



DALHOUSIE
UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF NURSING
75 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE

PhD (Nursing)
STUDENT HANDBOOK

*For the academic year
2025-2026*

PHD (NURSING) STUDENT HANDBOOK: TABLE OF CONTENTS

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SECTION A

GENERAL INFORMATION

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



DALHOUSIE
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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

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 facilitating 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 the 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 policies that impact 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-centered 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 meet 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, but 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 by 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.

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

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). <https://www.cna-aiic.ca/en/nursing/advanced-nursing-practice>

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. Welton (Ed.), *In Defense of the Lifeworld: Critical Perspectives on Adult Learning* (pp. 37-90). New York: 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

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 focus 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.

Degree Requirements

Total credit hours required: 15 credit hours, plus successful completion of Comprehensive examination and thesis	
CORE COURSES	6 CREDIT HRS
NURS 6050: Contemporary Views of Nursing Science: Philosophy, Research, and Practice	
NURS 6300: Doctoral Seminar	
HEALTH OUTCOMES COURSE	3 CREDIT HRS
NURS 6200: Nursing Sensitive Health Outcomes	
ADVANCED RESEARCH METHODS/DESIGN COURSE	3 CREDIT HRS
Students must complete a 3-credit hour advanced research methods/design course, approved by their supervisory committee (ie. NURS 5170).	
GENERAL ELECTIVE	3 CREDIT HRS
An additional 3 credit hours of graduate electives in the student's substantive area of study, normally selected in consultation with the supervisory committee.	
TOTAL NUMBER OF CREDIT HOURS REQUIRED:	15 CREDIT HRS

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).

The PhD comprehensive examination in the student's area of study must be taken in the second year of the program (NURS 9413.00). Comprehensive examinations may be taken only after the completion of all required course work, and they cannot be taken less than one year prior to the submission of the thesis for final defence. Members of the thesis supervisory committee will set the student's comprehensive examination.

NURS 9413.00 Comprehensive Examination

NURS 9530.00 Doctoral Thesis

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.
- Develop nursing practices that improve health outcomes generally.
- Influence health and social policy to improve health and health care systems.

PROGRAM-LEVEL POLICIES

The following program-level policies apply. For more information, please contact the program directly.

Additional coursework may be assigned. Students who have not completed both qualitative and quantitative research courses at the graduate level will normally be required to complete NURS 5100 and/or NURS 5120 (or their equivalent) as part of their doctoral program.

Admission requirements for Doctor of Philosophy in 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.

*Applicants with a GPA of less than 3.7 are still encouraged to apply as we consider all aspects of the application equally.

The Application Process consists of two steps:

Step One

[Visit the Dal Application Portal and Apply online](#)

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.

2. 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

3. 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](#)
 - Canada Graduate Scholarships - Doctoral

4. 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

5. 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.

6. Official Transcripts:

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

7. 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.

8. 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 to be sent directly to the School of Nursing.

9. Copy of current active nursing College/Association membership in Canada or another country.

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

PHD (NURSING) EARLY/DIRECT ENTRY

In exceptional circumstances, master's 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	Policy Sponsor: School Council Responsible Unit: School of Nursing	Approval Date: June 19, 2012 Amendments: September 26, 2016 July 11, 2019 June 22, 2020 April 22, 2021
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1. 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 School Council regarding same.


2. MEMBERSHIP

- 2.1 Three members of faculty who hold tenured, tenure- track, senior and probationary instructor positions and one member of faculty who is a nurse practitioner
- 2.2 Ex Officio Member and Chair: Associate Director Graduate Studies
- 2.3 Ex officio Voting Member: Associate Director Research & International Affairs
- 2.4 One external stakeholder appointed by School Council
- 2.5 One graduate student representative, and their alternate (1 combined vote)

3. RESPONSIBILITIES:

- 3.1 Reviews academic regulations regarding graduate programs and makes recommendations for change to School Council for further consideration by the Faculty of Graduate Studies
- 3.2 Develops, evaluates, and recommends to School Council the curricula of the graduate programs for further consideration by the Faculty of Graduate Studies
- 3.3 Ensures that the graduate programs satisfy requirements for:
 - o Graduation with an MN, MScN, or PhD degree
 - o Program approval of the Nurse Practitioner Program by the Nova Scotia College of Nursing (NSCN)

