



# Dalhousie University School of Nursing

## PhD (Nursing) STUDENT HANDBOOK

*For the academic year  
2022-2023*

# PHD (NURSING) STUDENT HANDBOOK: TABLE OF CONTENTS

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**SECTION A**

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

The PhD Nursing is presently a program of full-time study.

**Students should always consult the  
[Faculty of Graduate Studies](#) website  
for the most up-to-date information and forms.**



# Dalhousie University School of Nursing

## Mission Statement

To lead and inform transformation in health and social justice through nursing education, research, leadership, practice and policy.

## Vision

Partnering to meet the health needs of Nova Scotians  
*Healthy people and healthy communities*

## Values

- We embrace innovation and change
- We champion scholarship and critical inquiry
- We respect all voices
- We commit to integrity, equity, inclusion and well-being
- We strive for meaningful collaborations
- We value broad perspectives of health

## Strategic Directions

- Pursue excellence in learning, teaching and educational scholarship
- Amplify the research impact
- Develop citizenship through a social justice perspective
- Enhance and optimize partnerships
- Strengthen our infrastructure and support

## GRADUATE PROGRAMS PHILOSOPHY & CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The mission of Dalhousie University is to: foster an environment of teaching and learning excellence, built on innovation, collaboration and respect; create a hub of world-leading research and innovation, adding to the intellectual, social and economic capital of our communities; and facilitate opportunities for our students, staff and faculty to connect with and serve our local, national and global communities. In Canada, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms defines us as a nation and identifies what we hold to be fundamental freedoms: freedom of conscience and religion; freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication; freedom of peaceful assembly; and freedom of association. It is within this democratic social context that the Canada Health Act provides the foundation for our health care system and professional practice. This foundation, which underpins Medicare, reflects values of social justice and inclusion and the belief that health is a right, not a privilege. Such values and beliefs also inform the School of Nursing's mission, its vision for the future, and the principles which guide our work. As practitioners, teachers and researchers, nurses occupy a privileged position of trust within which they care for and advocate for others, educate nurses, generate knowledge and shape policy that impacts the profession and the health and well-being of individuals, families, groups and communities.

The curriculum framework of the Dalhousie School of Nursing graduate programs prepares practitioners, professional practice leaders, and nurse scientists in the context of people-centred practices driven by elements of critical social theory across all health and social care systems (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Framework of the Graduate Nursing Programs at Dalhousie University



Critical Social Theory (CST) is designed to inform the context for advanced nursing practice education and is used to guide and influence the programs. CST is important for nursing because it is not derived from any one discipline or profession and focuses on critical analysis of existing structures and beliefs (Agger, 2013; Freeman & Vasconcelos, 2010; Ryan, 2018; Torres, 2012). The importance of understanding the influence of history and culture as well as the need for critical discourse to achieve understanding and emancipation of existing knowledge constraints are essential components of the way nurse practitioners, professional practice leaders, and nurse scientists enact their roles. In this way power relationships are questioned and addressed in light of social equity and justice. It is the idea of emancipation that is key here because healthcare systems continually evolve and future practitioners, professional practice leaders, and nurse scientists need the skills derived through the theoretical approach to learning of CST that will equip them to drive as well as contribute to the evolution of knowledge, education and healthcare. The goal within CST of achieving social transformation through addressing issues of equality, equity, and power imbalances is consistent with nursing goals. Through education these students undergo a knowledge transformation enabling them to lead teams, influence health care through research, leadership, policy and practice innovations.

### **Nursing and Advanced Nursing Practice**

We believe that nursing encompasses autonomous and collaborative care of individuals of all ages, families, groups and communities, sick or well, and in all settings. Nursing includes health promotion, illness prevention, injury reduction, health protection, and the care of sick, disabled and dying people. Advocacy, research, participation in shaping health policy and health systems, management, education, and social and political action are also key nursing roles. We believe that nurses must practice ethically, adhering to values of person-centered evidence-informed safe competent and ethical care; health and well-being; choice; dignity; confidentiality; social justice and diversity; accountability; continuing competence; judgement; respectful inter and intra professional relationships; civility; professional leadership; and self-regulation.

In addition to direct patient care, competencies of advanced nursing practice include research, education, consultation, collaboration and leadership (CNA, 2019). Nurses provide leadership for interprofessional teams and develop systems improvements to impact individuals and the healthcare system. The multiple role dimensions are essential synergistic components that enable this broad impact.

### **People-Centered**

People and their wellbeing form the core of the framework. Placing people and their needs at the centre is deliberate and intended to drive how we prepare graduates. Four concepts depict the competencies of our graduates: a) reflective, moral, and ethical practice, b) research excellence and leadership, c) collaboration, and d) transformation. Knowledge related to the health needs of the population is continuously generated. At the same time, people are individuals and meeting their needs necessitates establishing a relationship that permits graduates to tailor the application

of the evidence to the situation. Evidence-informed, people-centered practice will be delivered by reflective, moral, ethical practitioners who are leaders, and who continuously strive for excellence. Although the scholarship/practice of each individual is important to meeting the needs of people, frequently the needs of individuals exceed the expertise of any one healthcare professional, therefore collaborating across the range of healthcare professionals is essential to person-centered care. Not only do we want graduates to be reflective, moral, ethical, collaborators, we also expect they be change agents who work continuously to transform systems in ways that progressively contribute to meeting the needs of the people who are the intended beneficiaries

To be people-centered means placing the people at the centre of decision-making, and in doing so collaborate with them to provide care and to conduct research. Stating we are people-centered implies a set of beliefs such as; a) the ability of people to manage their health with support and information from healthcare providers; commitment to wellness care, not just illness care; and the needs of people are our

first consideration. The goals of a people-centered approach include: (a) a reorientation of care from illness to wellness, (b) knowledgeable patients with improved ability to self-manage their health and (c) healthcare providers who are prepared to engage with patients to arrive at solutions together.

### **Reflective Ethical Moral Practice**

A reflective practitioner/researcher is one who incorporates knowledge learned in practice and/or research, constantly assesses the practice moment, and subsequently reflects on the moment. To achieve excellence, reflection is essential (Mezirow, 1991, 1995, Taylor, 2007).

An ethical practitioner/researcher is one who has sound knowledge of the duties and responsibilities that constitute practice/research and executes these duties and responsibilities in such a way as to create the conditions for empowerment and participatory decision-making. An ethical practitioner/researcher also demonstrates the seven values as outlined in the Canadian Nurses Association Code of Ethics.

The moral character of a practitioner/researcher is dependent upon virtues such as sensitivity, courage, and persistence (Northhouse, 2004). It is believed that moral character is developed from experience, and we seek to contribute to the growth of moral character in our students providing challenging well-mentored learning experiences and by modeling high moral standards.

### **Interprofessional Collaboration**

Part of providing people-centered care involves collaboration with other healthcare professionals. We are committed to providing learning experiences for our students whereby they learn to work within teams to conduct research, provide and direct care, and maximize health benefits. These experiences are guided by the [CNA position statement on interprofessional collaboration](#).

### **Systems Transformation**

System transformation is intended to improve care delivery as well as the quality of care. In depth understanding of organizational context and theory is essential to transformation. Our graduates engage in system transformation by developing knowledge related to systems theory and social policy, providing leadership to initiate change where needed and by educating healthcare providers and consumers on how to be change agents

### **Research/Clinical Excellence and Leadership**

Graduates are prepared to act as leaders to improve health outcomes. Graduates understand complex systems, utilize advanced clinical reasoning, and generate and apply knowledge to improve the healthcare of individuals and families and impact health systems. Graduates' understanding of organizational systems enables them to develop strategies to lead optimal evidence-informed clinical practice change, monitor and sustain process improvements, and generate knowledge.

### **Health and Social Care Systems**

Health is the capacity to function optimally with a sense of well-being, given personal choices and environmental challenges, constraints and resources. People can achieve a state of well-being in the presence of disease. Health is a dynamic process, influenced by the determinants of health, which change with time and circumstances. Health has many components which form an integrated whole: emotional, physical, mental, social, cultural, sexual, environmental and spiritual.

Health and social care in the Canadian context include programs that have been developed to respond to health and social needs. Adequately funded social care is essential to the health and wellbeing of the population. Development and integration of knowledge of health and social care systems is an essential component of student learning.



## TEACHING AND LEARNING PROCESSES

Teaching and learning are viewed as reciprocal processes, informed by the principles of adult learning whereby faculty, students, clients, and community/learning partners engage in partnerships of mutual respect, critical reflection, sharing, and support. Teaching and learning necessitate that partners understand and accept the responsibilities of the roles, functions, and behaviours necessary to develop a challenging learning encounter for building capacity and reaching desired outcomes. Ongoing evaluation is an integral part of this reciprocal process.

Boyer's four domains of scholarship, discovery, integration, application, and teaching inform graduate education. Students are mentored to conduct research independently, integrating other disciplines as needed, and employing strategies to apply knowledge to practice and policy.

Graduate students learn to conduct and evaluate research, and integrate and apply knowledge to practice, policy, and education. Graduate nursing programs embrace a commitment to life-long learning.

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Agger, B. (2013). *Critical social theories: An introduction*. London, UK: Oxford University Press  
Boyer, E. L. (1990). *Scholarship reconsidered: Priorities of the professoriate*. Princeton, NJ: Carnegie

### **Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.**

Canadian Nurses Association Code of Ethics.

<https://www.cna-aiic.ca/en/on-the-issues/best-nursing/nursing-ethics>

Canadian Nurses Association Position Statement on Interprofessional Collaboration.

<https://www.cna-aiic.ca/en/on-the-issues/better-care/interprofessional-collaboration>

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/17449642.2012.733590>

Canadian Nurses Association (2019). [Advanced Practice Nursing Framework](#).

Freeman, M., & Vasconcelos, E.F.S. (2010). Critical social theory: Core tenets, inherent issues. In M. Freeman (Ed.), *Critical social theory and evaluation practice*. *New Directions for Evaluation*, 127, 7–19. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Mezirow, J. (1991). *Transformative dimensions of adult learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

**Mezirow, J. (1995). "Transformation theory of adult learning." In M. R. Welton (Ed.), *Defense of the lifeworld* (pp. 39-70). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.**

Northhouse, P.G. (2004). *Leadership: Theory and practice* (3rd ed.). London: Sage.

Ryan, G. (2018). Introduction to positivism, interpretivism and critical theory. *Nurse Researcher*, 25(4), 14–20. <https://doi.org/10.7748/nr.2018.e1466>

Torres, C. A. (2012). Critical social theory: A portrait. *Ethics and Education*, 7(2), 115-124, DOI: 10.1080/17449642.2012.733590

## PHD (NURSING) PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The goal of the PhD (Nursing) program is to prepare nurse scholars who will provide leadership in the advancement of nursing knowledge, nursing theory and practice, and health policy through scholarly research and the dissemination of research findings.

The orientation of the doctoral program is on the short and long-term impacts of nursing practices and health outcomes at the individual, family, community, and/or population levels, as well as women's health outcomes. The required courses and the doctoral seminar provide forums to analyse, discuss, and critique the concepts of health outcomes and health and social policies from the perspective of nursing practice. Health related policy is addressed through the thesis, doctoral seminars, and courses in the student's substantive area.

The program is organized around the student's research question which frames an intensive investigation of a particular question relevant to nursing. This starting point becomes the vehicle for the student to develop an advanced understanding of research methodologies and techniques and to gain knowledge which contributes to the theoretical development and practice of nursing.

The program consists of a minimum of four courses, doctoral seminar, comprehensive examination, and thesis.

1. Four core courses:

- NURS6050, *Contemporary Views of Nursing Science: Philosophy, Research, and Practice*
- two courses in the student's substantive area of study (one of which will be NURS6210, *Women's Health Outcomes* or NURS6200, *Nursing Sensitive Health Outcomes*)
- an advanced research methods/design course
  - NURS6300, *Doctoral Seminar*

2. Comprehensive Examination (see Section B)

3. NURS9530, *Thesis* (see Section C)

Core courses, the doctoral seminar, and the thesis are all designed to prepare students who:

- Understand the philosophical and theoretical foundations of nursing science.
- Critically analyse their own and other's perspectives in relation to research and nursing practice.
- Demonstrate the requisite cognitive skills to develop health outcomes generally, as well as women's health outcomes.
- Develop nursing practices that improve health outcomes generally, including women's health outcomes.
- Influence health and social policy to improve health and health care systems.

