

DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
PhD HANDBOOK
2025–2026

Welcome to the Department of English at Dalhousie University!

Along with exciting graduate courses, engaging faculty members, and the opportunity to conduct original research, our PhD program requires some routine administrative tasks. This handbook aims to help English PhD students stay on track throughout the course of the program. Information regarding registration, scholarships, Teaching Assistant appointments, the Dalhousie Association of Graduate Students in English (DAGSE), degree requirements, and general information about Dalhousie University can be found in this guide.

Most of the information that follows is also available online through the Department of English or Faculty of Graduate Studies websites. The Graduate Administrator (Angie Morash) will also send reminders of upcoming deadlines throughout the year.

Department of English Graduate Committee for 2025 – 2026

Dr. Alice Brittan, Graduate Coordinator

Office 3192, McCain Building

alice.brittan@dal.ca

Dr. Bart Vautour, Teaching Assistant Coordinator

Office 3197, McCain Building

bvautour@dal.ca

Dr. Eric Schmaltz, Professional Development Coordinator (on leave Fall 2025)

Office 1193, McCain Building

ens@dal.ca

Department of English Graduate Program Administrator

Angie Morash, Graduate Program Administrator

Office 1186, McCain Building

gradengl@dal.ca

902-494-6924

Department Mailing Address:

Dalhousie University – Department of English
Marion McCain Arts & Social Sciences Building
6135 University Ave, Room 1186
PO Box 15000
Halifax, NS Canada
B3H 4R2

Website: <https://www.dal.ca/faculty/arts/english/programs/graduate.html>

Department of English *Graduate* Faculty Directory

(Note: we have department members who are not appointed to the Faculty of Graduate Studies)

Andrews, Jennifer (jenniferandrews@dal.ca), office 3030

Brittan, Alice (alice.brittan@dal.ca), office 3192

Brown, Andrew (Andrew.brown@dal.ca), office 3195

Cawsey, Kathy (Kathy.cawsey@dal.ca), office 3198

Enns, Anthony (Anthony.enns@dal.ca), office 3183

Evans, David (david.evans@dal.ca), office 1190

Haslam, Jason (Jason.haslam@dal.ca), office 1183

Jeffers, Asha (asha.jeffers@dal.ca), office 3193

Jessup, Heather (heather.jessup@dal.ca), office 3196

Johnson, Lili (lili.johnson@dal.ca), office 2195

Maitzen, Rohan (rohan.maitzen@dal.ca), office 3185

Robinson, Margaret (mrobinson@dal.ca), office 2115

Ross, Trevor (trevor.ross@dal.ca), office 3047

Schmaltz, Eric (ens@dal.ca), office 1193

Vautour, Bart (bart.vautour@dal.ca), office 3197

Wright, Julia (Julia.wright@dal.ca), office 2193

Wunker, Erin (erin.wunker@dal.ca), office 3194

*Adjunct/Cross-Appointed Faculty Directory

Barker, Roberta - Cross Appointed, Dalhousie – Theatre, Gender, Women’s, Canadian Studies
Baxter, John – Professor Emeritus, Dalhousie – Early Modern Literature
Brownlee, Shannon- Cross Appointed, Dalhousie – Film Studies
Byers, Michele – Saint Mary’s University – Gender & Sexuality, Media & Popular Culture
D’Arcy, Michael – St. Francis Xavier – Comparative Literature
Dawson, Carrie – Mount Saint Vincent University – Canadian Literature
Edwards, Elizabeth – Professor Emerita, University of King’s College – Medieval Literature
Gantar, Jure – Cross Appointed, Dalhousie – Theatre studies
Glowacka, Dorota – University of King’s College – Contemporary Studies
Green, Reina – Mount Saint Vincent University – Early Modern Literature
Huebert, Ronald – Professor Emeritus, Dalhousie – Early Modern Literature
Johnson, James “Billy” – Instructor, Dalhousie – Canadian Literature
Kennedy, Sean – Saint Mary’s University – Irish Literature
Luckyj, Christina – Professor Emerita, Dalhousie – Early Modern Literature
MacFarlane, Karen – Mount Saint Vincent University – Contemporary Literature
Malton, Sarah – Saint Mary’s University – Nineteenth Century Literature
Morley, Stephanie – Saint Mary’s University – Medieval Literature
Perkin, J. Russell – Saint Mary’s University – Nineteenth Century/Modern Literature
Roby, Matthew – Mount Saint Vincent University – Global Medieval Languages & Literature, Middle English, Old Norse Icelandic Literature
Saklofske, John – Acadia University – Media & Pop Culture, Video Games, poetry
Smol, Anna – Professor Emerita, Mount Saint Vincent University – Tolkien, Medievalism, Old English Literature
Stanivukovic, Goran – Saint Mary’s University – Renaissance
Stone, Marjorie – Professor Emerita, Dalhousie — Victorian Literature
Thompson, Judith – Professor Emerita, Dalhousie – Romantic Literature
Vanderburgh, Jennifer – Saint Mary’s University – Film and Media Studies
Wainwright, Andrew – Professor Emeritus, Dalhousie – Canadian Literature
Whetter, Kevin – Acadia University – Medieval Literature

*Note that adjunct faculty do not usually supervise PhD dissertations, although they may serve as Second or Third Readers. Also note that Emeritus/a Faculty are retired and no longer serve on PhD committees.