- 3.4 Recommends changes to improve the quality and social relevance of the graduate programs to School Council
- 3.5 Makes all recommendations and reports to School Council through the Chair
- 3.6 Provides an annual report of its activities to School Council
- 3.7 Considers recommendations from sub-committees, including the Graduate Student Affairs Committee, and provides recommendations to School Council concerning same
- 3.8 Provides direction as required to sub-committees to execute tasks in relation to their approved mandate
- 3.9 Undertakes other tasks related to its mandate as directed by School Council from time to time

 DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY Graduate Student Affairs Committee	Policy Sponsor: School Council Responsible Unit: School of Nursing	Approval Date: June 19, 2012 Amendments: June 22, 2015 March 28, 2016
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The Graduate Student Affairs Committee is a sub-committee of the Graduate Studies Committee.

1. PURPOSE

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

2. MEMBERSHIP

- 2.1 Four members of faculty, three of whom hold tenured, tenure- track, senior and probationary instructor positions and one nurse practitioner
- 2.2 Ex Officio Member and Chair: Associate Director Graduate Studies
- 2.3 One graduate student representative, and their alternate (1 combined vote)

3. RESPONSIBILITIES:

- 3.1 Oversees the recruitment and admission of students to graduate programs
- 3.2 Monitors graduate student progression, accommodation, and attrition
- 3.3 Recommends graduate students for scholarships and awards
- 3.4 Recommends graduate students for graduation
- 3.5 Forwards all recommendations to the Graduate Studies Committee through the Chair
- 3.6 Undertakes other tasks related to its mandate as directed by the Graduate Studies Committee from time to time
- 3.7 Provides an annual report on its activities to the Graduate Studies Committee

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:
 - NURS 6050 Contemporary Views of Nursing Science: Philosophy, Research and Practice
 - Two (2) courses in the student's substantive area of research, one of which will be:
 - NURS 6200 Nursing Sensitive Health Outcomes
 - The second, to be selected in consultation with supervisor/committee
 - An advanced research methods/design course (NURS 5170 or another advanced research course subject to approval by Associate Director, Graduate Programs)
 - NURS 6300 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 earlier than the first 12 months, and 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. Students will present at least once through the Centre for Transformative Nursing and Health Research during Wednesdays at Noon
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.
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.
7. Students will have opportunities to work as a Teaching Assistant

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. If 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 academic dismissal (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 WITH FGS MEMBERSHIP

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PROGRAM OF STUDIES FOR THE PHD (NURSING) DEGREE

Residency

All doctoral programs require a residency period and program fees.

Students are normally 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

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:
[Dalhousie University Timetable](#)

NURS6050 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 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 multiplicity from the perspective of methodology, measurement, and evaluation will be interrogated. *(Not currently offered)*

NURS6200 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 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. *(Not currently offered)*

NURS6300 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. The 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 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 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.

NURS 9413 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.

NURS 9530 Doctoral Thesis

Following successful completion of the Comprehensive Examination Requirement, students may begin to register in the Doctoral Thesis each term and continue to do so until degree completion.

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 [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

For details about transfer credits and advanced placement credits, please refer to [Faculty of Graduate Studies Regulation 7.6 Modification of Degree Requirements](#).

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 in the graduate calendar](#).

A class may be added or dropped on DalOnline, by the Add/Drop deadlines listed in the Dalhousie Academic Calendar. Please refer to the [Graduate Academic Calendar for more information about Add/Drop Dates](#).

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

(click each regulation to see additional details in the graduate academic calendar)

[Membership in the Faculty of Graduate Studies](#)
[Graduate Programs](#)
[Admission Requirements for Graduate Programs](#)
[Graduate Application Process](#)
[Registration Procedures and Regulations](#)
[Intellectual Property and Conflict of Interest](#)
[Degree Requirements](#)
[Examinations](#)
[Thesis Supervisors and Supervisory Committees](#)
[Thesis Regulations](#)
[Degree Completion](#)
[Appeals](#)
[Departmental and Program Listings](#)

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.

Graduate Nursing Society

All graduate nursing students belong to the Dalhousie 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). Please email DGNS@Dal.Ca for more information.