\* Students who have not completed both qualitative and quantitative research courses at the graduate level must complete NURS5100, *Qualitative Research Methods*, and/or NURS5120, *Quantitative Research Methods* (or their equivalent) as part of their doctoral program.

By the end of the student's first year of study, the Thesis Supervisory Committee will be identified (see Section C, Identification of Thesis Supervisory Committee).

## ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS FOR PhD NURSING

Candidates are accepted under the general regulations of the Faculty of Graduate Studies. **Meeting minimal requirements does not ensure admission.**

Application deadline is **February 1** for September admission. All materials listed below must be received by the deadline date.

Applicants are encouraged to develop their application package in consultation with the supervisor with whom they will be working.

Candidates for the program must hold a first-class Master's degree in nursing or a relevant discipline, or its equivalent, from a recognized university. The identification of a first-class research or non-thesis Master's degree is based on grades in class work and evidence of a well-written, high quality thesis or evidence of research work as demonstrated by a major research paper. Other indicators include publications in refereed journals, presentations at scholarly conferences, and grant applications.

In addition to the general regulations above, candidates for admission to the PhD in Nursing must be licensed to practice as a registered nurse (active practitioner) in a province in Canada or a foreign country.

Applicants normally have a minimum GPA of 3.7 in their previous graduate degree.

The School of Nursing, a unit within the Faculty of Health, recognizes that deliberate Equitable Admissions processes are required to increase the support and admission, and graduation of students who self-identify as belonging to historically underrepresented groups: persons of Aboriginal/Indigenous ancestry (especially Mi'kmaq), members of racialized groups, persons of African descent (especially African Nova Scotians), Acadians, persons with dis/Abilities, and persons belonging to minority sexual orientation and/or gender identity (SOGI) groups.

The Application Process consists of two steps.

### **STEP ONE**

Applicants apply online: [Admissions Login \(dal.ca\)](#)

### **STEP TWO**

Applicants **send the documentation outlined below directly to the School of Nursing, Graduate Programs Office:**

#### **1. Study Plan:**

4-5 pages in length: A plan of study outlining the applicant's area of research interest, how this interest fits with the School of Nursing research foci, a statement of the preliminary plans for thesis research, goals in undertaking doctoral work, initial intentions regarding course work, and future career plans.

#### **3. Scholarly Work:**

Examples of applicant's scholarly written work:

##### Required

- One First-authored peer-reviewed manuscript under review or published in a recognized journal

##### Two other required works, for example

- One Co-authored peer-reviewed manuscript under review or published in a recognized journal
- Evidence of grantsmanship, e.g., submitted scholarship application (provincial, health research funding organization)
- Accepted peer-reviewed poster abstract

- Research report (to health care organization, NGO, government)
- Evidence of knowledge translation, e.g., clinical workshops

**4. Funding Information:**

- A copy of the applicant's completed and submitted Nova Scotia Research and Innovation Graduate Scholarship application

OR

- Letter of sponsorship from the international applicant's agency/government

AND

- Other funding already applied for/potential sources of funding (for example, Harmonized Scholarship application) [Harmonized Scholarship Process | Faculty of Graduate Studies | Dalhousie University](#)
- Tri-Council application

**5. Curriculum Vitae** (suggested format is as follows):

Education (post secondary)  
 Certification (e.g., CNA certification)  
 Registration (e.g., College of Registered Nurses of Nova Scotia)  
 Awards and Honours (practice awards from employers, bursaries, scholarships)  
 Professional Employment  
 Committees (e.g., work-related, professional)  
 Presentations and Publications (e.g., workshops, conferences, journal references)  
 Clinical/Administrative/Practice Innovations - please provide brief description or examples  
 Professional Affiliations and Activities - please specify role  
 Relevant Volunteer Activities - please specify role

**6. Thesis Supervisor Form:**

Have obtained an agreement for supervision from a faculty member whose research aligns with the applicant's interests and who has been approved to supervise PhD students.

**7. Two Sets of All Official Transcripts:**

This includes transcripts of all postsecondary course work (ie. university credits transferred into a degree).

**8. Three Letters of Reference:**

Academic references from two professors familiar with the candidate's earlier graduate work. Where appropriate, one letter must be from a thesis or practicum supervisor. One reference from an employer.

**9. Official English Proficiency Test Score Results:** For international applicants whose first language is not English, minimum scores for English proficiency are:

IELTS 7	TOEFL 92 (internet based)
MELAB 85	CanTest 4.5 overall, with no band score lower than 4.0
PTEA 65 overall, with no band score lower than 54	MET C1-level and 4-skills test required 64 (with no skills area below 53)
	CAEL 70 overall, with no band score lower than 60

English proficiency test scores are sent directly to the School of Nursing.

**10. Copy of current active nursing College/Association membership in Canada or another country. (Some exceptions may be considered)**

**11. A Personal Interview with the Associate Director Graduate Studies is required.**

**12. Application Checklist:**

Indicates completeness of the application.

## PhD (Nursing) Early Entry

In exceptional circumstances, Masters students with a demonstrated ability to perform research at an advanced level, publications and funding will be considered for transfer to the PhD program (early entry). Faculty of Graduate Studies Regulation 3.3.1 states that students who wish to transfer from a Master's to a Doctoral program should do so within the first five terms of initial registration. Such requests must be made before the term in which the transfer is to take effect. The deadline for submission of a request for early entry is 1 February.

Students who wish to apply for early entry to the PhD (Nursing) program must apply, in writing, to the Associate Director Graduate Studies, and supply the following documentation:

Letter of support from their supervisor/potential supervisor

Current CV that includes evidence of:

- Funding awards
- Research experience
- Publications – minimally,
  - one First-authored peer-reviewed manuscript under review or published in a recognized journal and
  - two other works, such as One Co-authored peer-reviewed manuscript under review or published in a recognized journal, or Accepted peer-reviewed poster abstract, or Research report (to health care organization, NGO, government)

Early entry decisions will be made by the Graduate Student Affairs Committee. Funding/publication successes do not guarantee early entry; each application will be considered on its merit.

Approved GSC 13 Jan 2020; Council 27 Jan 2020



**Dalhousie University**

## **GRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Graduate Studies Committee is a Standing Committee of School Council.

### Purpose

The purpose of the Graduate Studies Committee is to review the academic regulations regarding the graduate programs: develop and evaluate the curricula of the graduate programs; assess their social relevance; oversee quality assurance; ensure they meet the requirements of the University, and the Nova Scotia College of Nursing (NSCN) as required, and to report to the School Council regarding same.

### Membership

Ex Officio Member and Chair: Associate Director Graduate Studies; Ex Officio Voting Member: Associate Director Research & International Affairs; Elected Voting Members: Three members of faculty who hold tenured or tenure-track positions and one member of faculty who is a nurse practitioner; Appointed Voting Member: One external stakeholder appointed by School Council; Student Voting Members: One graduate student and their alternate (1 combined vote).

### Responsibilities

The Graduate Studies Committee:

- Reviews academic regulations regarding graduate programs and makes recommendations for change to School Council for further consideration by the Faculty of Graduate Studies.
- Develops, evaluates, and recommends to School Council the curricula of the graduate programs for further consideration by the Faculty of Graduate Studies.
- Ensures that the graduate programs satisfy requirements for:
  - Graduation with an MN, MScN, or PhD degree;
  - Program approval of the Nurse Practitioner Program by the Nova Scotia College of Nursing (NSCN).
- Recommends changes to improve the quality and social relevance of the graduate programs to School Council.
- Makes all recommendations and reports to School Council through the Chair.
- Provides an annual report of its activities to School Council.
- Considers recommendations from sub-committees, including the Graduate Student Affairs Committee, and provides recommendations to School Council concerning same.
- Provides direction as required to sub-committees to execute tasks in relation to their approved mandate.
- Undertakes other tasks related to its mandate as directed by School Council from time to time.

Approved, School Council, June 2012



## GRADUATE STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Graduate Students Affairs is a sub-committee of the Graduate Studies Committee.

### Purpose

The purpose of the Graduate Student Affairs Committee is to apply academic regulations, policies and guidelines regarding the admission and progress of graduate students in the School

Membership:	<i>Ex officio</i> Member and Chair:	Associate Director, Graduate Studies Committee
	Elected Voting Members:	Four members of Full Faculty, three of whom hold tenured or tenure-track positions, and one nurse practitioner
	Student Voting Member:	One graduate student, and their alternate (1 combined vote)

- Responsibilities: The Graduate Student Affairs Committee:
- Oversees the recruitment and admission of students to graduate programs
  - Monitors graduate student progression, accommodation and attrition
  - Recommends graduate students for scholarships and awards
  - Recommends graduate students for graduation
  - Forwards all recommendations to the Graduate Studies Committee through the Chair
  - Undertakes other tasks related to its mandate as directed by the Graduate Studies Committee from time to time
  - Provides an annual report on its activities to the Graduate Studies Committee

Approved SON Council, June 2012

## EXPECTATIONS/REQUIREMENTS OF DOCTORAL STUDENTS RELATED TO PROGRESS AND PERFORMANCE

### Progress

1. The PhD program is a full time program, necessitating 4 terms of residency in the first 4 years.
2. Students are expected to complete the program in 4 years.
3. Course work will be completed over the first 15 months in the program.
4. Required courses are:
  - NURS6050 Contemporary Views of Nursing Science: Philosophy, Research and Practice
  - Two courses in the student's substantive area of research, one of which will be NURS6210 Women's Health Outcomes or NURS6200 Nursing Sensitive Health Outcomes
  - An advanced research methods/design course
  - NURS6300 Doctoral Seminar

Students may also be required by their Supervisor to complete additional course work related to their substantive area or to the methodology being used.

5. Thesis supervisory committees are to be structured by the end of the first year in the program and will meet at least once before the comprehensive exams are prepared.
6. Students are to prepare a research proposal draft that the committee reviews to determine readiness for comprehensive exams.
7. Comprehensive exams will be taken no later than the end of second year in the program.
8. Following successful completion of the comprehensive exams the student will continue to refine the proposal and defend it within six months of completion of comprehensive exams.
9. Ethics applications will be prepared in tandem with the proposal and revised as necessary based on committee feedback, making them ready for submission as soon as possible upon successful proposal review.

### Performance

1. Research Rounds are held on a regular basis in the School, providing opportunity for scholarly exchange among students and faculty. Students will be scheduled at least twice over the length of their program to present at the series and are required to attend all sessions.
2. Publications are considered evidence of scholarly performance, and students will prepare a minimum of three manuscripts as first author for submission to scholarly journals during their time in the program. Students will have accepted for presentation a minimum of one abstract at a national or international conference.
3. Scholarships and funding awards are necessary to support student progress. Students are required to apply for a minimum of two funding awards in the first 2 years of their program of study.
4. Research training is an important aspect of doctoral study, and students are expected to commit a minimum of 4 hours per week on research activities that may include grant preparation, ethics applications, and scholarly presentation preparation in their supervisor's area.
5. Supervisors will conduct performance and progress reviews of students twice yearly in November and April, based on the above requirements.



6. As per Faculty of graduate Studies (FGS) guidelines, supervisory committees should meet at least twice a year during the thesis research period and more often in the writing stages of a student's program. A Record of Graduate Thesis Supervisory Committee Meetings will be submitted to the Graduate Programs Office after each of these meetings.

Approved GSC 13 March 2017; Council 25 March 2019

## UNSATISFACTORY PHD STUDENT PERFORMANCE/PROGRESSION

### GUIDELINES FOR ACTION

Normally students' progress through the PhD program within the six-year timeline as outlined by the Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS Regulation VI. Degree Requirements) and in accordance with the expectations for PhD students in relation to progress and productivity. Students are fully advised of program expectations related to progress and productivity (August 2011 and onward), and of the process in the event of unsatisfactory performance/progress (December 2011 and onward). In the event that the student performance/progress is deemed to be unsatisfactory the following actions will be implemented.