Graduate Essays & Grading

While overall grading strategies and models will vary from course to course, based on type and number of assignments, area, approach, methodology, and so on, the academic “paper” (or academic essay) is still our most common benchmark assignment. In general, graduate essays are expected to be well-situated in terms of research, fully and properly documented according to an accepted bibliographic style (in most cases, MLA or Chicago citation styles are used), and free of typographic and writing errors.

Some general definitions of essay grades are offered below. You should check with your specific instructors about their methods of grading.

A+ Papers that earn the highest grade are rare. They are original, innovative, and add to the scholarly discussion on the topic(s) at hand. They also show considerable command of critical and other secondary material. Depending on the type of assignment, these papers could, with minor revisions, be considered publishable in academic journals specific to the field.

A These essays constitute excellent graduate work. They are original, are strongly written, and show considerable command of critical and other secondary material but would need significant revision before being considered publishable.

A- These essays are very good graduate-level work. They are well-written and researched, offering a good understanding of the primary material and the scholarly discussion thereof.

B+ These essays are considered good graduate work, but show weaknesses in terms of research, argumentation, or writing.

B These essays are satisfactory graduate work, but with substantial flaws in one or more areas of research, argumentation, or writing. They may indicate difficulty in moving beyond undergraduate-level work.

B- Essays in this range are minimally passable graduate work, showing considerable weaknesses or errors in research, argumentation, and writing. These essays demonstrate difficulty in moving beyond undergraduate-level work.

Graduate Courses Grading Scale

The following table explains and defines Dalhousie's grading system for graduate courses and shows the GPA value that corresponds with each letter Grade.

| Grade | Grade Point Value | Percent/Definition |
|--------------|---|--|
| A+ | 4.30 | 90-100 |
| A | 4.00 | 85-89 |
| A- | 3.70 | 80-84 |
| B+ | 3.30 | 77-79 |
| B | 3.00 | 73-76 |
| B- | 2.70 | 70-72 |
| F | 0.00 | 0-69 |
| INC | 0.00 | Incomplete |
| W | Neutral and no credit obtained | Withdrew after deadline |
| ILL | Neutral and no credit obtained | Compassionate reasons, illness |
| P | Neutral | Pass |
| TR | Neutral | Transfer credit on admission |
| Pending | Neutral | Grade not reported |
| CR | GPA neutral grading option due to extenuating circumstances | Credit obtained (requires a minimum passing grade in the course) |
| NCR | GPA neutral grading option due to extenuating circumstances | No credit obtained |

Teaching Assistant Appointments: Guidelines and Information

The Department of English offers Teaching Assistant positions to most graduate students that cover 130 hours per term (TA130). Though duties and delivery (in-person or online) can vary, many TAs will be responsible for leading tutorials for “Writing Requirement” courses. TA positions depend on sufficient enrollment, and fluctuating numbers mean that appointments are sometimes not fully finalized until the first week of each term.

The Department of English has a separate **Teaching Assistant Handbook** that will be distributed to Instructors and Teaching Assistants prior to classes beginning.

If you are assigned a TA position, you and the course instructor are required to complete a “TA Duties Form” to be submitted to the Graduate Administrator within the first two weeks of holding the position (if not prior to the beginning of the semester). The form outlines how many hours per week you are expected to work as a TA and approximates how those hours will be spent. *Please include the 1.5-hour TA training as part of the hour breakdown for Fall semester.* Teaching Assistants are automatically members of CUPE Local 3192; more information can be found at <https://3912.cupe.ca/>

A Teaching Assistant Training Workshop will be held on Thursday, September 4th, 2025, 11:30am to 1:00pm, in Room 1198.

Objective: The workshop will address the roles and responsibilities the position entails, including professor/TA relations, attendance, marking, plagiarism, class preparation, and dealing with student matters.

Any additional information or questions are always welcomed by the Teaching Assistant Coordinator (bvautour@dal.ca) or Graduate Coordinator (alice.brittan@dal.ca).

The Doctoral Program Timeline: From Year One to Year Four(+)

YEAR 1: COURSEWORK

In the first year of the PhD program, students complete six ENGL 5000-level courses, normally three in the Fall Term and three in the Winter Term. Given that courses offered in Year One may not cover all areas, PhD students may opt to defer one of their courses to Year Two (Fall or Winter) *with* the Graduate Committee's permission. With prior approval from the Graduate Committee, one course may be taken in another Department. One course may be a Directed Reading (ENGL 5000/5001) in the area of the proposed doctoral thesis. Directed Readings are normally permissible only if a regular course in the area is not being offered, if a member of the Department or an adjunct agrees to offer the course, and if the Graduate Committee approves the syllabus and its method of evaluation.