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 and a designate 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, Equity and Inclusion 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 7th 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 \(sharepoint.com\)](https://sharepoint.com)) (NetID Login required).

Accessibility to the Forrest Building

Graduate nursing students will have access to the Forrest Building, Mon to Fri, 0645 hrs - 1800 hrs.

Between 0645 hrs and 1800 hrs on weekdays, 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

Note: There is no weekend access to Forrest Building for students. Students should have their Dalhousie student ID with them at all times while on the Dalhousie University campus.

The Graduate Programs Coordinator's office is located in Room 139, located off the main lobby, and students are encouraged to visit between Mondays and Thursdays from 0830-1630. Staff work remotely on Fridays. Students can self-book meetings With the Graduate Programs Coordinator by accessing the [Self-Booking Feature](#).

Research Rounds

The Centre for Transformative Nursing & Health Research Centre (CTNHR) hosts research rounds entitled Wednesdays @ Noon throughout the Fall and Winter semesters. Presenters include faculty, students, stakeholders and guest presenters from Dalhousie and other institutions and the sessions are delivered online via MS Teams.

This is an opportunity for students to learn about others' research and to present on their research and to use the session as a practice defence. Should you wish to present, please email Julie.barry@dal.ca to arrange.

All sessions are recorded and the recordings of previous sessions can be found on our website at <https://www.dal.ca/faculty/health/nursing/research/CTNHR/Event%20Recordings.html> and on our YouTube channel at https://studio.youtube.com/channel/UCz_7LLownt5kpfFra6aamsg/videos/upload?filter=%5B%5D&sort=%7B%22columnType%22%3A%22date%22%2C%22sortOrder%22%3A%22DESCENDING%22%7D

Listed below are student expectations:

- To attend and participate, onsite, when possible, otherwise by distance
- To identify areas of interest – keeping relevant to student's focus of research and scholarship
- To mentor junior students

It is an expectation that all students will attend the seminars.

Frequently used web sites

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

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

[Dalhousie university policies](#) (all policies)

Policy on submission of student papers

All written assignments will be submitted through BrightSpace course portals.

Academic Integrity Policy

https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/academic-integrity.html

Suspension or dismissal from a program on the grounds of professional unsuitability

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

Faculty of Health allegation of professional unsuitability: procedural guidelines

[Allegation of Professional Unsuitability Procedural Guidelines](#)

Guidelines for the student use of social media and electronic communication in practice education settings

[Guidelines for the Student Use of Social Media and Electronic Communication in Practice Education Settings](#)

Dalhousie University Code of Student Conduct

[Dalhousie University Student Affairs: Student Code of Conduct](#)

Faculty of Graduate Studies Academic Appeals

[Faculty of Health Academic Appeals Committee - Terms of Reference](#)

[FGS Regulation XII - Appeals](#)

Student Ratings of Instruction

[SLEQs – Information and Resources for students](#)

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 NURS 9413, *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 Exam Components

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 Coordinator. 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 Graduate Programs Coordinator and the Associate Director 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.

PHD NURSING DOCTORAL THESIS (NURS 9530)

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

Program fee registration - REGN 9999 (01), in addition to Registration for Doctoral Thesis NURS 9530 (01), is still required each term until degree completion.

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 (or two co-supervisors) from the School of Nursing. The thesis supervisor (or one co-supervisor) must be a Regular or Adjunct (Retired) member of the Faculty of Graduate Studies. All members of the supervisory committee should complement the expertise available to the student in completing their research program and must have membership with the Faculty of Graduate Studies. 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. This is usually the Thesis Supervisory Committee and an external examiner. A candidate will not be permitted to proceed with the oral defence and examination until all 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 7th 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 (7th 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.