1. The Supervisor advises the student and the Associate Director of Graduate Studies by way of the annual progress report both in person and in writing of unsatisfactory performance/progress based on PhD program expectations of students as outlined in the Expectations of PhD Students prepared and approved by the Graduate Studies Committee and circulated to students in August 2011.
2. The Associate Director of Graduate Studies, Supervisor and student prepare a non-negotiable timeline to ensure that the student is on track and remains on track. Once signed by all three parties, the timeline will be placed in the student file and copied to the Faculty of Graduate Studies, the Director of the School of Nursing, and the Dean of the Faculty of Health.
3. Quarterly progress and timeline review meetings will be held with the student and the Supervisor for the duration of the program.
4. The Supervisor will advise the Associate Director of unfavourable deviations from the timeline with any accompanying justification for the deviation.
5. Failure to follow the timeline will result in the Associate Director of Graduate Studies meeting with the student to advise the student that the Faculty of Graduate Studies will be notified about the lack of progression and the student will also receive any of the submitted justification material.
6. Unless the accompanying explanation and justification for unsatisfactory performance/progress is compelling, the student may face exclusion from the program (FGS Regulations VI. 6.6.11. Academic Standards).
7. The Faculty of Graduate Studies will advise the student, the Associate Director, and the Supervisor on the status (i.e. remains in good standing, dismissed) of the student in the program.

Approved GPC 28 Nov 2011; School of Nursing Council 22 Oct 2012

SCHOOL OF NURSING FACULTY HAVING FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES MEMBERSHIP

ASTON, Megan (Dr.) Professor & Associate Director, Research and International Affairs & Director, Centre for Transformative Nursing & Health Research	Forrest Bldg, Room 123 megan.aston@dal.ca	902-494-6376
BOMBAY, Amy (Dr.) Associate Professor	Forrest Bldg, Room G27 amy.bombay@dal.ca	902-494-7114
CAMPBELL-YEO, Marsha Professor, Neonatal Nurse Practitioner	Forrest Bldg, Room 117 marsha.campbell-yeo@dal.ca	902-494-4283
CASSIDY, Christine (Dr.) Assistant Professor	Forrest Building, Room N21 ccassidy@dal.ca	902-494-2223
CHIRCOP, Andrea (Dr.) Associate Professor	Forrest Bldg, Room 140 andrea.chircop@dal.ca	902-494-2384
CURRAN, Janet (Dr.) Professor, Research Chair Quality and Patient Safety, IWK	Forrest Bldg, Room 121 jacurran@dal.ca	902-494-4286
GOLDBERG, Lisa (Dr.) Associate Professor, Associate Director Undergraduate Student Affairs	Forrest Bldg, Room G21 lisa.goldberg@dal.ca	902-494-2988
GRAHAM, Laurie NP Coordinator & Lecturer	Forrest Bldg, Room G34	902-494-4333
HEBERT, Kim NP Family All Ages, Senior Instructor	Forrest Bldg, Room G34 kim.hebert@dal.ca	902-494-2611
HUGHES, Jean (Dr.) Professor	Dentistry Bldg, Room 5208 jean.hughes@dal.ca	902-494-2456
LACKIE, Kelly (Dr.) Assistant Professor & Associate Director, Simulation-based Education and Interprofessional Education	Forrest Bldg., Room G23 klackie@dal.ca	902-494-6510
LATIMER, Margot (Dr.) Professor, Indigenous Health Chair in Nursing	Forrest Bldg, Room 127 mlatimer@dal.ca	902-494-2391
MACDONALD, Marilyn (Dr.) Professor & Director, JBI Centre Aligning Health Needs and Evidence for Transformative Change	Forrest Bldg, Room 130 marilyn.macdonald@dal.ca	902-494-2433
MARTIN-MISENER, Ruth (Dr.) Professor & Director School of Nursing & Assistant Dean Faculty of Health	Forrest Bldg, Room 132 ruth.martin-misener@dal.ca	902-494-1143
MITCHELL, Carolyn (Dr.) Assistant Professor	Forrest Bldg, Room G37 Carolyn.mitchell@dal.ca	902-494-6907
MOODY, Elaine (Dr.) Assistant Professor	Forrest Bldg. Room G32 <a href="mailto:elaine.moody@dal.ca">elaine.moody@dal.ca</a>	902-494-2143

PRICE, Sheri (Dr.) Professor	Forrest Bldg, Room 122 pricesl@dal.ca	902-494-8831
SHEFFER, Catherine (Dr.) Senior Instructor & Associate Director Academic Undergraduate Studies	Forrest Bldg, Room 126 catherine.sheffer@dal.ca	902-494-1975
STEENBEEK, Audrey (Dr.) Professor & Associate Director Graduate Studies	Forrest Bldg, Room G26 a.steenbeek@dal.ca	902-494-2113
WEEKS, Lori (Dr.) Professor	Forrest Bldg., Room G30 lori.weeks@dal.ca	902-494-7114

## **PROGRAM OF STUDIES FOR THE PhD (NURSING) DEGREE**

### **Residency**

All doctoral programs at Dalhousie University are full time and require a full-time residency period and program fees.

Students are required to be on campus for at least four semesters in the first 2 years of their program. (Faculty of Graduate Studies Regulation 2.3.2)

### **Program Registration**

A full-time graduate student paying program fees is a student who has been approved by the School of Nursing and the Faculty of Graduate Studies as working full-time on their graduate degree.

Tuition amounts will be subject to annual increases approved by Dalhousie's Board of Governors. For complete details please see the fee schedule "" on Dalhousie's Money Matters website [https://www.dal.ca/admissions/money\\_matters.html](https://www.dal.ca/admissions/money_matters.html)

## PHD (NURSING) PROGRAM COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

**Not all courses will be offered every year; check the timetable or with the School of Nursing**  
The timetable is found online: [https://dalonline.dal.ca/PROD/fysktime.P\\_DisplaySchedule](https://dalonline.dal.ca/PROD/fysktime.P_DisplaySchedule)

### **NURS6050.03 Contemporary Views of Nursing Science: Philosophy, Research, and Practice**

This course explores the philosophy underlying the ontological, epistemological, and ethical approaches to nursing and its practices. Both learner and educator will critically analyze, reflect, and dialogue in a relational, scholarly, and intersubjective learning space. An in-depth understanding of the diverse research traditions that exist within the discipline of nursing and the unique body of knowledge that evolves with each tradition will be illuminated.

### **NURS6130.03 Measurement in Nursing Phenomena**

This course is designed to prepare learners to develop and share nursing knowledge in methodological and measurement issues as an evolving field in today's research environment. The preparedness of nursing science to embrace critical multiplism from the perspective of methodology, measurement, and evaluation will be interrogated. (Not currently offered)

### **NURS6200.03 Nursing Sensitive Health Outcomes**

Conceptual, philosophical, theoretical, epistemological, methodological, and feasibility issues central to health outcomes research are examined. The concept of health outcomes and related health and social policies from the perspective of nursing practices are analyzed and critiqued. The impacts of nursing practices on health outcomes at individual, family, community, and population levels will be discussed, analyzed and critiqued.

### **NURS6210.03 Women's Health Outcomes**

This course provides a forum to analyze, discuss, and critique philosophical, conceptual, theoretical, methodological, and feasibility issues central to women's health outcomes research and nursing practice from a gender-based and diversity analysis perspective and the relationship to health and social policies. The short- and long-term impacts of nursing practices on women's health outcomes and nursing practice at the individual, family, community, and population levels will be analyzed.

### **NURS6300.03 Doctoral Seminar**

The goal of the doctoral seminar is for students and faculty to share the findings from their research, engage in scholarly debate, and foster scholarship. The seminar will facilitate proposed and ongoing research between and among doctoral students, faculty members, and other key stakeholders. Focus is on the critical examination of the research process in nursing, health service delivery, and policy decision-making with an emphasis on maintaining the links between the research problem, theory, and research methods. Consideration is given to both quantitative and qualitative research approaches, designs, and data collection and analysis. Knowledge translation as a core component of research design will be discussed. Strategies for critically analyzing research studies and for utilizing findings are examined.

**NURS6800.03                      Directed Doctoral Study**

This course offers doctoral students the opportunity to undertake further study in a specific topic of interest that is not covered by regular course offerings. The student will be supervised by a faculty member who is competent in the area of interest. Regular meetings between the student and supervising faculty member will be held. The method of evaluation will be contracted by the student and supervising faculty member.

**NURS6820.03                      Doctoral Reading Course**

This course offers doctoral students the opportunity to undertake further study in a specific topic of interest that is not covered by regular course offerings. The student will be supervised by a faculty member who is competent in the area of interest. Regular meetings between the student and supervising faculty member will be held. The method of evaluation will be contracted by the student and supervising faculty member.

**NURS9530.00                      Doctoral Thesis**

**PHDP8000.00                      Doctoral Comprehensive Exam Requirement**

Following completion of course work, students will register in the Doctoral Comprehensive Exam Requirement while they prepare for and until they have passed the Comprehensive Examination.

## TAKING COURSES AT OTHER UNIVERSITIES

### Procedure for Gaining Permission to Register for Classes at a University Other than Dalhousie

Graduate level class(es) may be taken at a university other than Dalhousie. **The classes must be approved by the student's supervisor and the Associate Director, Graduate Studies PRIOR to enrolment in the class.** Students must submit the Letter of Permission and Additional Processing Information forms, available on the Faculty of Graduate Studies' web site ([Faculty of Graduate Studies' website](#)), at least two (2) months prior to the course start date. Classes must be passed with at least a B-.

### Transfer Credits/Advanced Placement for Graduate Courses Taken Prior to Entry to the PhD (Nursing) Program

Upon admission, a student may be granted advanced placement credits based on courses completed previously with a course content equivalent to a graduate course at Dalhousie University. Graduate classes that have not been counted towards a previous degree can be awarded transfer credit. For courses that have been counted towards a previous degree advanced placement normally does not reduce the overall course requirements in the Dalhousie program, but may replace one or more required courses.

The maximum number of courses taken outside Dalhousie (transfer credits and advanced placement) cannot normally exceed 33% of program requirements (Regulation 7.6)

See the Faculty of Graduate Studies guidelines (Regulation 7.6) online:

[Dalhousie Academic Calendar](#)

## GRADING

All graduate courses **must be passed with at least a B-**. Consistent with Faculty of Graduate Studies regulations (Reg 7.6.2), faculty within the School of Nursing use the following grading system:

<u>Alphabetic Grade</u>	<u>Numerical Value</u>	<u>Grade Point</u>
A+	4.3	90-100
A	4	85-89
A-	3.7	80-84
B+	3.3	77-79
B	3	73-76
B-	2.7	70-72
Failure	F	

## Withdrawal

The last dates for adding and deleting classes are published in the schedule of academic add/drop dates at the front of the calendar. A class may be added or dropped on the web at:

[https://dalu.sharepoint.com/sites/graduate-studies/SitePages/add-drop.aspx?\\_ga=2.82015702.1113133529.1650282956-2045043073.1640187289](https://dalu.sharepoint.com/sites/graduate-studies/SitePages/add-drop.aspx?_ga=2.82015702.1113133529.1650282956-2045043073.1640187289) by the deadlines listed in [Academic Class Add/Drop Dates](#) section of the Dalhousie Academic Calendar.

Half-credit courses are assigned a value of three credit hours.

## **Failures**

Normally (in the School of Nursing), students who fail any paper may, at the discretion of the Professor, have the option of rewriting the paper once. The rewritten paper must be submitted within 2 weeks of receipt of the original graded paper (see individual course professor). The maximum grade that can be obtained in the rewritten paper shall be a "B" grade.