Registration: PhD students must register for "REGN 9999" and selected graduate courses in consultation with the Graduate Coordinator (see the Handbook's Annual Timetable below). View Dalhousie's Academic Timetable for the corresponding CRN Code. You can access the Academic Timetable here: https://dalonline.dal.ca/PROD/fysktime.P_DisplaySchedule.

By the **15th of February** of the first year, PhD students must submit the [Intent to Qualify form](#) to the Graduate Coordinator specifying the Comprehensive Examination Reading List on which they choose to be examined. By the end of the first-year course work, PhD students should have secured a Comprehensive Examination Supervisor (often, but not necessarily, the same as the proposed thesis supervisor). Written in May of the PhD student's second year (assuming a September start-date), the Comprehensive Exams aim to ensure broad understanding of the chosen area of specialty. The "Reading Year" preceding the Exams thus serves as the foundation for developing expert knowledge within a given speciality and not as preparation for writing the thesis.

The Department makes available "Reading Lists" of primary (and sometimes also secondary) works in each speciality, and Comprehensive Exams are restricted to the list. Most current Reading Lists include roughly the equivalent of about 75 full-length items (novels, plays, collections of poetry, anthologies, prose works, works of criticism, etc.) The number can, however, vary among specialities, with some requiring knowledge of a broad array of material and others demanding more concentrated study of a fewer number of texts. In consultation with their supervisors, students may revise up to **one quarter** of the chosen Reading List to reflect their own research interests. Reading List revisions must be formally approved by the supervisor and the Graduate Committee, and proposed revisions must be submitted to the Graduate Coordinator by the **15th of April** of the first year of the PhD program.

PhD students should also begin approaching potential dissertation supervisors in the Winter Term of the first year and should have a good idea of an area of specialty and a thesis topic.

Students should also:

- Be ready to discuss their general thesis topic.
- Be flexible and open to suggestions.
- Not be shy: professors are expected to supervise grad students, and it is often one of the most enjoyable jobs they take on. They are happy to hear from you.
- Speak to several potential supervisors or committee members to gauge who is best suited to supervise the topic.
- Not take it personally if a faculty member cannot supervise. A professor's ability to do so depends on existing commitments as well as research areas, and a "no" usually indicates more about availability than interest.
- Ask the Graduate Administrator or Graduate Coordinator for suggestions.

Some students come into the program with a specific direction or with the intention of working with a particular faculty member. Most faculty are excited to support graduate students in their research but sometimes have other commitments and may have to decline. In any case, students should have a sense of the faculty members who work in their area and who might be available for a multi-year commitment to supervision.

YEAR 2: READING YEAR

Preparation for the Comprehensive Exams should be a collaborative effort between the student and the supervisor. Students should expect to meet with their supervisor at least once a month during the reading year, though some supervisors may recommend more frequent meetings, especially as the exams draw nearer. Students are also encouraged to meet with other members of the Comprehensive Exam Supervisory Committee to benefit from the expertise and guidance of other faculty members, and to practice the kind of critical discussion expected in the exams. Students and supervisors share the responsibility of developing a productive and workable schedule.

Examinations are normally taken no later than May of the second year of the PhD, and they take place over three days. On the first and second days, the prospective candidate writes a three-and-a-half-hour examination set by three members of the Supervisory Committee who are experts in the field, one of whom is the supervisor. After the second day's examination, the Supervisory Committee considers the two exams and decides (by majority vote) whether the student has passed or failed. The supervisor notifies the student of the result. In the case of a pass, the student proceeds the next day to the oral portion. The oral exam is approximately two hours long and is chaired by the Graduate Coordinator or designate. At this point, the Supervisory Committee is superseded by an Examining Committee made up of the three experts in the field and a fourth non-specialist member of the Department. There are two rounds of questioning with each of the four examiners permitted a total of twenty minutes on the first round and ten minutes on the second; the Exam Chair is also entitled to ask questions at the end of the second round. The prospective candidate is then asked to withdraw while the Examining

Committee discusses and votes on the performance. Decision is by majority vote of the four examiners, with the Chair voting only to break a tie. The student is immediately informed of the result is pass or fail—a pass confers the student with the new title of “PhD Candidate.” In the event of a failure, the student may take the Comprehensive Exams again within six months and is not permitted to work on the thesis until the Exams are passed. Note that a second failure in either the written or the oral portion or the Comprehensive Exams immediately disqualifies the student from the program.

Registration: REGN 9999 and PHDP 8000: PhD Comprehensive Exams.

