitting the [Change of Enrolment Status form](#) to your Graduate Coordinator, indicating ‘medical leave’ as a reason for changing your enrolment status. No additional information is required by the program contact (including your supervisor).

All medical information is collected, in confidence, by Accessibility Services through a secure process, as outlined below, and your student record is updated by Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs (GSPA) appropriately after the verification process is completed by Accessibility Services. This process assures that your medical records remain confidential and ensures compliance with human rights legislation.

IX. Department Engagement and Events

Department events include, but are not limited to, Orientation, the Department Speaker Series, and the Annual Graduate Student Conference. Students are expected to attend all events unless there is a conflict with lectures or TA duties.

a) Meet the Prof Night

The PSCI Grad Student Association (PSGSA) organizes this event as a way for graduate students to meet and interact with Department faculty members. The event takes place on campus during the Fall term.

b) Award Ceremony

In October, the Department holds an Award Ceremony. This event celebrates the academic achievements of graduate and undergraduate students in the Department. The event takes place in the late afternoon and all graduate students are invited to attend.

c) Speaker Series

The Speaker Series is an intermittent event where invited faculty members and significant political speakers present on different topics in politics. This event is organized by the Department on a monthly basis during the Fall and Winter terms.

d) Graduate Student Conference

This is a one-day conference organized by the PSCI graduate students (usually an organizing committee of 4 or 5 students) in March/April of each year. It aims to engage students from across Canada with a broad range of research interests. The PSGSA will put out a call for papers, arrange panels, and invite a keynote speaker. The Graduate Coordinator assists with administrative support. Graduate students are also strongly encouraged to present their own papers.

e) Annual Book Launch

Around March, the Department holds an Annual Book Launch. It is organized to celebrate major publications by faculty members. The event aims to bring attention to the dedication and hard work done by faculty members. It is also a great networking opportunity for graduate students.

f) What's up Wednesdays/Tik Talk Tuesdays

The Department Chair and some other available faculty members will gather in the Political Science lounge to meet with the Political Science undergraduate students and graduate students to catch up on and discuss the latest news and events happening around us - whether from across our campus, in our communities or around the globe! The date/time of the event will be announced at the beginning of each term. The event name is subject to change based on the date chosen.

g) Inquiry & Insight: The Graduate Student Journal of Political Science

The PSCI Graduate Student Journal has been published for the last 13 years. For the past several years, papers that were submitted for the conference were used in the Journal. Normally three students edit and publish the journal.

X. Resources

a) Campus Wellness

Campus Wellness services are available to all students who may require mental or physical health aid. Do familiarize yourself with the complete list of services offered through [Campus Wellness](#).

Counselling Services provides in-person services as well as through phone and video. To book an appointment, please call 519-888-4096. Please check the [Counselling Services](#) website for hours and more information.

If urgent assistance is needed, you can contact **Good2Talk** at **1-866-925-5454**.

b) The Centre

[The Centre](#) is a go-to place for a number of student administrative needs. Students can order official documents, drop off forms, change their personal information, receive financial advice, get answers to a wide range of miscellaneous questions, and so much more!

c) Faculty

Faculty members are a great resource for graduate students. If you would like to review the research that a faculty member specializes in, or would like to set up an appointment, contact information can be found on our [Department webpage](#).

d) Co-operative and Experiential Education

The [Co-operative and Experiential Education](#) Centre also offers career advice for all students and staff at UWaterloo.

Students should contact a Career Advisor for support and guidance with searching for both academic and non-academic jobs. Workshops, and individual appointments on a wide range of work search topics, including effective document preparation, interview skills and job search strategies are available.

e) AccessAbility Services

Students can register for services and accommodations provided through [AccessAbility Services](#) by using their online system. Some of the [Student Services](#) offered include:

- Adaptive technology
- Alternate format texts
- Campus orientation assistance
- Learning strategists

- Student access van

To schedule an appointment or contact the Front Desk, please visit the AccessAbility office located in Needles Hall North, 1st Floor, Room 1401 on Monday - Friday between 8:30 am - 4:30 pm or phone 519-888-4567 ext. 35082. For individualized support with learning strategies and/or assistive technology, please attend the online Student Support Drop-in Centre which runs Monday-Friday between 1-3 pm.

f) Library

The University of Waterloo has two main libraries on campus: the Dana Porter (DP) Library and the Davis Centre Library. The DP library is the main library for PSCI students. If you have any questions or need information or need guidance in finding resources for your studies/research you may contact Mike Chee, Librarian, Information Services and Resources at mchee@uwaterloo.ca. For all other general inquiries, please visit the [library website](#).

g) GradVenture

GradVenture is a central hub of professional development resources designed specifically for graduate students at the University of Waterloo. It is offered by Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs, in collaboration with campus partners. (source: [Grad Venture](#))

Students are encouraged to regularly check the GradVenture website, or to follow them on Twitter (@GRADventure_UW) for information on upcoming events, workshops, and opportunities to get involved.

h) Writing and Communication Centre

The Writing and Communication Centre offers [graduate-specific programing](#). For quick questions or check-ins, you can visit the Writing and Communication Centre for [drop-in appointments](#).

Other resources offered, include:

- [Individual writing appointments](#)
- [Workshops](#)
- [Grad Writing Café](#)
- [Dissertation Boot Camp](#)
- [Online resources](#)
- [Write Spot](#)

XI. Convocation and Applying to Graduate

At the end of their program, students must apply to graduate through [Quest](#).

- Select *My Academics*
- Select the *Graduation tab*
- Select the *Apply for Graduation* link
- Select the *Expected Graduation Term* from the *drop-down list*
- Review the *Graduation Instructions* and then select *Continue*

Students should aim to apply to graduate by:

- For a Spring ceremony: **April 15**
- For a Fall ceremony: **August 15**

You must apply online to graduate in order to be eligible to attend [convocation](#).

In order to graduate on time, students must have defended their thesis by:

- **Mid-March** (If aiming to graduate in Spring)
- **Mid-July** (If aiming to graduate in Fall)

*These deadlines are **NOT** flexible.*

See [Ph.D. Thesis Defence Backwards Planning Tool, Faculty of Arts](#)

Please note that until the final draft of your Thesis is signed off by your supervisor, and you have: (a) submitted your Thesis to UWSpace; (b) applied online to graduate; your paperwork cannot be forwarded for processing.

It should also be noted that the name printed on the degree document will be the name that appears on Quest. If changes need to be made, please complete a [Change of Name](#) form. The form must be submitted to the Graduate Studies Postdoctoral Affairs office.

Students who are unable to attend the convocation will have their degrees mailed to them by the Graduate Studies Postdoctoral Affairs office approximately one week after the convocation ceremony. Please make sure your mailing address is up to date on Quest.

For more information on Convocation, please review the [Graduate Studies graduation checklist](#).