## **FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES REGULATIONS**

**Faculty of Graduate Studies Regulations are found online at the following URL:**

[Dalhousie Academic Calendars - View Calendar](#)

### **Topic**

- I. [Membership in the Faculty of Graduate Studies](#)
- II. [Graduate Programs](#)
- III. [Admission Requirements for Graduate Programs](#)
- IV. [Graduate Application Process](#)
- V. [Registration Procedures and Regulations](#)
- VI. [Intellectual Property and Conflict of Interest](#)
- VII. [Degree Requirements](#)
- VIII. [Examinations](#)
- IX. [Thesis Supervisors and Supervisory Committees](#)
- X. [Thesis Regulations](#)
- XI. [Convocation](#)
- XII. [Appeals](#)
- XIII. [Departmental and Program Listings](#)
- XIV. [Centre for Learning and Teaching](#)



## SPECIAL NOTICES FOR PhD (NURSING) STUDENTS

### Guidelines for Graduate Student Advisement

#### Responsibilities of the Thesis Supervisor.

1. Advise students on academic planning, concerns, and procedures, including class selection and adding/deleting classes.
2. Advise students on University, Faculty, and School policies, rules, and regulations and the students' responsibilities in understanding, knowing, and fulfilling program requirements and relevant regulations which may affect them.
3. Advise the Associate Director Graduate Studies, of students with special concerns and needs that may affect their standing in the program.
4. Advise students of the resources available at Dalhousie University and in the wider community on concerns voiced which are beyond the responsibilities of the academic advisors.

#### Email

Email is an authorized means of communication for academic and administrative purposes within Dalhousie University. The University will assign all students an official email address. This address will remain in effect while the student remains a student and for one academic term following a student's last registration. **This is the only email address that will be used for communication with students regarding all academic and administrative matters.** Any re-direction of email will be at the student's own risk. Each student is expected to check their official email address frequently in order to stay current with Dalhousie communications. (Approved by Senate, Dalhousie University, Nov 2002)

#### Nursing Electives

A number of courses are offered as nursing electives. These courses will not routinely be offered each year. They will be offered if the number of students warrants and if School of Nursing resources permit.

#### Carrels

PhD (Nursing) students share dedicated office space in the Dentistry Building, Room 5210.

A limited number of carrels are available for graduate students in the Schools of Nursing, Occupational Therapy, and Physiotherapy, in room G44 of the Forrest Building and in the Kellogg and Killam Libraries.

## **Lounge**

Graduate students in the Schools of Nursing, Occupational Therapy, and Physical Therapy are welcome to use shared Graduate Student Lounge in Room 314, located on the 3rd floor of the Forrest.

## **Interdisciplinary Locker Space**

Graduate students in the Schools of Nursing, Occupational Therapy, and Physical Therapy share lockers in Room G41, on the ground floor of the Forrest Building. Students are required to supply their own padlock.

## **Graduate Nursing Society**

All graduate nursing students belong to the Graduate Nursing Society. The Society makes a valuable contribution to the graduate education experience and significantly increases the sense of community amongst students by hosting/promoting academic and social events. Students are encouraged to put forward their names and assume responsibilities of the Society Executive (President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary).

## **Graduate Student Representation on School of Nursing Committees**

Graduate student representation on a number of School of Nursing committees is mandated in the committees' Terms of Reference – one graduate student for each of the following, serving a one-year term and having voting privilege: School of Nursing Council, Graduate Studies Committee, Graduate Student Affairs Committee, Research and Scholarly Development Committee, Student Appeals Committee, Diversity Committee; one graduate student for Full Faculty, not having voting privilege.

## **Graduate Student Union**

All full- and part-time students belong to the Dalhousie Association of Graduate Students (DAGS) upon payment of university fees. DAGS, as the association is more familiarly known, also prepares a Handbook which contains some very helpful information for new graduate students. Students are encouraged to become involved with DAGS, both socially and politically.

## **Format for Papers**

American Psychological Association (APA 7<sup>th</sup> edition) format is the program policy for all papers and theses in the School of Nursing. This format provides direction regarding referencing, headings, cover page, margins, tables, etc.

Theses are also completed within APA format. The only exceptions (ie., margins, ordering of parts of the manuscript, page numbering) are those format aspects required by the Faculty of Graduate Studies outlined in the Faculty of Graduate Studies Regulation for Submission of Theses section of this Handbook and on the Faculty of Graduate Studies web site ([Formatting Your Thesis \(sharepoint.com\)](#)) (NetID Login required).

## **Accessibility to the Forrest Building**

Graduate nursing students will have access to the Forrest Building, Mon to Fri, 0700-1800 hrs

Between 1800 and 2200 hrs and on weekends, the Forrest Building is accessible by using Dalhousie ID and PIN on the card reader located on the glass entries to the Dentistry Building. Instructions for setting up the PIN are found at the following URL:  
[http://www.dal.ca/campus\\_life/Dalcard/contact-us-form.html](http://www.dal.ca/campus_life/Dalcard/contact-us-form.html)

Note: No student is permitted in the Forrest Building after 2200 hrs.

Students should have their Dalhousie student ID with them at all times while on the Dalhousie University campus.

The School of Nursing Reception is open between 0830 and 1630 hrs, Monday to Friday.

## **Wednesdays@Noon**

The School of Nursing hosts **Wednesdays@Noon Nursing & Health Research Centre Research Rounds**.

Available on site and by distance delivery, the seminars reflect the four research foci of the School, and will be conducted by faculty, students, and guest presenters from Dalhousie University and other universities and organizations.

- Health Needs of People
- Marginalized Populations and Health Equity
- Health Systems and Health Workforce Planning and Impact
- Knowledge Translation and Implementation Science

The content for Research Rounds seminars has been developed in collaboration with students and faculty members. Faculty representing the graduate programs have committed to supporting the sustainability of this series designed to mentor graduate students in the areas of nursing scholarship and research capacity. Listed below are student expectations:

- To attend and participate, onsite when possible, otherwise by distance
- To identify areas of interest – keeping relevant to students
- To mentor junior students

It is an expectation that all graduate students attend the seminars, therefore information regarding distance access will be made available.

## FREQUENTLY USED WEB SITES

<b>Dalhousie University Web Sites</b>	
Dalhousie University School of Nursing	<a href="https://nursing.dal.ca/">https://nursing.dal.ca/</a>
Faculty of Graduate Studies	<a href="https://www.dal.ca/faculty/gradstudies.html">https://www.dal.ca/faculty/gradstudies.html</a>
Letter of Permission forms	<a href="https://dalu.sharepoint.com/sites/graduate-studies/SitePages/resources-students.aspx">https://dalu.sharepoint.com/sites/graduate-studies/SitePages/resources-students.aspx</a> (NetID login required)
Transcript request	<a href="https://www.dal.ca/admissions/registrar_office.html">https://www.dal.ca/admissions/registrar_office.html</a>
Student Accounts	<a href="https://www.dal.ca/admissions/money_matters.html">https://www.dal.ca/admissions/money_matters.html</a>
Dal On-Line/Web for Students	<a href="https://dalonline.dal.ca/home.html">https://dalonline.dal.ca/home.html</a>
Email for Students	<a href="http://www.dal.ca">www.dal.ca</a> Click on <i>myDal</i>
Dalhousie University Ethics Review guidelines & process	<a href="https://www.dal.ca/dept/research-services.html">https://www.dal.ca/dept/research-services.html</a>
Dalhousie University library	<a href="https://libraries.dal.ca">https://libraries.dal.ca</a>
<b>External Web Sites</b>	
Nova Scotia College of Nursing	<a href="https://nscn.ca/">https://nscn.ca/</a>
Research NS (formerly Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation)	<a href="https://researchns.ca/">https://researchns.ca/</a>
Canadian Nurses Foundation	<a href="http://www.cna-aiic.ca/">http://www.cna-aiic.ca/</a>
Canadian Nurse Practitioner Initiative	<a href="#">National Framework of Guiding Principles</a>
Nurse Practitioner Association of Nova Scotia	<a href="https://npans.ca/">https://npans.ca/</a>

## POLICY ON SUBMISSION OF STUDENT PAPERS

Any instructor may require student papers to be submitted in both written and electronic (computer-readable) form, as defined by the instructor. The instructor may submit the material to a third-party computer-based assessment system(s) for the purpose of assessing the originality of the paper. The results of such assessment may be used as evidence in any disciplinary action taken by the Senate.

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

See the Dalhousie University policy online:

[https://www.dal.ca/dept/university\\_secretariat/academic-integrity.html](https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/academic-integrity.html)

## **SUSPENSION OR DISMISSAL FROM A PROGRAM ON THE GROUNDS OF PROFESSIONAL UNSUITABILITY**

See the Faculty of Health Professions guidelines online:

[Suspension or Dismissal due to Professional Unsuitability](#)

## **FACULTY OF HEALTH ALLEGATION OF PROFESSIONAL UNSUITABILITY: PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES**

See the Faculty of Health Professions guidelines online:

[Allegation of Professional Unsuitability Procedural Guidelines](#)

## **GUIDELINES FOR THE STUDENT USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION IN PRACTICE EDUCATION SETTINGS**

See the Faculty of Health guidelines online:

<https://www.dal.ca/faculty/health/current-students/student-policies-and-procedures.html>

## **DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT**

See the Dalhousie University Code of Student Conduct online:

[https://www.dal.ca/dept/university\\_secretariat/policies.html#](https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/policies.html#)

## **FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES ACADEMIC APPEALS**

See the Faculty of Health Policy online:

[FGS Academic Appeals](#)

See the Faculty of Graduate Studies guidelines (Regulation 12) online:

[FGS Guidelines \(Regulation XII\)](#)

## **STUDENT RATINGS OF INSTRUCTION**

See the Dalhousie University Senate guidelines online:

[http://www.dal.ca/dept/university\\_secretariat/policies/academic.html](http://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/policies/academic.html)

**SECTION B**

**COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION**

**Students should always consult the  
Faculty of Graduate Studies  
[Comprehensive Examinations](#)**

**for the most  
up-to-date information and forms.**

## PHD (NURSING) COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION PROCESS

The Comprehensive Examination represents a synthesis of knowledge which candidates have gained from course work and their developing thesis proposal. The Comprehensive Examination indicates the candidate's readiness for doctoral research, and it provides an opportunity for candidates to demonstrate their scope of knowledge rather than specialization. The Comprehensive Examination is not a narrative or literature review. It is a discussion of key issues and controversies which is expected to be critical and analytical.

The PhD Comprehensive Examination in the candidate's area of study will be taken in the second year or not later than the beginning of the third year of the program. The Comprehensive Examination may be taken only after the completion of all required course work. In no case should the Comprehensive Examination be held less than one year prior to the submission of the thesis for defence.

During the time that the candidate prepares for the Comprehensive Examination and until they pass the Examination, they will be registered in PHDP8000, *Doctoral Comprehensive Requirement*. This will appear on the candidate's official record.

Before the Comprehensive Examination, the candidate's Thesis Supervisory Committee (see Section C, Identification of Thesis Supervisory Committee) will have met at least once and reviewed a **first draft** of the candidate's thesis proposal.

### Comprehensive Examination Process

The Comprehensive Examination will consist of a written component and an oral component. With input from the candidate, the Thesis Supervisory Committee will develop **two** questions relevant to the general area of the candidate's research. These questions will be framed within the following two categories: theoretical/philosophical underpinnings and methodological issues. The candidate will write approximately 20 pages to address each question. The written component of the Comprehensive Examination will be submitted to the Thesis Supervisory Committee within 4 weeks of receipt of the questions. The Committee will evaluate the two papers and give the candidate written comments within a 3 week time period. If and only if the written papers are judged by the thesis supervisory committee as meeting the standard for examination, the oral component of the Comprehensive Examination will be held.

In the case where either of the papers is judged as not meeting the standards of the examination, the student will be given an opportunity to revise the paper(s). Thesis supervisory committee members and the student will agree upon the timeframe for revision, not to exceed 2 months. Thesis supervisory committee members are expected to provide detailed guidance to the student related to improvement of the paper(s). The student will be given one opportunity to revise their papers. Failure to achieve approval of the papers after the second submission will result in a failure, and this would constitute grounds for the student's academic dismissal from the PhD program.