Within four weeks of successfully completing the Comprehensive Examinations, the candidate and supervisor finalize the thesis topic, and the Graduate Committee approves the Second and Third Readers, both with expertise in the research area, who make up the remaining members of the Supervisory Committee. Within the following eight weeks (twelve weeks after the Comprehensive Exams), candidates submit a 1000- to 1500-word Thesis Prospectus to the Supervisory Committee. The Thesis Prospectus includes an introduction to the topic and a description of the approach, a general outline of the central issues and methods, and a bibliography of relevant works. With approval from all three members of the Supervisory Committee, the Thesis Prospectus is submitted to the Graduate Committee to approve as is or request revision within three weeks. With the Graduate Committee’s final approval, the Supervisory Committee and candidate establish a schedule for writing and protocols for reviewing the thesis; some committees prefer to review each chapter as it is written, for instance, while others wait for a completed draft. Regardless of the procedure, the arrangement must be agreeable to the candidate and the Supervisory Committee.

YEAR 3: THESIS WORK BEGINS

In the term following Thesis Prospectus approval, candidates normally present their projects to the Department, usually in a panel of two or three twenty-minute presentations followed by a question-and-answer period.

The PhD thesis is about 75,000 to 100,000 words, excluding notes, bibliography, and most appendices, and it should make a significant contribution to knowledge; according to Faculty of Graduate Studies regulations, the PhD thesis “must display original scholarship expressed in satisfactory literary form consistent with the discipline concerned and be of such value as to merit publication.”

Registration: REGN 9999 and ENGL 9350: Doctoral Thesis.

YEAR 4 and BEYOND

No less than 12 weeks before the anticipated Thesis Defence date, and with the approval of the Supervisory Committee, the Supervisor advises the Department Chair to begin the search for an

External Examiner. Around the same time, the Graduate Committee appoints the Internal Non-Specialist (or Fourth Reader) who, along with the three members of the Supervisory Committee and the External Examiner, makes up the Examining Committee for the Thesis Defence. The supervisor recommends at least three potential External Examiners and provides a description of their qualifications to the Department Chair, and the Chair contacts and makes arrangements for the External Examiner, who must then be approved and formally invited by the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

Note that it is the candidate's responsibility to:

6 Months Prior to Defence

- Begin preparing your thesis for presentation as a finished document.
- Remind your supervisor and/or Department Chair of the need to recommend External Examiners. It is very important for you to not contact potential External Examiners personally.
- Begin discussing potential Defence dates with your supervisor.
- Attend Thesis Defences of other PhD Candidates (this is something to do throughout your degree to offer support and learn about the structure of the Defence).

12 Weeks Prior to Defence

- Finish preparing your thesis for presentation as a finished document.
- Your department should deliver to FGS a Request to Arrange an Oral Defence Form, listing their choice of External Examiner along with the External Examiner's CV.
- Apply to graduate.

6 Weeks Prior to Defence

- Have a format check of your thesis done by FGS before your thesis goes out to the External Examiner.
- Complete all changes required by the format check.
- Deliver to FGS the completed PhD Thesis Submission Form and PhD Examination Information Form. Email the .pdf version of your thesis and CV to thesis@dal.ca. See: <https://dalu.sharepoint.com/sites/graduate-studies/SitePages/forms.aspx#theses-and-defences>.
- Deliver copies of your thesis to your departmental graduate coordinator to be distributed to your internal examining committee members.
- Send your abstract (max 350 words) by email to FGS at thesis@dal.ca. This must be sent in Word format.
- If your defence requires remote participation by a member of the examining committee, your department must email this request to thesis@dal.ca.

4 to 6 Weeks Prior to Defence

- Prepare your summary presentation (20 minutes or less) for your oral examination.

- Confirm with all members of examining committee their method of attendance.

1 Week Prior to Defence

- Familiarize yourself with the defence location.
- If you have a remote participant, the Senior Thesis clerk will contact you to arrange a test run in the defence room.

Day of Defence

- Arrive early. Rooms are booked one half-hour before each defence. The Senior Thesis Clerk will meet you there.
- Familiarize yourself with the room and A/V equipment. Note that the Senior Thesis Clerk will set up the A/V for any remote participants. This is not your responsibility.
- If you have changed the room setup, return it to its original state (note: the furniture in the Lord Dalhousie Room and Room 3107 of the Mona Campbell Building cannot be moved).
- If borrowing equipment from FGS (i.e. telephone, projector, etc.), return equipment to FGS after defence.

Following Your Defence

- Submit required changes to your supervisor within the specified timeframe.
- Follow all steps for submitting your thesis to DalSpace. This must be done before the thesis deadline for the term in which you wish to graduate.
- Complete the Graduate Student Exit Survey.

