

Dept of Statistics & Actuarial Science

Orientation for
New Grad Students

UNIVERSITY OF
WATERLOO

uwaterloo.ca

Friday, Sept 8, 2023

MC 3127

2:30 - 4:00

Agenda

- Introduction
- Degree Requirements
 - Courses and Milestones
 - Mandatory Training
 - Department Seminar Requirement
- Funding
 - TA positions
 - Other funding opportunities
- Technical Support and Resources
- HR items
- Conferences and Competitions
- Misc.
- Department event

About the Department

- ~60 research-active faculty members
- ~200 PhD, MMath, MQF, MActSc students
- Largest Stat & ActSc group in Canada
- ~1200 undergrad students

About the Department

- international reputation for
 - scope & depth of undergrad & grad programs
 - range & strength of faculties' research
- distinguished faculties
 - Several research chairs
 - many awards & honours

People to know

SAS Grad Office

Associate Chair, Grad Studies:	Greg Rice
Program Coordinator (MQF, MActSc):	Helen Chen
Grad Coordinator (PhD):	Mary Lou Dufton
Graduate Studies Manager:	Heather McLaughlin

Department Contacts

Department Chair:	Changbao Wu
Admin Officer:	Carlos Mendes
Technical/Web Specialist:	Greg Preston
Instructional Support Coordinators:	Divya Lala Jenny Tieu Funmilayo Adeku Steve Van Doormaal Matthew Babela

Programs

- MMath, PhD:
 - ActSc: Ben Feng/Fan Yang
 - Biostat: Kun Liang
 - Stat: Greg Rice
- MQF: Alexander Schied
- MActSc: Diana Skrzydlo

Degree Requirements

MMath

- [Graduate Academic Integrity Module \(Graduate AIM\)](#)
- Students must complete 7 one-term (0.50 unit weight) courses with an overall average of at least 70%. [Exact course requirements are listed by program in the academic calendar](#). A Grade below 60 in any graduate level course is considered a fail.
- Graduate Skills Workshop
- Research Paper

Note: students that switch to the thesis option are only required to take four one-term courses

PhD

- [Graduate Academic Integrity Module \(Graduate AIM\)](#)
- Students must complete 6 one-term (0.50 unit weight) courses with an overall average of at least 75%. [Exact course requirements are listed by program in the academic calendar](#). All students are required to take STAT/ACTSC 900. A Grade below 60 in any graduate level course is considered a fail.
- Graduate Skills Workshop
- Comprehensive Examination I and II
 - I. Is a breadth requirement
 - II. Is your thesis proposal
- PhD Thesis

Note: students without a previous master's degree must take 9 one-term courses

Thesis vs. Research Paper

Research Paper (MMath)

- Does not need to be original or publishable
- Graded numerically

All MMath students are enrolled in the research paper option and must request approval to switch to thesis

Thesis (MMath or PhD)

- Must be original and publishable
- Expectation for MMath is that thesis will be equal to one peer-reviewed paper, PhD thesis should be equal to multiple peer-reviewed papers

Suggested MMath – Degree timeline

First Term

- Take three courses
- Complete TA training, AIM module, Graduate Skills workshop
- Get to know faculty and their research in order to find a supervisor

Second Term

- Take three courses
- Secure supervisor by second month of second term (February).
 - There will be a research presentation day to help you get to know some of the faculty.
 - We recommend approaching some of the new faculty as many are looking for students.

Third Term

- Take one course
- Finish research paper and apply to graduate

Important: funding is only guaranteed for your first three terms.

PhD – Degree timeline

First Year

- Complete TA training, AIM module, Graduate Skills workshop
- Starting in term two you must complete a progress report each term
- By the end of term three you must have taken 5 courses:
 - 3 from breadth requirement + STAT/ACTSC 900 + one elective

Second Year

- By the end of your 7th term you should have completed your Comp II requirement (thesis proposal)

Third and Fourth Year

- Complete thesis and defense

Important: Funding is guaranteed until end of fourth year (12 terms)

Grad Student Skills Workshop

- Mandatory for all Grad students and is part of your degree requirements (milestone).
 - SAS Level 1 TA Training:
 - Date: September 11th
 - Time: 4:30-7:30pm
 - Location: M3 3127
 - SAS Level 2 TA Training:
 - Date: September 18th
 - Time: 4:30-7:30pm
 - Location: M3 3127

MFCF Orientation

Friday, September 22, 2023

1:30-2:30 M3 3103

Treats will be provided

Academic Integrity Module

- Mandatory (MMATH & PhD) **online course**
- Must be completed by the 8th week of classes, better to complete it sooner
- Self register through learn.uwaterloo.ca
 - [Academic Integrity Module \(AIM\)](#) – Course Code [ACINTY 640](#)