GUIDELINES ON THE SUPERVISION OF GRADUATE STUDENTS

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

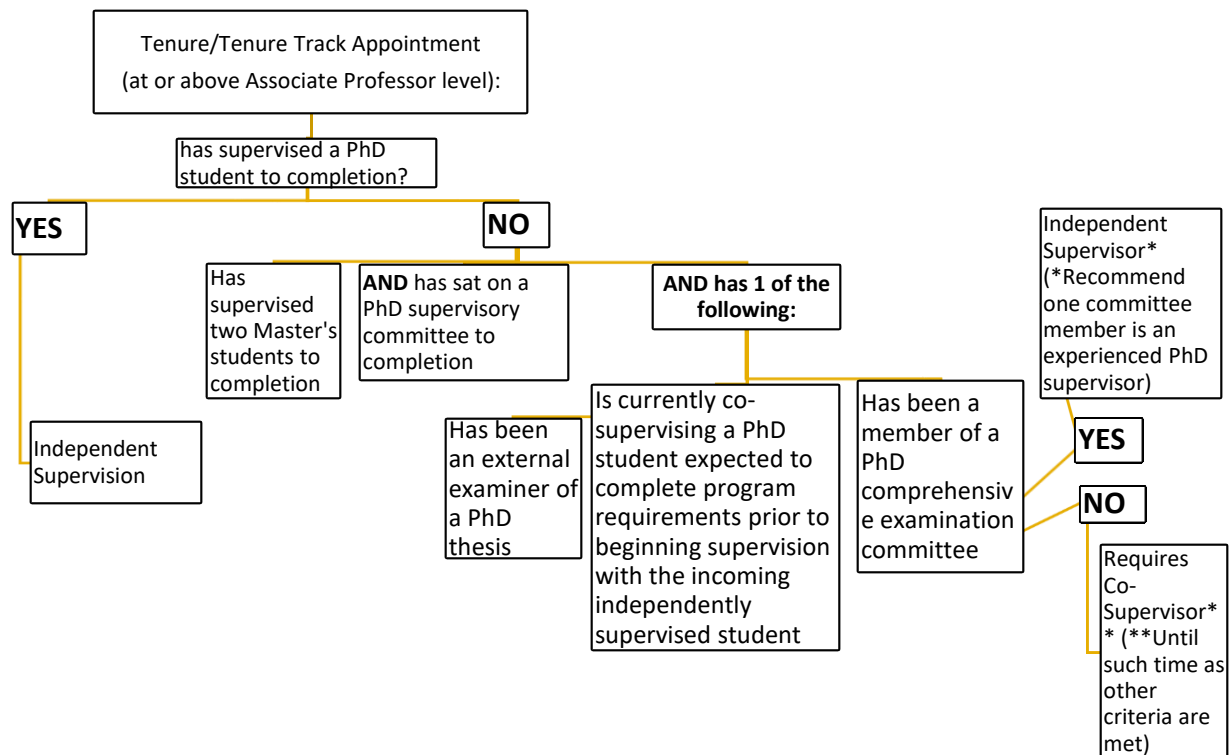
Selection of Thesis Supervisor

The individual serving as Thesis Supervisor (or one co-supervisor) must:

- Be a Regular or Adjunct (Retired) member of the Faculty of Graduate Studies.
- 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 a faculty member with a PhD or its equivalent. Equivalency must be based on a faculty member's record of research activity and supervisory experience. In the case of co-supervision of a Doctoral student, at least one of the supervisors must have a PhD or its equivalent
- 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 - Flowchart



Approved April 2019
Approved by School Council July 11 2019

IDENTIFICATION OF THESIS SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE

The Thesis Supervisory Committee is expected to be established early in the degree (ideally within the first 6 months). Until the committee is established, the Supervisor and the Graduate Coordinator are responsible for advising the student. While the membership of the committee can be adjusted at any time, it must be kept up to date with the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

The committee is to be comprised of one supervisor or two co-supervisors, a minimum of two additional members, at least one of whom has Regular or Adjunct (Retired) membership or a cross-listing within the student's academic unit.

All members of the committee must hold Faculty of Graduate Studies membership. At least 50% of the supervisory committee must hold Regular or Adjunct (Retired) membership.

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 Coordinator. The [PhD \(Nursing\) Thesis Supervisory Committee form](#) is approved by the Associate Director, Graduate Studies. The Graduate Programs Coordinator 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.

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 proposal.

Following the Proposal Review Meeting, the Thesis Supervisor prepares a typed report and distributes it to the student and Thesis Supervisory Committee members, as well as the Graduate Programs Coordinator, who will submit to the Graduate Programs Associate Director and will save to the student's file.