The oral component of the Examination will be held within one week following the student's receipt of the Thesis Supervisory Committee's written comments. Notice of the Comprehensive Examination Oral Defence will be distributed to the student and Thesis Supervisory Committee by the Graduate Programs Administrative Assistant. For each of the papers, the student will provide a 10 minute overview of their response (format to be decided by the student and supervisor and may include a presentation), followed by a 30 minute round of questioning by members of the Thesis Supervisory Committee. A pass/fail decision for the

Comprehensive Examination will be made by the Thesis Supervisory Committee immediately following the oral component.

If the answers to the questions for the oral examination are not judged to meet the standards of the examination, the student will be given an opportunity to undertake the examination once more, within 2 months of the initial oral examination. The student will be given one opportunity to repeat the oral examination. Failure to achieve approval of the oral examination after the second round will be considered a failure, and this would constitute grounds for academic dismissal from the PhD program.

A pass decision requires that **both** the written and oral components of the examination are satisfactory. The Thesis Supervisor will inform the office of the Associate Director Graduate Studies of the decision, who will then inform the Faculty of Graduate Studies of the date and outcome of the student's Comprehensive Examination.

Approved: GSC 10 June 2019  
Approved: School Council 11 July 2019



**SECTION C**

**PHD NURSING THESIS**

**Students should always consult the Faculty of  
Graduate Studies  
[Thesis Regulations](#)  
for the most up-to-date information and forms.**

## NURS9530 – DOCTORAL THESIS

Following successful completion of the Comprehensive Examination, the student is ready to engage in research and prepare their thesis.

Doctoral theses must display original scholarship expressed in satisfactory literary form consistent with the discipline of nursing and be of such value as to merit publication.

The subject of the PhD thesis must be approved by the Graduate Program at least 12 months before the date of the final examination. All doctoral candidates must have a formally constituted Thesis Supervisory Committee, consisting of a Thesis Supervisor and at least two other members of the Faculty of Graduate Studies who are knowledgeable in the field of research. Regulations for the defence of a Doctoral Thesis as set out by the Faculty of Graduate Studies must be followed.

All doctoral theses must be examined in a public oral defence and conducted by an Examining Committee recommended by the School of Nursing and approved by the Faculty of Graduate Studies. A candidate will not be permitted to proceed with the oral defence and examination until all of the following requirements have been met:

- (i) all required class work is completed successfully;
- (ii) comprehensive examination is passed;
- (iii) thesis title is approved;
- (iv) Examining Committee is established;
- (v) the style and format of the thesis meets the requirements of the University and appropriate copies of the thesis have been submitted as per Faculty of Graduate Studies regulations and deadlines. (See Faculty of Graduate Studies Regulations for Submission of Theses section below.)

Normally a candidate proceeds to oral defence with the approval of the PhD Thesis Committee. A candidate may proceed without the consent of the Thesis Supervisory Committee. In such an instance, the Faculty of Graduate Studies requires that a signed declaration from the student be included with the Thesis Submission Form (FGS Handbook).

### Criteria

The following criteria are used for a thesis which is aligned with, and in addition to, the Faculty of Graduate Studies regulations:

1. Theses are done by one person and must show evidence of independent scholarship.
2. Theses must show evidence of precise, scholarly writing. Form and style must be consistent and conform to the American Psychological Association (APA 7<sup>th</sup> edition) format, except when superseded by Faculty of Graduate Studies regulations (see [Faculty of Graduate Studies Thesis Format Guidelines](#)). Documents are returned to students for change and/or rewriting until expectations are met.
3. Theses are made part of the Dalhousie University library holdings and are available through the Dalhousie University Library Collections:  
<http://libraries.dal.ca/find/theses.html>

4. The thesis may be a theoretical or practical problem which focuses heavily on research methodology. The findings are academically defensible.
5. The thesis is graded as "approved" or "not approved".

### **General Comments**

1. The thesis is done under the guidance of the PhD Thesis Supervisory Committee (see Committee Composition below).
2. Considerable research and writing by faculty members occur during the summer months. The need to protect time for scholarly activities may result in different levels of access to faculty over the summer.
3. All local agencies/institutions have established ethical review policies for researchers to follow if they are seeking access to conduct nursing research. Candidates should ensure they obtain the information from their Thesis Supervisor and the relevant agency/institution.
4. Consistent form, style, and accepted rules of grammar must be used throughout the thesis. Candidates are required to follow the APA Style Manual (7<sup>th</sup> ed.) for the preparation of a thesis which has been approved by the Thesis Supervisor. Candidates are reminded of their responsibility to conform precisely to the style manual in the preparation of the manuscript except where Faculty of Graduate Studies regulations state otherwise (see Faculty of Graduate Studies Regulations Thesis Format Guidelines). The Faculty of Graduate Studies regulations always supersede. The acceptable standard must be met before the thesis is given final approval, and until such standards are met, the candidate is not eligible for graduation.

### **IDENTIFICATION OF THESIS SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE**

By the end of the student's first year of study, the Thesis Supervisory Committee will be identified. It is to be comprised of the Thesis Supervisor and a minimum of two additional faculty having membership in the Dalhousie University Faculty of Graduate Studies and expertise in the student's area of research interest. Regular members should constitute no less than 50% of the membership of a supervisory committee.

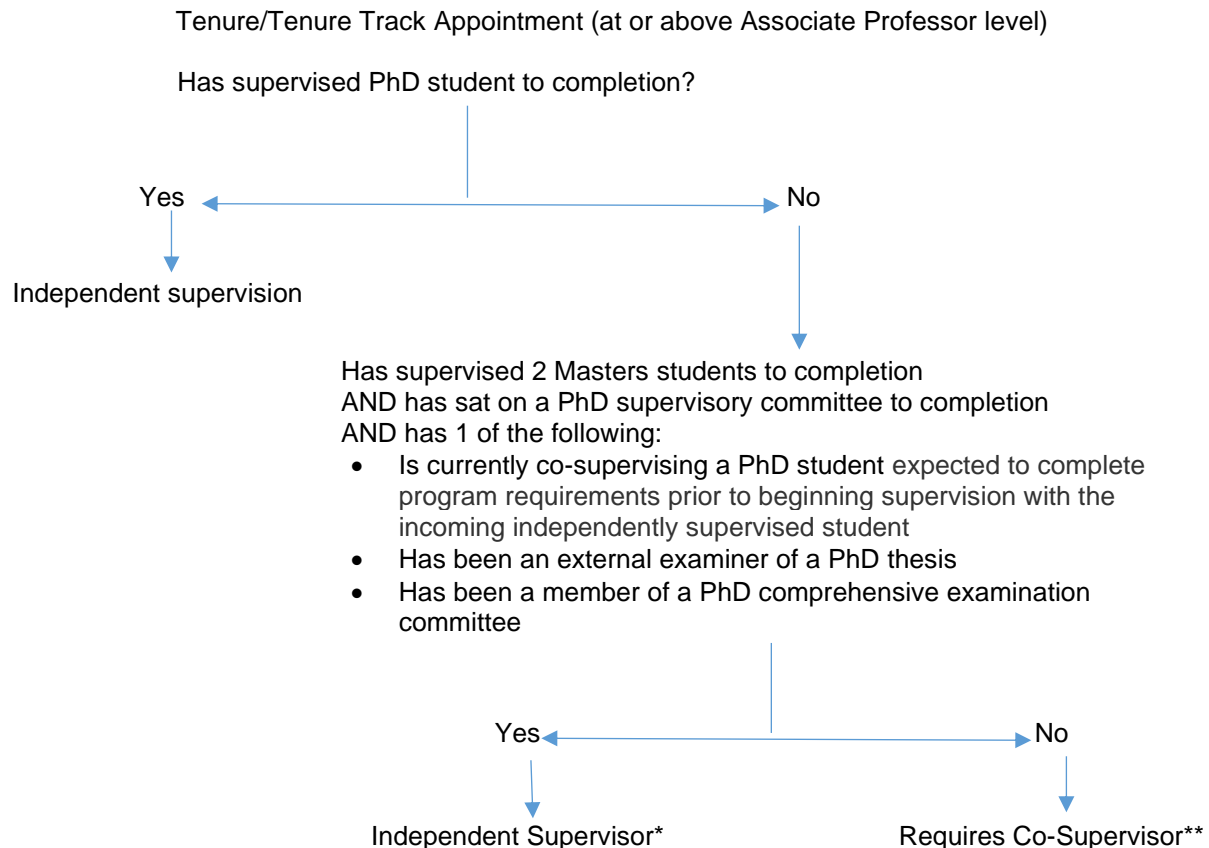
## Selection of Thesis Supervisor

The individual serving as Thesis Supervisor must:

- Hold a tenured position at least at the Associate Professor level within the School of Nursing and be a member of the Faculty of Graduate Studies.
- Be doctorally prepared.
- Demonstrate continuing scholarly or creative activity of an original nature such as a pattern of at least two peer-reviewed publications, accepted or in print annually.
- Participate as principal investigator in peer-reviewed research activities and hold funding for their program of research and for their students.
- Have participated in departmental supervisory programs promoting excellence in graduate education and supervision.
- Have participated as a supervisor or co-supervisor for at least one Master's thesis committee through to successful defence.
- Have participated as co-supervisor for a PhD student through to successful defence.

The Thesis Supervisor is responsible for ensuring the Thesis Committee has balanced skills.

### **PhD (Nursing) Supervision Identification Process**



\* Recommend one committee member is an experienced PhD supervisor

\*\* Until such time as other criteria are met

Approved April 2019  
Approved by School Council July 11 2019

## Process for the Selection of the Thesis Supervisory Committee

1. A PhD (Nursing) Thesis Supervisory Committee Approval Form is signed by all committee members, signifying confirmation of their committee membership. The form is available from the Graduate Programs Administrative Assistant. The PhD (Nursing) Thesis Supervisory Committee form is approved by the Associate Director, Graduate Studies. The Graduate Programs Administrative Assistant will record the Thesis Supervisory Committee membership on the Graduate Studies Information System [Dal Online].
2. The number of committee members from outside Dalhousie University cannot exceed the number from within.

## **GUIDELINES ON THE SUPERVISION OF GRADUATE STUDENTS**

Guidelines are found in [Regulation IX. Thesis Supervisors and Supervisory Committees.](#)

### **RESEARCH SCHEDULE**

Students should plan their research schedule in consultation with their Thesis Supervisor and with recognition of faculty members' research time. PhD Thesis Committees should meet at least twice a year during the thesis research period and more often in the writing stages of the student's program. Normally the agreement of all Committee members is required before the School of Nursing brings forward a thesis for examination.

#### **Preparation Steps**

##### **1. Draft Proposal**

The student will submit initial drafts of the thesis proposal to the Thesis Supervisor. When the Thesis Supervisor and the student feel that the proposal is well under way a draft is submitted to all Committee Members for their input. The Thesis Supervisor should then approve a final draft BEFORE the Proposal Review Meeting (PRM). Draft proposals will be in chapter format.

##### **2. Proposal Review Meeting**

The purpose of the Proposal Review Meeting (PRM) is to determine the acceptability of the research proposal submitted by the student. The members of the Thesis Committee are expected to have read the proposal thoroughly prior to the PRM. The student and Thesis Committee members must meet immediately prior to submitting the application to the appropriate Ethics Board/Committee, to discuss issues around the thesis proposal. The ethics application should be ready at the time of the PRM.

Following discussion of the thesis proposal the Committee is asked for a recommendation of:

- a) acceptance of the research proposal as submitted; or
- b) acceptance of the research proposal on the condition that minor modifications are made; or
- c) the research proposal requires major revisions and an additional PRM is required.

The Thesis Supervisor is responsible for recording the decision and recommendations of the Thesis Supervisory Committee. Should the proposal be accepted, the student is entitled to implement the proposed, or modified, plan of research. The recommended changes/modifications in the research proposal made by the Thesis Supervisory Committee during the Proposal Review Meeting constitute the approved plan of research. Any deviation from the approved plan must receive prior approval from the entire Committee. All recommendations of the Committee must be incorporated in the final thesis.