PhD Thesis Defence

The defence is chaired by a designate of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and is open to anyone interested. Those entitled to examine the candidate are the External Examiner, the Supervisor, the Second and Third readers (all with some expertise in the field), the Internal Non-Specialist or Fourth Reader (representing a different area of expertise), and the Departmental Representative (normally the Graduate Coordinator or Department Chair), whose principal role is to ensure fair play. Beginning with the candidate's twenty-minute summary statement, the defence normally take about three hours. The statement is followed by two rounds of questioning, allowing a maximum of twenty minutes for each member of the Examining Committee on the first round and ten on the second, at the end of which the Departmental Representative may opt also to ask questions. The candidate and observers are then asked to withdraw while the Examining Committee deliberates. The candidate is informed as soon as a decision is reached as to whether the thesis is accepted as is, accepted with specific corrections (within a set period of time, but not to exceed six months), rejected with permission to submit a revised thesis (within twelve months), or rejected with no option to resubmit. Candidates should consult [Section 10 \(Thesis Regulations\)](#) of the Faculty of Graduate Studies Regulations for further information on the thesis and its defence.

Thesis submission

There are clear, up-to-date guidelines for the submission of theses on the FGS website (<https://dalu.sharepoint.com/sites/graduate-studies/SitePages/resources-students.aspx#theses-and-defences>), including formatting, deadlines, and the details of all requirements. Students must have applied to graduate in the term of, or after, the defence. Please consult deadlines for submission depending on when you intend to submit. Thesis submission forms can be submitted electronically to thesis@dal.ca

PhD candidates often defend the thesis in the fourth or fifth year of the PhD program. Though some take longer to complete, the Faculty of Graduate Studies permits doctoral enrolment to six years, with possible extensions to a strict maximum of ten years. Candidates are responsible for all tuition and fees associated with continuing thesis work.

Registration for third and subsequent years: REGN 9999 and ENGL 9350 Doctoral Thesis.

ANNUAL TIMETABLE FOR PHD STUDENTS

JUNE/JULY

- Students should be officially accepted to Dalhousie and have paid the deposit to hold a place in the program.
- Incoming students should also register on Dal Online for REGN 9999 using an activated Net ID. All university correspondence must be through a valid @dal.ca email address. The deadline to Register for REGN 9999 is August 1 for all students.
- Continuing PhD students must complete the ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT via GSIS (Dal Online) by August 1 of each year they are in their degree. PLEASE NOTE: Students who do not complete the Progress Report will have their funding delayed. The Progress Report is submitted by the student and approved by both the supervisor and the Graduate Coordinator. The Report is simply a way to keep track of your progress through the program and to flag any concerns along the way. The Graduate Administrator will send you an email reminder before the Report is due.
- Enrol in Fall and Winter graduate seminars.

AUGUST

- Though the nature and availability of positions are subject to enrolment, Teaching Assistants are usually notified of their assignments mid-August.
- Submit direct deposit forms to payroll and TA duties form to Grad Administrator. A delay on submission will delay payment.
- If necessary—i.e. you have not completed previous degrees at Dalhousie— submit final transcripts from past degrees to the Department (students who do not submit are subject to dismissal).
- Usual date of DAGSE (Dalhousie Association of Graduate Students in English) Conference. You will receive email updates from DAGSE concerning attendance and/or participation in the conference.

SEPTEMBER

- Teaching Assistants are required to attend a TA Workshop early in the term.
Date: Thursday, September 4, 2025
Time: 11:30 am- 1:00 pm
Location: McCain Building, Room 1198
- Students are also invited to the annual **Grad Student Meet & Greet** hosted by DAGSE for electing the new Executive and, of course, some meeting and greeting. (Information

about each Executive position is circulated via email ahead of time.) Students will meet at 3:30pm and will be joined by Faculty at 4:00pm.

Date: Friday September 5, 2025

Time: 3:30 pm

Location: McCain Building, Room 1198

- All eligible PhD students who do not already hold a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Award are required to apply and need to request necessary transcripts from the Graduate Administrator.
- SSHRC applicants are required to attend SSHRC Workshops organized by the Graduate Committee, and have access to additional SSHRC resources, proposals, and application advice available through the Graduate Administrator. Deadlines for SSHRC seem to move earlier every year; emails will be sent out with updated deadlines. See workshop details under “Professional Development Seminars” below.

NOVEMBER

- Teaching Assistants are notified of Winter assignments. If they haven’t already, students should register for all Winter Term courses.
- Teaching Assistants will be required to complete mid-term reports (sent via email).

JANUARY

- Students should have finalized Winter Term course registration— this is the final deadline to do so.

FEBRUARY

Year 1 students must submit the Intent to Qualify form indicating the chosen Comprehensive Exam Reading List to the Graduate Administrator (see page 8).

APRIL

- Usual submission deadline for the August DAGSE Conference.
- Register for REGN 9999 for the Summer Term.

MAY

- The annual MA Colloquium with lunch and reception. Date to be announced. All graduate students are encouraged to attend and support their fellow graduate students.