Proposal Review Meeting 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 Coordinator of the date and time of the PRM. The Graduate Programs Coordinator 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 prepares the report of the Thesis Supervisory Committee Decision and distributes it to the student, Thesis Supervisory Committee, and Graduate Programs Coordinator. The Graduate Programs Coordinator places a

copy in the student's file. If preferred and requested explicitly by the supervisor, the Graduate Programs Coordinator can share with the committee and student on behalf of the supervisor.

3. Ethics Approval

Dalhousie University has two University Research Ethics Boards (REB) 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>)

Depending on where participants will be recruited, the IWK Health Centre REB or Nova Scotia Health REB may be applied to instead of Dalhousie University REB. 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.

1) 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.

2) 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 Coordinator: 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

FGS THESIS FORMAT GUIDELINES

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

Thesis Defence

In addition to the information below, please review this [flowchart on preparing for your doctoral defence \[PDF\]](#).

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 procedure, which includes a recommended timeline, is available on the Faculty of Graduate Studies website: [Preparing for Your Doctoral Defence \(sharepoint.com\)](#) (NetID Login Required). You are strongly advised to consult this site for more information.

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. 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, as a MS Word or text document.
- The defence may be held in person at the University, online, or hybrid.
- Coordinate with 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. *Most of the committee members and a select number of audience members attend in person. A maximum of two committee members and the remaining audience members attend virtually via Microsoft Teams.*
- 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.
- Send an approved electronic pdf of the thesis to the External Examiner. If the external examiner requests a hard copy of the thesis, the Faculty of Graduate Studies will send it via courier
- 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 academic unit, 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: (a) all required coursework completed successfully; (b) comprehensive examination passed; (c) examining committee established; (d) 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. A candidate proceeds to Doctoral thesis examination with the approval of the supervisor and supervisory committee. In exceptional circumstances, a candidate may proceed without the consent of the supervisor and supervisory committee, but a signed declaration included on the PhD Thesis Submission Form is required by the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

Procedures

Appointment of External Examiner

On the [Request to Arrange Oral Defence of a Doctoral Thesis Form](#), the head of the academic unit (or graduate coordinator, where appropriate) shall recommend to the Associate Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies the name of the proposed external examiner that was approved by the supervisory committee.

Usually, the appointment of an external examiner occurs three months before the anticipated date of defence. The person suggested should be an acknowledged expert 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; must not have collaborated or published with the student or the supervisor within the last ten years; should possess a Doctoral degree or equivalent; and should have demonstrated experience of Doctoral supervision to degree completion and/or examination of PhD candidates.

Additional criteria for the selection of an external examiner can be found on the [FGS website](#) and the [Request to Arrange an Oral Defence form](#). Evidence of these qualifications must be explicit in the CV submitted for the proposed external examiner. The choice of the external examiner must be approved by the Associate Dean of Students. If the first-choice external examiner is unacceptable to the Faculty of Graduate Studies or if that person is unavailable, the Faculty of Graduate Studies will contact the academic unit and request information for an alternate external examiner.

Once an external examiner has been appointed, the graduate coordinator may then confirm the availability of the external examiner and propose dates and times for the defence. Once a tentative date and time have been confirmed by the academic unit, the formal invitation to the external examiner is issued by the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

1. Thesis Required for External Examiner Evaluation: 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 (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. The Faculty of Graduate Studies will send the thesis to the external examiner once the PhD Thesis Submission Form has been received, and the tentative 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). If the external examiner requests a hard copy of the thesis, the Faculty of Graduate Studies will send it via courier.
2. Thesis Required for Committee and Academic Unit: The candidate will provide the thesis to the examining committee (excluding the external examiner).
3. No arrangements will be made for the oral examination until all these requirements are fulfilled. The examination will be held no earlier than five weeks after submission of the thesis, thereby allowing adequate time for the thesis to be read by the external examiner.