Following the Proposal Review Meeting, the Thesis Supervisor prepares a written report and forwards it to the Graduate Programs Administrative Assistant who types the report and distributes it to the student and Thesis Supervisory Committee members.

### Process

- The student submits drafts of the proposal to the Thesis Supervisor until the Thesis Supervisor approves the proposal as ready to be discussed at the Proposal Review Meeting (PRM).
- The student informs the Thesis Supervisor of dates and times when the Thesis Committee members are available for the Proposal Review Meeting, and the Thesis Supervisor chooses the final date and time.
- The student notifies the Graduate Programs Administrative Assistant of the date and time of the PRM. The Assistant then sends appropriate notification to all Committee members.
- The student must submit the final draft of the thesis proposal to all Committee members at least two weeks prior to the PRM.
- Documentation necessary for ethics approval should be submitted to the Thesis Supervisor at the same time as the final proposal (before the PRM).
- The Thesis Supervisor must submit a written report of the Thesis Supervisory Committee decision regarding the PRM to the Graduate Programs Administrative Assistant who then types the report, distributes it to the student and the Thesis Supervisory Committee, places a copy in the student's file, and forwards notification of approval to the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

### 3. Ethics Approval

Dalhousie University has two University Research Ethics Boards which review all faculty and graduate thesis research that involves human participants, human tissue or human data:

The Health Sciences Research Ethics Board  
The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Ethics Board

Faculty and students submitting their research projects for human ethics review must prepare their submissions using the appropriate forms and guidance documents which are specific to each Board. The selection of the correct forms is governed by the nature of the research and research participant population, not the home Department or discipline of the Researcher. If researchers are uncertain which guidelines are suitable, they should consult the Office of Research Ethics Administration for advice.

Forms and guidance documents are found on the Office of Research Services web site:  
<https://www.dal.ca/dept/research-services.html>

**The Thesis Supervisor will provide advice regarding the ethics approval process. The student and supervisor must adhere to Dalhousie and health agency policies on integrity in scholarly activity and research ethics. The Dalhousie Research Ethics Boards require that graduate student supervisors complete the Confirmation of Supervisor's Review and ensure its inclusion with the student's ethics submission.**

(The form may be downloaded from the Research Services web site  
<https://www.dal.ca/dept/research-services.html>)

Students need to obtain the current guidelines for ethics review to be conducted by Dalhousie University, the IWK Health Centre, Nova Scotia Health, Horizon Health Network, or additional appropriate institutional body. Students will be advised by the ethics review board/committee when they have been given ethics approval. Students must inform the Thesis Supervisor when ethics approval is received. A yearly update on the status of the research will be sought from the student by the appropriate institutional ethics review service. A copy of the completed update must be forwarded by the student to the Thesis Supervisor. The student is responsible to notify the Research Ethics Board(s) when the research is completed, i.e., the thesis is approved and submitted.

#### 4. Data Collection

NO DATA are to be collected until approval is received from the relevant ethics board/committee. Following approval(s), the student may proceed with data collection. The Thesis Supervisor usually takes primary responsibility for ensuring that ethical guidelines are followed regarding data collection and storage.

#### 5. Data Analysis

The student submits to the Thesis Supervisor draft copies of the results, discussion, and implications chapters until both the Thesis Supervisor and the student are satisfied. (On some Thesis Supervisory Committees drafts may be submitted to other members.)

## GUIDELINES FOR PHD THESIS BY MANUSCRIPT

The decision regarding thesis by manuscript versus the traditional thesis will be made by the supervisor and the student and may be renegotiated as required.

The Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS) permits programs to allow students to submit theses or dissertations including individually or co-authored works currently published or intended for publication. The School of Nursing has requirements in addition to those provided in the FGS guidelines for manuscript-based theses.

These guidelines are presented below and are subject to change. If you have any questions, please consult the Associate Director Graduate Studies.

Students and supervisory committee members should familiarize themselves with the Dalhousie University policy on Intellectual Honesty (<http://academicintegrity.dal.ca>) and FGS policy on Intellectual Property (Reg 6.2)

☐☐ **Application to submit a manuscript-based thesis:** A student may apply to the Graduate Studies Committee (GSC) to submit some or all of the thesis as a series of related papers, or manuscripts intended for publication, that form a coherent body of work (see "Format" below). Consideration by the GSC of such an application requires prior consent of the supervisory committee. The paper(s) will normally form one or more well defined thesis chapters; details of organization and content are determined by the student and the supervisory committee. The publication status (submitted, in revision, in press, or published, with dates) and book or journal details (volume, page numbers, etc.) of any manuscripts or papers included in the thesis must be specified with each such chapter. To request permission to perform a manuscript-based thesis, send an email containing the following information to the Associate Director Graduate Studies and copied to the Graduate Programs Administrative Assistant: Primary supervisor name, *all* committee member names, and a statement to indicate that all of these individuals have been informed of your intention to complete a manuscript-based thesis *and* that they all approve of this format. This email must be copied to the supervisor and all committee members. For example:

“My primary supervisor is Dr. A and my committee members are Drs. B, C, and D. I have informed all of these individuals of my intention to complete a manuscript-based thesis and they have approved this format. I have copied each of these individuals on this message.”

☐☐ **Authorship:** Single or multi-authored papers may be included, provided that the student is the first author of all papers and has made a substantial contribution to the work. The student's contribution to both the research and the writing of any multi-authored paper must be clearly specified either in the introduction to the thesis or at the beginning of each relevant chapter. The [Student Contribution Form](#) should be filled out by the supervisor and submitted with the thesis. For each co-authored work included in the thesis or dissertation, the candidate must provide signed waivers from all co-authors explicitly consenting to the inclusion of that material and verifying the candidate's contributions. Committee members must also describe their contribution as co-authors.

☐☐ **Format:** Publications incorporated as thesis chapters should be in manuscript form in a style consistent with general FGS guidelines (section 2.1). The quality and appropriateness of the refereed journal will be approved by the supervisory committee and Associate Director Graduate Studies. Publication status and details for each manuscript or paper must be stated with each chapter. Although manuscript chapters will normally have their own introduction and



discussion sections, there should be a single general introductory chapter at the beginning of the thesis and a single comprehensive discussion chapter at the end. Linking sections between manuscripts should be considered and may be required by the supervisory committee. Where publication abstracts, acknowledgements, or reference lists are included, they should appear as sections or subsections that are numbered in accordance with the rest of the chapter text. Formatting details such as reference citation style and figure numbering must be consistent throughout the thesis. When necessary, abstracts and other elements of any 'manuscript chapters' may be excluded and/or papers modified to avoid repetition and to encourage good continuity with other chapters of the submission.

The **thesis by manuscript** format usually consists of the following elements

- Title page
- Dedication (optional)
- Table of Contents; the first entry on the Table of Contents will be the List of Tables
- List of Tables
- List of Figures
- Abstract and key words
- List of abbreviations, symbols, and nomenclature (if needed)
- Glossary (optional)
- Acknowledgements
- Body of thesis in Chapter format: - Chapter 1: Introduction to entire thesis; Chapter 2 (if not included as a manuscript) Literature Review; Three (3) Manuscripts (minimum), each identified in its own distinct chapter\*; Chapter X: Titled Conclusion or Discussion, contains substantive discussion including: summary / discussion of findings / conclusions / limitations of study / future research directions
- References
- Tables and Figures, if not embedded in thesis
- Appendices (final entry in Table of Contents).

\* The three papers should form a cohesive body of work that supports the theme or themes clearly expressed in the Introduction Chapter. The Introduction Chapter should integrate the manuscripts together to focus on their collective meaning and combined contribution. The Introduction Chapter should include: a statement of the problem, an explanation of the importance of the problem / issue, theoretical foundations, overview of the important literature (even though each paper would have its own literature review), the research questions addressed across all manuscripts, and the methods used in each manuscript to address the research questions. Each paper should be carefully planned out with the support and guidance of the supervisory committee. These papers **MUST** be developed and ready for submission to an identified journal and could already be published / accepted for publication **AFTER** formal discussion of thesis format has been completed within the supervisory committee. **ALL** manuscripts must represent work undertaken by the PhD student while enrolled in the PhD program **AND** must be approved by the supervisory committee, usually at the time of the proposal defense. Authorship of the papers should be explicitly discussed and agreed upon at a supervisory committee meeting and well in advance of preparation of the first paper.

☐☐ **References:** All references cited in publication-format chapters must be included in a single complete reference list at the end of the thesis (see section 2.4).

☐☐ **Supplementary Material:** Supplementary material not intended for publication (e.g., extensive data tables, details of experimental methods) may appear as supplements to publication-format chapters, as separate chapters, or as appendices, depending on the nature and length of the additional material required.

☐☐ **Copyright Permission:** Students must obtain appropriate copyright permission for any substantial part of the thesis for which copyright is held by another party (e.g., a publisher; see section 4.0). Copyright permission letters should appear in an appendix at the end of the thesis. Letters must include provision for LAC (NLC) reproduction [Grad Students and Copyright - Copyright Office - Dalhousie University](#)

☐☐ **Reprints:** Reprints may be included in the appendices. Copyright permission is required.

☐☐ **Revisions:** Examiners may specify revisions to any part of the thesis, regardless of publication status.

Students and supervisory committee members should familiarize themselves with the Dalhousie University policies on Intellectual Honesty (<http://academicintegrity.dal.ca>)

[Material for these guidelines was drawn from the Dalhousie University Faculty of Graduate Studies web site, Dalhousie University Department of Psychology and Neuroscience (2014-2015) Graduate Student Handbook, and Bloomberg Faculty of Nursing University of Toronto Thesis Format Options (for PhD Students. . .)]

Approved GSC 14 Sep 2015

## FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES THESIS FORMAT GUIDELINES

Guidelines are found at the URL: [Formatting Your Thesis \(sharepoint.com\)](#) (NetID Login Required)

### THESIS DEFENCE

The checklist below is provided as a reminder and guide for doctoral candidates who are proceeding to the defence of their thesis and to Chairs, Directors, and Graduate Coordinators involved in the examination. A full outline of the procedures is available on the Faculty of Graduate Studies website: [Preparing for Your Doctoral Defence \(sharepoint.com\)](#) (NetID Login Required).

### Responsibilities

#### 1. Student Responsibilities

- 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](mailto:thesis@dal.ca). See the Graduate Studies Calendar for specific dates. It is important to bear in mind that **the External Examiner must be allowed at least one month to read the thesis before the defence date.**

- Ensure the thesis abstract (MAXIMUM length of 350 words) is suitable for the Thesis Defence Notice; it is limited to one page only. At least one month prior to the defence date, the abstract must be submitted electronically to FGS at [thesis@dal.ca](mailto:thesis@dal.ca), as a MS Word or text document.
- Coordinate with [thesis@dal.ca](mailto:thesis@dal.ca) to visit the room where the defense will be held.
- Prepare a summary presentation, **not to exceed twenty minutes**, for the oral examination. The candidate may want to attend several defences prior to own defence to familiarise themselves with the conduct of a doctoral examination.

It should be noted that these are the only formal pre-examination responsibilities of the candidate to the FGS office. Arrangements for the examination, including communication with the External Examiner, are handled by the Department or the FGS office, not by the doctoral candidates.