- Second-year students must have passed the written and oral component of the PhD Comprehensive Examinations to become PhD candidates; candidates must submit the Thesis Prospectus to the Supervisory Committee within twelve weeks of successfully passing the Oral Examination. The Prospectus must also be approved by the Graduate Committee and will be presented at the English Department's Speaker Series in the following semester. Candidates must also register for ENGL 9350 Doctoral Thesis.

Dalhousie Student Services and Resources

WHERE TO GO: Campus Maps online: <https://www.dal.ca/campus-maps/maps.html>.

Dal Cards: All students need a Dal Card, issued in September of each year and renewed thereafter. This is also your city transit pass, your library card, and more, and can be loaded for cash transactions on campus, like a debit card. You can pick up your Dal Card at: 6230 Coburg Road.

DalPlex: Access to Dalhousie’s fitness complex (6260 South Street) is included in full-time fees. From fitness classes to the swimming pool to the cardio centre, classes, and recreational leagues, it’s a great resource.

Student Accounts/Payroll: Both offices handle financial and payroll services for students, including scholarships and TA payments. If you need assistance, both offices are in the Henry Hicks A&A Building: https://www.dal.ca/admissions/money_matters/tuition_payments.html.

Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS): The Faculty of Graduate Studies administers most elements of your program and is the body to which you submit your thesis. A useful resource for graduate students, the FGS website outlines all graduate policies and guidelines, and offers information about potential scholarships and careers. *All graduate students are also eligible for conference travel funding via FGS.* Get to know FGS online: <https://www.dal.ca/faculty/gradstudies.html>.

The Dalhousie Writing Centre (Killam Library): A source of employment for some and a helpful free resource for all. For more information on the Writing Centre, visit their webpage: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/writing-and-study-skills.html.

Dalhousie Student Union: As a member of Dalhousie’s student body, you are automatically a member of the Dalhousie Student Union, which administers Health and Dental Plans, society and social committees, and many other campus services. Visit <https://www.dsu.ca/> for more info.

Dalhousie Bookstore: Located in the basement of the Student Union Building (also known as the SUB), the Dalhousie Bookstore stocks some course materials for your graduate courses, as well as school supplies and Dalhousie swag: <https://bookstore.dal.ca/>.

King’s Co-op Bookstore: Located on the King’s campus, some instructors order their books through this alternative store: <https://kingsbookstore.ca/>.

Dalhousie Health Services: If you’re feeling under the weather and don’t have a local family doctor, the Dalhousie Health Clinic takes appointments for students seven days a week. The Clinic

will also issue valid doctor's notes and prescriptions for students. For more information: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/health-and-wellness.html.

Dal Online: Dal Online (accessed with your Net ID/password) is an online portal that holds your registration, student records, employee information and various applications and program requirements that you'll need to complete. Go to <https://dalonline.dal.ca/>.

To access Dal Online, students first need an activated Net ID. You can activate your ID and set your password here: <https://password.dal.ca/>.

Personal Info: Update address, phone, and email. Dal correspondence (like Alumni mailing) will be directed to your listed 'permanent' address.

Web for Students: Under this tab, you can Add/Drop classes, view your academic record (transcript), print T4/tax forms, apply to graduate, see account, and check your Graduate Studies Information System (GSIS).

GSIS: An online record system indicating your academic history and progress of your program. An annual report must be submitted on GSIS by August 1. Your GSIS file will be audited by the Faculty of Graduate Studies before approval to graduate.

Add/Drop Classes: This worksheet allows students to input CRNs (course numbers) for approved courses and classes. Students are able to register for the full year or per term. CRNS will be provided by Graduate Admin. Registration deadlines can be found at https://www.dal.ca/academics/important_dates.html.

Student Account: A breakdown of your financial owing to Dalhousie. Tuition and fees are deducted from scholarships. *T4A Tax Information: Dal provides electronic T4/T4A forms to be printed or saved electronically for filing annual income tax.

Academic Record: An electronic version from which your transcript is based. This shows all registered courses and grades.

Apply to Graduate: Students must apply online to graduate by the stated deadline.

Department Events and Activities

DAGSE: The Dalhousie Association of Graduate Students in English (DAGSE) is a student body that oversees and administers the DAGSE Meet & Greet, the annual Graduate Conference, organizes social gatherings throughout the year, and offers peer support to in-program students. The Executive is elected at the beginning of each academic year.

DAGSE Graduate Conference: Organized by DAGSE, the annual graduate student conference invites participants to present on a thematic subject decided by the Executive. The conference “Call for Papers” (CFP) is usually distributed in January, and DAGSE welcomes volunteers to help organize the event.

Department Speaker Series: All graduate students are strongly encouraged to attend the Department’s Speaker Series. Time, location, and speaker information are announced throughout the year. Events are followed by a reception in the Department Lounge or some other location, and details will be sent via email by the Graduate Administrator. The Speaker Series talks afford an excellent opportunity to meet other students and professors working in your research area and outside of it. A list of speakers is usually made available on the News and Events page of the Department website.