Only needs to be completed once, if you completed it in a previous UW graduate degree you are exempt

Conflict Management and Human Rights Office (CMAHRO) TA Training - Mathematics

- Harassment and Discrimination are issues taken seriously by the University of Waterloo
- Must be completed in your first term prior to starting your first TA position. If this training is not completed your TA position may be revoked which would result in a loss of funding.
- mandatory for all MMATH & PhD students
- Self register through learn.uwaterloo.ca

Safety Training

- All new Graduate students are required to complete the following health and safety training modules
 - Employee Safety Orientation (SO1001)
 - WHMIS 2015 (SO2017)
 - Workplace Violence
- [Register for the modules in learn](#)

Departmental Seminars

- Minimum attendance requirements:
 - MMath students: 2 (Fall); 2 (Winter)
 - PhD students: 4 (Fall); 4 (Winter)
 - Suggested that all attend the meet and greets to chat with the seminar speakers

You will receive an email at the start of term with a link to the form to track your attendance

Seminar Series

- David Sprott Distinguished Lecture Series
- Actuarial Science and Financial Mathematics
- Statistics and Biostatistics
- Probability
- Student Seminars
- Department Seminars

Funding

- Primary source of funding is TA positions
- Each TA unit is approximately 80 hours of work during the term. Duties include:
 - **marking** assignments (& keeping student records)
 - holding **office hours**
 - teaching **tutorial** sessions
 - **proctoring** tests/exams
- Additional information will be provided during the TA training session
- Important things to remember:
 - Unsatisfactory performance of your TA duties can result in your position, **and therefore your funding**, being revoked
 - You must be physically present on campus to complete your TA duties including during the exam period.

Additional Funding Opportunities

- GSPA keeps a searchable database of all UWaterloo awards. Many of these awards do not receive any applications. We strongly recommend you review the database to see if you qualify

<https://uwaterloo.ca/graduate-studies-postdoctoral-affairs/awards/database>

- External awards:

<https://uwaterloo.ca/graduate-studies-postdoctoral-affairs/current-students/external-awards>

- Financial need funding:

<https://uwaterloo.ca/graduate-studies-postdoctoral-affairs/current-students/financial-need-funding>

- Funding is also available for conference expenses, see Mary Lou for details

Technical Support

- Department will arrange an information session with MFCF for you to learn how to connect remotely, use their servers, printing, etc.
- Contact IST for issues with:
 - UW user ID
 - wireless connection (eduroam, WatIAM)
 - virtual private network (VPN)
 - discounted software (Matlab, etc)
- MFCF: <https://uwaterloo.ca/math-faculty-computing-facility/mfcf-information-sheet-math-faculty>
 - [biglinux / fastlinux].math.uwaterloo.ca
 - “P:” drive in Windows = “/u/jdoe” directory in Linux

Your UW Email



- your UW email, e.g., jdoe@uwaterloo.ca is our primary way of contacting you. **We will no longer send emails to your home email address.**
 - your responsibility to manage it
 - You may choose to forward your email to a different email address, gmail addresses are not recommended as IST has noticed that these tend to become lost/don't forward
 - Best practice is to download the outlook app to your devices and check your UW email there regularly.

HR items

- Workday is our HR software, direct deposit info must be added to Workday for GRA/GRS/TA pay and refunds
- Payroll will not release funds until your SIN is added to workday
<https://uwaterloo.ca/human-resources/support-new-employees/obtaining-social-insurance-number>
- Study permit
- Co-op

Waterloo Conferences

- Waterloo Conference in Statistics, Actuarial Science, and Finance
 - normally in late April or early May
- Waterloo Student Conference in Statistics, Actuarial Science and Finance
 - normally in mid October or early November

Student Competitions

- Math Key Clues – puzzle competition (registration opens Sept 16th)
- SSC case studies and research presentation award comp.
- 3MT (three minute thesis)
- Hack the North

Misc.

- **Quest** – verify your personal and academic info, view funding details, register for courses, and view grades.
- **Add/drop classes** – can make changes in quest until 3rd week of term.
- After 3rd week can drop online with WD on transcript
- Past the 10th week a form needs to be signed and approved by Grad chair and Associate dean grad studies. A formal petition may be required.
- Once final projects have been submitted or final exam period starts you can no longer drop courses.

Department Social

When? Right after this presentation

Where? M3 Atrium

What? Food
 Drinks
 Fellow students
 Professors