## 2. Director/Associate Director, Graduate Studies, School of Nursing Responsibilities

- The Director/Associate Director, Graduate Studies and thesis supervisor prepare a prioritized list of three potential external examiners. The first name on the list will be forwarded to the Associate Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies. The School of Nursing recommendation should be made at least 3 months prior to the anticipated date of submission of the thesis and should be accompanied by a curriculum vitae or a statement of examiner's qualifications for the first choice of External Examiner (indicated on the Request to Arrange Oral Defence of a Doctoral Thesis form).
- After the Associate Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies, approves the External Examiner, the Director/Associate Director, Graduate Studies, School of Nursing, will be notified of the External Examiner appointment.
- The Director/Associate Director, Graduate Studies will contact the External Examiner to issue an initial invitation and determine dates the External Examiner is available to attend the defence.
- The Director/Associate Director, Graduate Studies will recommend to the Associate Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies (after consultation with the candidate's supervisor) a suitable time for the thesis defence, keeping in mind that the External Examiner should have at least one month to read the thesis. PLEASE NOTE: The External Examiner's copy of the thesis will not be sent to the External Examiner until an established date and time has been determined by the School of Nursing and the External Examiner. The School of Nursing is required to provide this information to the Faculty of Graduate Studies in writing. When selecting a defence date and time, take into consideration that normally there can be only one member of the Examining Committee participating remotely through telephone/video conferencing or by sending in questions to the School of Nursing representative. (Note: the External Examiner is considered part of the Examining Committee.)
- The Assistant to the Director/Associate Director, Graduate Studies will arrange details of travel and accommodation if required with the External Examiner. The External Examiner is provided with an expense claim form to be submitted to the Associate Director Graduate Studies.
- The Director will participate at the defence as the Departmental Representative, or assign a designate.
- The Assistant to the Director/Associate Director, Graduate Studies will distribute Thesis Defence notices (provided by the Faculty of Graduate Studies) to all Thesis Supervisory Committee members and interested parties.

### 3. Associate Director, Graduate Studies Responsibilities

- The Associate Director, Graduate Studies will consult with the Director, School of Nursing, in selecting a suitable time for the thesis defence.

### 4. Faculty of Graduate Studies Responsibilities

- Issue a formal letter of invitation to the External Examiner.
- Courier an approved copy of the thesis to the External Examiner (if a hard copy is requested).
- Book a suitable room for the defence.
- Notify Associate Director Graduate Studies if the defense can proceed
- Copies of External Examiner's report are provided to the Defence Chair who will distribute copies to the members of the Examining Committee after the in-camera session.
- Prepare and forward to the School of Nursing the Thesis Defence Notice one week in advance of defence for distribution.
- Provide the signature page at the Examination for Examination Committee members' signatures. The signature page is given to the Defence Chair with their defence materials. This is completed electronically by FGS in the case of a virtual defense.
- Write a congratulatory letter to the student stipulating the time span for corrections or to explain a negative decision.
- Receive the Library and Archives Canada Form with original signature; thesis title page; signature page with original signatures of the Examining Committee (page II of thesis); copyright page with original signature of the student (page iii of the thesis); ethics page and, if applicable, Student Contribution to Manuscripts; and, if applicable, copyright release letters for copyrighted material included in the thesis.
- Process the External Examiner's expense claim and mail a cheque when issued from Financial Services.

## **REGULATIONS FOR THE DEFENCE OF A DOCTORAL THESIS**

All Doctoral theses must be examined in a public oral defence, to be conducted by an examining committee recommended by the department and approved by the Faculty of Graduate Studies. A candidate shall not be permitted to proceed with the oral defence and examination until all of the following requirements have been met: (i) all required classwork completed successfully; (ii) comprehensive examination passed; (iii) thesis title approved; (iv) Examining Committee established; (v) the style and format of the thesis meets the requirements of the University and appropriate copies of the thesis have been submitted as per regulations and deadlines in paragraphs 1-11 below. Normally a candidate proceeds to oral defence with the approval of the supervisor and Supervisory Committee. A candidate may proceed without the consent of the supervisor and committee, but a signed declaration included on the Thesis Submission Form is required by the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

### **Procedures**

1. Appointment of External Examiner: The Director/Associate Director, Graduate Studies, School of Nursing, will recommend to the Associate Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies, the name of the first choice for external examiner (with CV) as submitted by the Thesis Supervisor (and approved by the Supervisory Committee) for the appointment of an External Examiner at least three months before the anticipated date

of completion of the thesis. The persons suggested should be acknowledged experts in the field or discipline of the research being examined in the thesis, must not have been directly involved in the student's research in any way, and should possess a Doctoral degree or equivalent, and should normally have demonstrated experience of Doctoral supervision and/or examination. The choice of the External Examiner must be approved by the Faculty of Graduate Studies. If the first choice is unacceptable to the Faculty or if that person is unavailable, then the other names will be considered in order of identified priority. The Associate Director, Graduate Studies may then confirm the availability of the External Examiner and proposed date and time for the defence. The formal invitation to the External Examiner is issued by the Faculty of Graduate Studies (see paragraph 7, below).

2. Thesis Required for External Examiner: At least six weeks prior to the scheduled defence, the Candidate shall send a PDF copy of both the thesis and their current CV to the Faculty of Graduate Studies Office ([thesis@dal.ca](mailto:thesis@dal.ca)). The PhD Thesis Submission Form and PhD Examination Information Form with all signatures must be sent to the Faculty of Graduate Studies. FGS will send the thesis to the External Examiner once the PhD Thesis Submission Form has been received and the date and time of the defence has been determined. The candidate shall also send the abstract from their thesis for publication in a public notice of defence (the abstract must be submitted in Word compatible format to [thesis@dal.ca](mailto:thesis@dal.ca)). If the External Examiner requests a hard copy of the thesis, Faculty of Graduate Studies will send it via courier.  
<https://academiccalendar.dal.ca/Catalog/ViewCatalog.aspx?pageid=viewcatalog&catalogid=106&chapterid=6499&topicgroupid=28469&loaduserredits=False>
3. Thesis Required by Committee and Academic Unit: The candidate will provide the thesis to the Examining Committee (excluding the External Examiner) and the graduate Assistant for use by other interested faculty and students.
4. Committee Copies: Confirm with committee members whether they want hard or soft copy of the thesis.
5. The Faculty of Graduate Studies will establish the place for the examination. Wherever possible the Coburg Board Room in the Mona Campbell building will be used.
6. No arrangements will be made for the oral examination until all these requirements are fulfilled. The examination will be held no earlier than four (4) weeks after submission of the thesis, thereby allowing adequate time for the thesis to be read by the External Examiner.
7. In consultation with the Director, School of Nursing, the Associate Director Graduate Studies, and the research supervisor, the Faculty will establish a date and time for the examination.
8. The Associate Dean of Graduate Studies will issue a formal invitation to the External Examiner and will send a copy of the thesis (see paragraph 3, above) to them at least four weeks before the examination, with a request to submit a written appraisal (the Examiner's Report, see paragraph 8) of the thesis with a recommendation for the defence to either proceed or not proceed, no later than one week prior to the date of the defence.

9. The External Examiner will submit a constructively critical and analytical report (the Examiner's Report) to the Faculty of Graduate Studies at least one week prior to the scheduled date of the defence. The Examiner's Report must include a recommendation on whether or not the thesis should proceed to defence. Where the recommendation is not to proceed, the report should indicate what, if anything, would be required to make the thesis acceptable. Note that a decision to proceed to defence does not imply that the thesis is approved, only that it is acceptable for defence. The External Examiner (and the Examining Committee) will have questions which must be answered to their satisfaction, and a thesis can be rejected as a result of the defence. The Examiner's Report must not be disclosed to the candidate or the Supervisory Committee prior to the defence. Normally the External Examiner will attend the defence. A request for remote participation must be approved by the Associate Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies. If participation by the External Examiner is not possible, the defence should be rescheduled.
10. The defence will occur only if the External Examiner states that the thesis may proceed. If the External does not recommend that the thesis proceeds to examination, then within 12 months, a revised thesis may be resubmitted and sent to either the original external examiner or to a new external examiner, as deemed appropriate by the Faculty of Graduate Studies. A doctoral thesis may be submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for examination no more than twice.
11. If the External Examiner recommends that the thesis proceed to defence, notice of the public defence of the thesis will be published and sent to all relevant departments by the Faculty of Graduate Studies. All interested faculty, students, and members of the public will be welcome to attend.
12. Variation of the regulations outlined above may be permitted only with the written permission of the Dean of Graduate Studies.

[\(Faculty of Graduate Studies Regulation 10.5.1\)](#)

## **Oral Examination**

The oral examination of a doctoral thesis is the culmination of the candidate's research program. It exposes the work to scholarly criticism and gives to the candidate the opportunity to defend the thesis in public. The roles of the committee members are as follows:

1. Chair of the Defence: The Examination is chaired by a member of the Panel of PhD Defence Chairs.
2. Examining Committee: The Examining Committee consists of the research supervisor or co-supervisors, at least two additional members, and the External Examiner who shall be from outside the University. A Departmental Representative (the chair of the academic unit or a designate) is included as a non-voting and non-examining member of the committee.

3. The Departmental Representative attends the public and *in camera* sessions of the defence. The role of the Departmental Representative is to ensure the academic unit expectations are adhered to and reports such to the Defence Chair.
4. Order of Examination Proceedings: a) the Chair of the Defence opens the proceeding with a brief description of the protocol; b) the candidate is questioned on the thesis following a summary presentation no longer than 20 minutes; c) the Chair will give priority to questions from the External Examiner and then from the other members of the Examining Committee in some pre-arranged order; d) the audience will then be invited to ask questions; e) the Chair adjourns the examination when the Examining Committee decides that further questioning is unnecessary, and the candidate and all members of the audience are required to leave the room; f) the Chair then presides over the Examining Committee during its deliberations *in camera*; g) following the *in camera* session, the candidate is invited back into the room and is informed of the decision of the committee; h) the Chair oversees the completion of the PhD Thesis Approval Form as appropriate and completes the Defence Report and returns it immediately to the Faculty of Graduate Studies Office.
5. *In camera* Deliberations and Grading: The decision of the Examining Committee is based both on the thesis and on the candidate's ability to defend it. The thesis is graded approved or rejected. A thesis can be a) accepted by the Examining Committee as submitted; b) accepted on condition that specific corrections with a clear timetable for completion normally within one month are made or c) rejected. The thesis can be rejected on grounds of form as well as content. If specific corrections are required, the thesis will be returned to the candidate with a time limit for the completion of all corrections, normally no more than one month. Specific corrections will usually be left to the satisfaction of the research supervisor.
6. Proceedings in the Case of Rejection: If the thesis is rejected, the committee can recommend that the student be encouraged to re-submit a revised thesis. The revised thesis will be re-read by an Examining Committee, at least two of whose members were on the original committee. The thesis shall be submitted to an External Examiner who may be the original External Examiner if the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies considers this to be desirable. The candidate shall defend the thesis before an Examining Committee in the usual way. If the thesis is rejected again, there will be no third examination. Such a student will be academically dismissed without the possibility of reinstatement.
7. Variation of the procedures stipulated above may be permitted only with the written permission of the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

Anomalies or deviations from the procedures or actions detailed above will be dealt with solely by the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies. The Dean(s) of the Faculty in which the student is enrolled cannot intercede in matters related to the defence of a thesis (Master's or PhD).

[\(Faculty of Graduate Studies Regulation 10.5.2\)](#)



## PHD CANDIDATE THESIS AND DEFENCE: TIMELINE AND CHECKLIST

### Six Months Prior to Defence

- Begin preparing your thesis for presentation as a finished document.
- Remind your supervisor and/or department head/chair of the need to recommend external examiners. It's very important for you to not personally contact potential external examiners.
- Begin discussing potential defence dates with your supervisor.

### 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.

### 6 Weeks Prior to Defence

- Have a format check of your thesis done by FGS ([thesis.review@dal.ca](mailto:thesis.review@dal.ca)) 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](mailto:thesis@dal.ca).
- 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](mailto: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](mailto:thesis@dal.ca).

### 4 to 6 Weeks Prior to Defence

- Prepare your summary presentation (20 minutes or less) for your oral examination.
- Attend thesis defences of other PhD candidates to get some idea what to expect.
- Confirm all members of examining committee will attend in person.

### 1 Week Prior to Defence

- Familiarize yourself with the defence location.
- If you have a remote participant, 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. Senior Thesis Clerk will meet you there.
- Familiarize yourself with room and A/V equipment.
- If you have changed the room setup, return it to its original state (Note the furniture in 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. This must be done before the thesis deadline for the term in which you wish to graduate.
- Complete Graduate Student Exit Survey.