MA English Colloquium: A presentation of the MA Thesis Prospectus is required by all MA students at the annual English MA Colloquium. The Colloquium is normally scheduled sometime during early May and will be communicated via email. The proceedings follow typical conference format, and all graduate students and faculty members are encouraged to attend.

Varma Prize for Gothic Literature: Every October, undergraduate English students submit short pieces of original Gothic literature for the Varma Prize. Finalists read their submissions aloud at a Halloween party. While grad students aren’t eligible to enter, they are sometimes invited to review submissions on the Varma Prize Jury, and all are welcome to attend the event.

Scholarships, External Awards, and Academic Contests

FGS Scholarships: An entrance scholarship sometimes offered with acceptance to the program; tuition and incidental fees are deducted from the amount.

SSHRC Doctoral Awards: All eligible PhD students who do not already hold SSHRC awards are required to apply to the SSHRC Talent Program in the Fall Term. MA students considering going on to the PhD are strongly encouraged to apply. For more info: <https://www.dal.ca/faculty/gradstudies/finance-your-studies/scholarships-bursaries/cgs-d.html>. Or: <https://sshrc-crsh.canada.ca/en/funding/opportunities/doctoral-fellowships/2024/competition.aspx>.

Killam Awards: Students can apply for Killam Predoctoral Scholarships, either prior to beginning the program or during the PhD. Learn more: <https://www.dal.ca/faculty/gradstudies/finance-your-studies/scholarships-bursaries/killam-master-doctoral.html>. Or: <https://killamlaureates.ca/killam-insitution/dalhousie-university/>.

The Malcolm Ross Thesis Award: This annual \$200 cash prize is awarded to an outstanding MA or PhD thesis on Canadian Literature, nominated by the supervisor.

Graduate Memorial Scholarship: To commemorate the important scholarly and cultural work done by faculty and graduate students in English at Dalhousie over the last 150 years, this scholarship “will be awarded annually to one or more MA or PhD student(s) enrolled in English.” Eligible applicants “must be members of designated groups as defined under the Collective Agreement between the Board and the Dalhousie Faculty Association,” with preference given to Aboriginal students or members of visible minorities. Of these, “Mi’kmaq people will be given preference among Aboriginal Peoples and African Nova Scotians will be given preference among visible minorities.”

Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences Essay Competition: Three essay prizes valued at \$7,000 each are award annually by FASS. Graduate students are eligible for two of them (Mushkat and Glovin). For regulations, go to: <https://www.dal.ca/faculty/arts/about/essay-competition.html>.

Research and Travel Grants: All graduate students are eligible for travel and conference funding through the Faculty of Graduate Studies. Applications entail a two-step process and require original documentation and official approval, and can be found at: <https://www.dal.ca/faculty/gradstudies/finance-your-studies/scholarships-bursaries/travel-grant.html>.

External Scholarships: FGS provides information about external scholarships at: https://www.dal.ca/admissions/money_matters/awards-financial-aid/scholarships/external_scholarshipsbursaries.html.

Committees and Terms: A Glossary

Examining Committee (Exams): Composed of the student’s Supervisor, specialist Second and Third Readers, and nonspecialist Fourth Reader. With the exception of the Fourth Reader, the Examining Committee assists the student during the Reading Year and prepares and delivers the Comprehensive Examinations.

Supervisory Committee: Composed of the student’s Supervisor and specialist Second and Third Readers. The Supervisory Committee and candidate establish a schedule for writing and protocols for reviewing the thesis.

Examining Committee (Thesis): The Graduate Committee appoints the Internal Non-Specialist (or Fourth Reader) who, along with the three members of the Supervisory Committee and the External Examiner, makes up the Examining Committee. The Thesis Defence also includes a Chair appointed by FGS and a Departmental Representative (normally the Department Chair).

GSIS (Dal Online): The FGS administered Graduate Student Information System is an online record keeping profile of a student’s progress through courses, degree requirements, committee membership, and Annual Progress Reports. All updates must be approved by several parties.

Exams: A term used for the PhD Comprehensive Examinations, including the two-part written and one-part oral exam. Students must complete and pass this degree requirement before moving on to thesis writing and research.

REGN 9999: You’ll hear this one a lot. This is a registration code indicating that you are an active member of Dalhousie’s graduate program, and you must register for REGN 9999 for every term of your study at Dalhousie (Fall, Winter, and summer terms have different CRNs used to register). Registration in REGN 9999 is required to maintain scholarship payments and student status, and the deadlines are strict.

CRNs: This stands for “course registration number,” a 5-digit code associated with each Dalhousie course and used to register for courses on the “Add/Drop Courses” Worksheet found under “Registration” on the Dal Online system.

Class Cancellations, University Closures, and Emergencies

Dalhousie University offers the DalSAFE subscription service that notifies subscribers of any urgent notices regarding the campuses. This includes snow days, university closures and a campus emergency. You can subscribe with your phone here:

<https://www.dal.ca/dept/dalsafe.html> or download the app through Google Play.