4. The Faculty of Graduate Studies will arrange the schedule and format for the examination.
5. The Faculty of Graduate Studies will send a copy of the thesis to the external examiner at least five weeks before the examination with a request to submit the examiner's report of the thesis no later than one week prior to the tentative defence date.
6. The external examiner will submit a constructively critical and analytical report (the external 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 the thesis should proceed to oral 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 that must be answered to their satisfaction, and a thesis can be rejected as a result of the defence. The external examiner's report must not be disclosed to the candidate or the supervisory committee prior to the defence. If participation by the external examiner is not possible, the defence should be rescheduled.
7. If the external examiner does not recommend that the thesis proceeds to oral defence, the thesis is considered rejected. The candidate then has 12 months to submit a revised thesis for examination. The revised thesis may be 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. If the thesis is rejected a second time before the oral defence, the student will be dismissed from their program without the possibility of reinstatement.
8. 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 academic units by the Faculty of Graduate Studies. All interested faculty, students, and members of the public will be welcome to attend the defence.
9. Variation of the regulations outlined above may be permitted only with the written permission of the Faculty 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 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 Faculty of Graduate Studies PhD defence chairs.
2. Examining Committee: The examining committee consists of the research thesis supervisor or co-supervisors, at least two additional members, and the external examiner who shall be from outside the university. An academic unit representative (the head of the academic unit or a designate) is included as a non-voting and non-examining member of the committee.
3. The academic unit representative: Attends the public and *in camera* sessions of the defence. The role of the academic unit 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 if time permits; 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 venue; 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 venue and is informed of the decision of the committee; h) the chair oversees the completion of the PhD Thesis Approval Form for examining members present at the hybrid/in-person defence while the Faculty of Graduate studies will oversee the completion of the PhD Thesis Approval Form for those attending virtually (for virtual defences). The chair completes the defence report and returns it immediately to the Faculty of Graduate Studies.
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 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, typically no more than one month. Specific corrections required by the examining committee will usually be left to the satisfaction of the research thesis 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 whom 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.

Please note the thesis can only be rejected twice (i.e., by the external examiner before oral defence, by the examining committee after oral defence, or rejected by any combination of the external examiner and the examining committee) at which point a student will be academically dismissed without the possibility of reinstatement.

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

PHD CANDIDATE THESIS AND DEFENCE: TIMELINE AND CHECKLIST

6 months before your defence

- Begin preparing your thesis for presentation as a finished document. See our [formatting your thesis page](#) for more information.
- Remind your supervisor and/or department head/chair of the need to recommend external examiners. It is very important for you not to personally contact potential external examiners and instead leave this task to your department.
- Begin discussing potential defence dates with your supervisor.

12 weeks before your defence

- Finish preparing your thesis for presentation as a finished document.
- ***Important Update*** No PhD Thesis defences will be scheduled the week prior to a submission deadline. Please see the [Thesis Submission Deadlines](#).
- Discuss your ideal defence format with your supervisor(s). You have the options of 1) In-person, 2) Virtual, and 3) Hybrid. See our [Defence Formats page](#) for more details on the three types.
- Request a completed [Request to Arrange an Oral Defence form](#) [PDF], listing your proposed external examiner along with their cv, to be submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies.
- Identify if your defence will incorporate Indigenous ceremony or tradition.
- Once the proposed external examiner is approved, poll members of the examining committee to identify the ideal date, time, and format for your defence.
- Please remember that to provide the External Examiner adequate time to conduct a comprehensive review of the thesis and submit a constructively critical and analytic report (due one week prior to the defence), the defence cannot be scheduled any less than five weeks in the future. External examiners should never

be contacted directly to inquire if they are able to meet a shortened timeline. Inquiries of this nature should be directed to FGS.

- Email thesis@dal.ca with your preferred date, time, and format so your defence can be scheduled.
- Confirm that all members of your supervisory committee have received a copy of your thesis and will be able to review it prior to signing the [PhD Thesis Submission form](#) [PDF] (5 weeks prior to your defence).

Recommended: Submit your thesis to FGS for Format Check. See our [Formatting Your Thesis page](#) for more details.

5 weeks before your defence

- Submit your thesis to FGS for a format check. See our [formatting your thesis page](#) for more details.
- Complete all changes required by the format check.
- Obtain approval from the department chair or graduate coordinator before submitting a thesis to FGS.
- Deliver to FGS the completed [PhD Thesis Submission form](#) [PDF] and [PhD Examination Information form](#) [PDF]. Email the PDF version of your thesis and CV to thesis@dal.ca.
- *Send your abstract (maximum 350 words) by email to FGS at thesis@dal.ca. This must be sent in Word format.*
- If your defence will incorporate Indigenous ceremony or tradition, please email your request to thesis@dal.ca.