## **PUBLISHING**

- Students are expected to prepare a manuscript(s) based on their thesis research for submission to a nursing journal or other approved peer reviewed journal (with Thesis Supervisor listed as the second author). Refer to the Expectations/Requirements of Doctoral Students Related to Progress and Performance.
- Expecting the submission of a manuscript for publication is to make the results of the student's research available to nursing and other relevant health care professions. Joint authorship with the Thesis Supervisor is intended to reflect the effort expended by the Thesis Supervisor in directing the student throughout the course of the research.

### **Authorship Guidelines**

The Graduate Studies Committee recommends that the issue of authorship be discussed by the student and Thesis Supervisor prior to the Proposal Review Meeting. The supervisor and student should make it clear to potential Committee members that authorship of future publication(s) is dependent on actual contribution and familiarity with the research.

In cases where the thesis manuscript in whole or in part is submitted for publication, the student will be listed as the first author. Committee members will be given authorship credit if they have participated sufficiently in the development of the thesis and the subsequent manuscripts. It is expected that the order of authors is determined by the degree of participation in the conceptualization process and scholarly contribution.

The student may not be listed as first author if someone other than he/she changes the manuscript significantly, for example, through collection of additional data or reinterpretation of the data.

Graduate Programs Committee, June, 2007

**SECTION D**

**SOURCES OF FUNDING**

**Students should always consult the [Faculty of Graduate Studies for the most up-to-date information and forms.](#)**

## SOURCES OF FUNDING FOR PhD (NURSING) STUDENTS

### School of Nursing Awards and Scholarships

A number of awards and scholarships are available to graduate students and alumni of the School of Nursing. See the web site: [School of Nursing - Dalhousie University](http://www.dal.ca/~nursing/)

### Training Centres

There are a variety of CIHR training centers, for example the one described below, in most provinces. See: <http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/49440.html>

### CIHR Training Grant in Interdisciplinary Primary Health Care Research Transdisciplinary Understanding and Training on Research – Primary Health Care (TUTOR-PHC).

This is a one-year, national interdisciplinary research training program funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) with representation from the disciplines of: Family Medicine, Nursing, Psychology, Social Work, Epidemiology, Pharmacy, Sociology and Education. Refer to the web site for details: <http://www.uwo.ca/fammed/csfm/tutor-phc/>

The innovative curriculum (primary health care research skills and interdisciplinary theory and process) includes:

- An on-site 3-day symposium in May
- 2 on-line research skill development workshops (3 weeks each) – June and November
- 2 on-line interdisciplinary discussion groups (~7 weeks each) – September to November and January to March. Autumn - present your research project to peers and receive interdisciplinary feedback. Winter - work with an interdisciplinary team to create a primary health care research project
- Students accepted to the program will have their research supervisor participate in aspects of the program.
- At the end of the program trainees will be able to complete an interdisciplinary primary health care research proposal

### Canadian Child Health Clinician Scientist Program.

The Canadian Child Health Clinician Scientist Program (CCHCSP) provides support for highly qualified child health clinician candidates to develop their requisite knowledge and skills for a career as an independent scientist in child health research. Trainees engage in research training and a core curriculum in one of the participating Child Health Research Training Centres of the CCHCSP.

Research training is supervised by a research mentor and advisory committee and is structured to facilitate excellence in research with an interdisciplinary focus. Refer to the web site for details: <http://www.cchcsp.ca/>

## Faculty of Graduate Studies Scholarships and Fellowships

A number of scholarships and fellowships are available from the Faculty of Graduate Studies to support graduate studies at Dalhousie University. Please note that a number of scholarships are awarded through a Harmonized Scholarship Process (HSP). More information about HSP and each of the awards listed below is available on the [FGS Website](#)

- [Killam Predoctoral Scholarships](#) nominations are made by the School of Nursing. Students must have applied for relevant national scholarship funds (CIHR, SSHRC, etc.) in order to be considered for a Killam Predoctoral Scholarship. Killam scholarship holders must be eligible to receive scholarship support for at least 2 years. Renewal is based upon evidence of satisfactory performance at a required minimum level. Doctoral students may hold a Killam scholarship for up to 36 months. NOTE: Candidates do not apply for Killam scholarships. On the basis of the information in a completion application, the School of Nursing may nominate the student to the selection committee.
- [The President's Awards](#) are for students starting PhD programs who have a full doctoral scholarship from one of the specified agencies: SSHRC (Doctoral or CGSD), CIHR (Doctoral or CGSD), or Killam (Doctoral). The award, which is granted for the first two years of study, will cover tuition but not international differential fees or other student fees. For eligible students, the Faculty of Graduate Studies will notify those students and departments following admission. The Award will be verified and applied to the student's tuition each term for the duration of the award.
- The [Phi Kappa Pi Joe Ghiz Memorial Award](#) of \$750 will be awarded to a student studying at the Masters or Doctoral level, in any discipline at Dalhousie University. The student must have a first-class standing (GPA 3.7/4.3) or higher in the last two years of previous study (graduate and/or undergraduate) and demonstrate both community involvement and university life involvement. Application or nominations should be made to the Faculty of Graduate Studies. The application form is found on the Faculty of Graduate Studies website; the deadline for applications is 31 October.
- The [James Robinson Johnston Graduate Scholarship for African Canadians](#) is supported by the Endowment for the James Robinson Johnston Chair in Black Canadian Studies at Dalhousie as part of the commitment of the Johnston endowment and Dalhousie University to support the development of Black Canadian scholars in graduate studies and the professions. To be eligible, applicants must have been accepted, by the application deadline of 30 April, into a program of study in any discipline in which Dalhousie University offers a graduate degree. The award must be taken up initially in the first year of the degree program and may be renewed, subject to annual progress review, for a total of 36 months of full-time study, including initial award.

- [\*\*African Nova Scotian Graduate Scholarship\*\*](#) is awarded annually to an African Nova Scotian who has either recently started or is planning to pursue graduate studies at Dalhousie. The objective of these scholarships is to increase the representation of African Nova Scotian students in the university's graduate programs, and ultimately in the academy and in advanced professional occupations. The scholarship may be held for a maximum of two years of full-time studies. For students who are in-program at the time of application, the award will begin in May following the competition. In-progress master's students may only hold the award up until the end of their second full-time year in program. Eligible in-progress doctoral students can typically hold the award for the full two-year duration. Part-time students may hold the award at 50% value until the original eligible award amount is reached.
- [\*\*Indigenous Graduate Scholarship\*\*](#) is awarded annually to an Indigenous Student who has either recently started or is planning to pursue graduate studies at Dalhousie. The objective of these scholarships is to increase the representation of Mi'kmaq and Indigenous scholars in the university's graduate programs, and ultimately in the academy and in advanced professional occupations. The scholarship may be held for a maximum of two years of full-time studies. For students who are in-program at the time of application, the award will begin in May following the competition. In-progress master's students may only hold the award up until the end of their second full-time year in program. Eligible in-progress doctoral students can typically hold the award for the full two-year duration. Part-time students may hold the award at 50% value until the original eligible award amount is reached.
- [\*\*Nova Scotia Graduate Scholarships\*\*](#) nominations are made by the School of Nursing, before the student is officially enrolled in the program for which they are applying for funding at the time of the competition deadline. The scholarships support full-time research graduates at Nova Scotia universities for innovative work aligned with or advancing Nova Scotia priorities (see application form). The objectives of this award are to attract and retain top-quality research graduates, as well as to encourage exploration, discovery, and innovation.
- [\*\*Faculty of Graduate Studies Travel Grants\*\*](#) are available to Dalhousie University graduate students registered in thesis programs. (See the Faculty of Graduate Studies Web site.)

Graduate Thesis Student Conference Travel Grant

Travel grants are available to full-time Dalhousie University graduate students registered in thesis programs for presentation of a paper or poster at scholarly meetings/conferences. The letter of acceptance from the conference or the conference program must be attached to the application. Students must be registered in a graduate program at the time of application and at the time of the conference and are eligible to apply for one travel grant during the period of their degree program. The maximum travel grant award is \$500; this amount is subject to change. The application, guidelines and link to expense claim form may be found on the [Travel Grant](#) of the Faculty of Graduate Studies website.

## Outside Funding

Students are encouraged to identify outside sources of funding, including those listed below. Students are advised to consult with their supervisor for guidance in identifying sources of funding and assistance in submitting a strong application.

Canadian Nurses Foundation ([www.cnf-fiic.ca/](http://www.cnf-fiic.ca/))

Health Canada ([//www.hc-sc.gc.ca/index-eng.php](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/index-eng.php))

MITACS (<https://www.mitacs.ca/en>)

Research Nova Scotia (<https://researchns.ca/>)

Tri-Council: Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council ([Project Grant – Registration Instructions - CIHR \(cihr-irsc.gc.ca\)](http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/))

[Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarships](#)

Students may be eligible for illness or population-specific funding from organizations such as:

Students may be eligible for illness or population-specific funding from organizations such as:

[Alzheimer Society of Canada](#)

[Canadian Cystic Fibrosis](#)

[Canadian Liver Foundation](#)

[Canadian Lung Association](#)

[Heart and Stroke Foundation](#)

[Kidney Foundation of Canada](#)

[Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada](#)

[The Canadian Cancer Trials Group](#)

[The Savoy Foundation \(research in the field of epilepsy\)](#)

[VON Canada Foundation](#) - Dr. Helen K. Mussallem VON Education Fund

- Dr. Judith Shamian Fund

See also the [Faculty of Graduate Studies](#) and [Nova Scotia College of Nursing \(NSCN\)](#) websites for additional sources.

## Nursing Research Fund

<https://www.dal.ca/faculty/health/nursing/research/nursing-research-fund.html>

The Nursing Research & Development Fund was established in 1979 to support research in nursing practice, management and education; enhance the distribution and discussion of research findings; advance opportunities for the debate of significant issues in nursing and further excellence in nursing practice, education, administration and research. Dalhousie School of Nursing faculty, adjunct faculty and graduate students are eligible for these grants. There are three types of available awards, ranging from \$1500 to \$5000.

**Operating Grants** are awarded to conduct research specific to nursing practice, management and/or education. Requests for matching funds will also be considered. An operating grant is held for one or two years. (Maximum \$5000.00)

Please refer to **Operating/Development Grant Guidelines**

**Development Grants** are awarded for the development of an innovative idea into a feasible research proposal specific to nursing practice, management and/or education. The applicant must explain the innovative nature of the proposed work, describe and give rationale for the resources they require. A Developmental Grant is held for one year. (Maximum \$5000.00)

Please refer to **Operating/Development Grant Guidelines**

**Research Dissemination Grants** are awarded to applicants presenting at professional/educational conferences or another knowledge translation event or students travelling to consult with relevant academic advisors. Funds must be spent within six months. (Maximum \$1500.00)

Please refer to **Dissemination Grant Guidelines**

Proposals for Operating and Development Grants are evaluated on three criteria: (1) relevance and significance to the purpose of the fund, (2) scientific merit, and (3) academic or professional preparation of the applicant and team. Please attach an **Abbreviated CV** [Word - 30 kB] for each team member including the applicant. Funds are released subject to ethical review from the appropriate agencies. Unspent funds are to be returned to the Nursing Research and Development fund upon completion of the project, or the award end date. Successful applicants may only hold one grant at a time.

Proposals for Dissemination Grants are evaluated on two criteria: (1) demonstration of relevance of the professional/education conference or KT event and (2) demonstration of the contribution to research-based nursing practice, management and/or education. Successful applicants may only hold one grant at a time.

**Submission deadlines are May 1 and November 1 each year.**

**To apply** please complete an application form and email with attachments as one pdf file to [Julie.barry@dal.ca](mailto:Julie.barry@dal.ca).

### **New Ventures Fund**

<https://www.dal.ca/faculty/health/nursing/current-students/new-ventures-fund.html>

The School of Nursing's Alumni Fund for New Ventures Development supports current Faculty or student led relevant and rigorous projects that advance the mission and goals of the School of Nursing's Academic Plan. The source of funding is the generous donations to nursing at Dalhousie University. Since funding is based on donations, the total funding available may vary for each competition. Reports of funded projects will be posted on the School of Nursing website.