To report an emergency or to get help, call 902-494-2211.

Weather-Related Closures: Dalhousie occasionally closes in extreme weather. While infrequent, there may be a snowstorm or power outage that affects campus activity. Closures are announced via DalSAFE, on the opening page of the Dalhousie website <https://dal.ca> and through local news media.

Class Cancellations: If an instructor is unable to attend class due to illness or personal circumstances, all effort will be made to notify students, the TA, and the Department. If you need to cancel a tutorial as a TA, or need a replacement, please speak with your instructor or a Department Administrator.

Important Dates:

https://www.dal.ca/academics/important_dates.html

Professional Development Seminars 2025–2026

PhD students benefit from several mandatory and optional workshops offered over the course of the academic year. Beginning with principles and practices of research funding applications, professional development workshops also cover topics such as effective teaching, public speaking and paper presentations, career options, and the job search. Meetings will be held as “Brown Bag Lunches” (i.e., feel free to eat your lunch) on Thursdays, on the dates indicated, from 11:30 AM-1:00 PM. The Graduate Administrator will send calendar invites to all seminars for the year.

FALL 2025

1. Research Funding: SSHRC & Other Funding (Facilitated by Dr. Vautour)

September 11, 2025, McCain, Room 1198

Mandatory for all 1st-year PhD and 1st-year MA students and PhD students applying for SSHRC Awards.

Objectives: This session will introduce graduate students to the elements of a strong grant proposal for research in English and the Humanities. It will focus on the specific requirements of applications to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Doctoral Fellowships, but we will also explore strategies for developing strong materials that are relevant to a wide range of external funding applications.

Note: all eligible incoming PhD students who do not have an external funding award are required to apply to SSHRC; all MA students considering applying to PhDs are strongly encouraged to apply

2. SSHRC Application & Materials Review (Facilitated by Dr. Vautour)

September 25, 2025, McCain, Room 1198

Mandatory for PhD students seeking feedback on funding applications; strongly recommended for MA students applying for PhD funding.

Objectives: In preparation for this workshop, applicants for SSHRC doctoral funding will provide Dr. Vautour with a draft of their application materials via email a few days before the session; they will then be distributed to faculty members and advanced doctoral students who will prepare written feedback on the applications. When we meet, applicants and reviewers will be divided into groups to share and discuss this feedback, ask and answer questions, and brainstorm best practices for revising materials.

Note: this session is intended to supplement, not replace, working with a supervisor or other faculty members more closely as you prepare your application.

3. Competitive Applications for the Academic Job Market (Facilitated by Dr. Vautour)

October 9, 2025, McCain, Room 1198

Mandatory for 1st-year PhD students; recommended for any students who are curious about preparing for the academic job market.

Objectives: This session brings together English graduate students for an informal conversation about what to expect when applying for academic jobs and how to prepare as you move through the program. Graduate students will have the opportunity to ask any and all questions they have about that process. Our conversations will likely range from the pragmatic (How do I find job postings online? What materials do I need to prepare?) to the psychological (How can I effectively manage the stress of applying to jobs while also completing a dissertation?) to the philosophical (What does it mean to be an academic in our current moment? How can I align my career goals with my values as a thinker and writer?).

WINTER 2026

1. MA Thesis Prospectus Workshop (Facilitated by Dr. Schmaltz)

January 8, 2026, McCain Room 1198

Mandatory for all 1st-year MA students

Objectives: This seminar will introduce students to the objectives and format of the MA thesis prospectus. Models of successful past prospectuses will be provided for students to consult as they prepare their own materials.

2. Developing your Writing Practice (Facilitated by Dr. Schmaltz)

January 29, 2026, McCain Room 1198

Mandatory for all 1st-year PhD and 1st-year MA students; strongly recommended for senior PhD students.

Objectives: In this discussion, participants will share strategies for developing a productive, rewarding, and sustainable writing practice as a researcher in the humanities. Discussions will centre on the unique demands of high-level academic and creative writing, with a particular focus on its scope, breadth, and depth as compared with undergraduate-level work.

3. Conference Papers and the MA Colloquium (Facilitated by Dr. Schmaltz)

March 12, 2026, McCain Room 1198

Mandatory for all MA students; recommended for all other graduate students.

Objectives: In this seminar, we will discuss the process of applying to, preparing for, and presenting at academic conferences. Specific questions and topics may include: how do I draft a compelling abstract? How can I revise my academic writing to make it easier to read aloud? How do I present my research in a way that is accessible to audiences outside my own subfield? How should I approach professional “networking” at these events? The session will also familiarize MA students with the specific requirements of presenting their work at the Department’s annual MA Colloquium.

Other workshops

Dr. Vautour and/or Dr. Schmaltz will be hosting informal workshops for upper-year PhD candidates throughout the year. These will be organized via email.