4 weeks before your defence

- Prepare your summary presentation (maximum 20 minutes) for your oral examination.
- If possible, attend thesis defences of other PhD candidates to get some idea what to expect.
- Confirm all members of the examining committee will attend in-person or online, based on the approved setting and are aware of the protocols for in-person defences.

1 week before your defence

- Familiarize yourself with the defence location (for an in-person defence) or the Microsoft Teams platform (for an online defence).

Day of your defence

For in-person or hybrid defences:

- Arrive early. Rooms are booked 30 minutes before each defence. The Senior Thesis Clerk will meet you there.
- Familiarize yourself with the room, its audio/visual equipment, and the protocols for an in-person defence.
- If you have changed the room setup, return it to its original state following the defence. (Please note the furniture in the Lord Dalhousie Room of the Henry Hicks Building and Room 3107 of the Mona Campbell Building cannot be moved).
- If you have borrowed equipment from FGS, return it after the defence.

For hybrid and virtual defences:

- Make sure that you are comfortably installed in a quiet room away from distractions, with a good and reliable internet connection and reliable computer with microphone and webcam. If you do not have access to a quiet room for the defence, or do not have reliable internet connection, you should ask your department or School to arrange for the booking of an appropriate quiet room on campus.
- Sign into Microsoft Teams no later than 10 minutes before the defence is to start.
- Familiarize yourself with Microsoft Teams and the screen share option. Make sure to have your presentation ready so that you can start sharing your presentation when asked to do so by the defence chair. If you would like more information on sharing your screen, please see these Teams screen share instructions [PDF].

After your defence

- Submit the required changes to your supervisor within the specified timeframe.
- Follow all the steps for submitting your thesis. This must be done before the thesis deadline for the term in which you plan to graduate.

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 the student 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 website](#) 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.sdn.dal.ca/)

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. More information about 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](#)

[Health Canada](#)

[MITACS](#)

[Research Nova Scotia \(https://researchns.ca/\)](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](#)

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

Visit FGS for more information about [Master's Scholarships, Bursaries and Awards](#).
and [Nova Scotia College of Nursing \(NSCN\)](#) websites for additional sources.

NURSING RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT FUND

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.

Eligible applicants

The Principal Investigator or Co-Principal Investigator must be a Dalhousie University School of Nursing Faculty member, Adjunct Faculty, Graduate Student or Post Doctoral Fellow. Graduate Students and Post Doctoral Fellows from another discipline are eligible if their supervisor is a faculty member in the School of Nursing and their research is nursing related. Preference is given to Graduate Students.

Competitions

1 February, 1 May and 1 November each year.

There are three types of available awards, ranging from \$2500 to \$5000.

Operating Grants	\$5,000
Development Grants	\$5,000
Dissemination Grants	\$2,500

MARGARET INGLIS HAGERMAN RESEARCH FUND

The Margaret Inglis Hagerman Nursing Research Fund was established in 2020 with a generous donation from Margaret Inglis Hagerman to support research in line with the Nursing Research & Development Fund.

Dalhousie University School of Nursing Graduate Students and Post Doctoral Fellows are eligible for these grants.

Eligible applicants

Registered nurses enrolled in graduate studies or postdoctoral fellowships at the School of Nursing, Dalhousie University are eligible to apply.

There are three types of available awards, ranging from \$2500 to \$5000.

Grants

Operating Grants	\$5,000
Development Grants	\$5,000
Dissemination Grants	\$2,500

OPERATING GRANTS

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

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

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 \$2,500.00)

Please refer to [Dissemination Grant Guidelines](#)

EVALUATION CRITERIA

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](#) 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. (2) demonstration of the contribution to research-based nursing practice, management and/or education. Successful applicants may only hold one grant at a time.

At the end of the project, recipients are required to complete the [Nursing Research & Development Fund Operating, Development and Dissemination Grant End of Project Form](#) and email to julie.barry@dal.ca

SUBMISSION DEADLINES: FEBRUARY 1, 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

- [Operating grant application](#)
- [Development grant application](#)
- [Dissemination grant application](#)

INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.