



**DALHOUSIE
UNIVERSITY**

**SOSA Graduate Program
Handbook 2026-27**

**Department of Sociology and Social
Anthropology**

6135 University Avenue, Room 1128
PO Box 15000
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3H 4R2

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to SOSA! This booklet provides information about the structure and requirements of our graduate programs, as well as our admissions policies, departmental areas of concentration, and faculty research interests. We are committed to providing graduate students with a quality program which, within limits, they can tailor to their special interests.

If you are thinking of pursuing an MA or PhD in Sociology or Social Anthropology, please look over the following information about the programs and faculty research interests.

This booklet provides information to current and prospective graduate students about policies and procedures that are specific to SOSA. This information is intended as a supplement to the Calendar of the Faculty of Graduate Studies, which contains the official regulations of the University and the Faculty. The Calendar of the Faculty of Graduate Studies is available online [here](#).

Students are advised to keep an eye on the Dalhousie [Important Dates](#) for the Academic year.

Department of Sociology & Social Anthropology

Location

The Department is located in the Marion McCain Arts and Social Sciences Building, 6135 University Avenue, Room 1128, Halifax, Nova Scotia. Our mailing address is:

Department of Sociology & Social Anthropology Dalhousie University
6135 University Avenue, PO Box 15000 Halifax, NS B3H 4R2 Canada

SOSA Graduate Education Staff

Graduate Coordinator: [Dr. Laura Eramian](#)

Department Chair: [Dr. Emma Whelan](#)

Graduate Administrator: [Rachelle Fox](#)

Faculty Of Graduate Studies

The Faculty of Graduate Studies is located on the third floor of the Henry Hicks Building. For the contact details for specific FGS staff members, please refer to the [FGS website](#).

DEPARTMENTAL CONCENTRATIONS

The Department offers graduate programs capable of meeting the diverse intellectual needs of most students. The programs emphasize faculty expertise and interest in three designated areas of departmental concentration: Social Justice and Inequality; Economy, Work, and Development; and Critical Health Studies. An “Advanced Issues in...” class is offered every year in each of these departmental concentrations. Students with particular backgrounds and interests in these areas are encouraged to apply. Because individual faculty members may have some research interests that do not obviously fall within the three concentrations, students should be sure to make their own interests known to the faculty.

Critical Health Studies

This area includes research on health, illness, health care, food and nutrition, and the body. Faculty and students working in this area are interested in how health is socially and culturally constructed and how it is contested, both within dominant biomedical and public health paradigms and outside them. The Department’s focus on power, authority, conflict and change, our methodological approaches, and our engagement with contemporary social theory and social activism make our approach to health studies distinct from other disciplines. Our faculty work in such diverse areas as drug use and addictions, aging and the life course, gender and health, the political economy of health, pain, genetically modified foods, mothering/reproductive health, the perspectives of patients and lay health activists, and models of science and expertise in health care systems.

Economy, Work, and Development

This area covers the sociology and anthropology of work and industrialization; debates over modernization, development, modernity and postmodernity; economic and labour process restructuring; and comparative economic and social systems. Topics explored in classes include the gendering of work; international labour migration; economic transformation in post-socialist states; capitalism and class in global perspective; occupations and professions; and continuity and change in rural societies. Research foci in recent years have covered occupational and labour market segregation and pay equity; gender and livelihood in Southeast Asia; comparative studies of fisheries in Canada, Scandinavia, the Philippines and the Caribbean; culture, class and community in Atlantic Canada; tourism and development; and the interrelationships among work, family and higher education.

Social Justice and Inequality

This area encompasses the study of power relations, inequality, resistance and demands for social justice. Among the subjects addressed are gender, minority and class inequality; human rights; local and transnational social movements; citizenship, multiculturalism, and religion; border and security studies; cross-cultural conflict and dispute settlement; and the sociology of law, deviance, and criminal justice. Faculty have interests and expertise in these subjects, as well as in related issues such as international development, indigenous peoples’ rights, socioeconomic change, comparative and alternative models of justice, justice policy and reform, policing, and health inequalities. The Department houses the Atlantic Institute of Criminology, which provides information access and some research assistance to faculty and students working on appropriate issues.

ADMISSION POLICIES

All policies and procedures in the SOSA graduate handbook are governed by and adhere to [Faculty of Graduate Studies regulations](#) as outlined in the FGS Calendar

MA Program

Preference for admission is given to applicants who hold a 4-year bachelor's degree from a university of recognized standing with:

- Honours (or equivalent) standing as granted by Dalhousie University, in the discipline in which graduate work is to be done, including classes in theory and methods specific to the discipline
- An A- average over the last twenty half-credits (usually the last two years of full-time study)

Students with degrees in disciplines other than Sociology or Social Anthropology may be considered for admission if space is available but are generally required to take extra courses in addition to the usual MA coursework requirements, to fill in any gaps in their background.

PhD PROGRAM

Preference for admission is given to applicants who:

- Hold a Master's degree in Sociology or Social Anthropology
- Have a combined average of A- over (1) their most recent Master's degree and (2) the last ten half-credits of their undergraduate degree (usually the last year of full-time study)
- Have not acquired both a BA and MA from our department
- Wish to conduct research in one of the department's three areas of concentration

Students with Master's degrees in other disciplines besides Sociology and Anthropology may be considered for admission, but they are generally required to take additional courses to fill in any gaps in their background. In general, the Department tries to be as flexible as possible and to accommodate students with non-typical career paths.

Overview of Pertinent Application Information

[General Dalhousie Application Information and Fees](#)

[The Official Dalhousie Online Application Form](#)

[Tuition/Fee Schedule](#)

[How to Apply](#)

[SOSA Application Deadlines](#)

We admit once a year; all students start their programs in September. The application deadline for the Graduate program and the Harmonized Scholarship process is January 15th of each year.

Please note: Some external scholarships, like those granted by SSHRC, have deadlines earlier, in the Fall. Check the [Faculty of Graduate Studies website](#) for scholarship information and deadlines:

[Application Instructions](#)

In addition to completing the official online [Dalhousie application form](#), students should follow the

application instructions listed on the relevant [FGS](#) and [SOSA websites](#).

The Graduate Education Committee (GEC) shall make its recommendation to the Dean of Graduate Studies regarding admission based on the applicant's interests and qualifications, faculty interest, and funding availability.

THE MA PROGRAM

The Sociology and Social Anthropology MA programs each involve five credits, including class work and a thesis. A Master's degree may be pursued on a 12-month full-time basis, or on a part-time basis (the degree requirements for each being the same). Full time enrolment for the first year is standard and supported, with the aim for students to both form a strong learning cohort and to complete required and elective courses, as well as their research proposal presentations and ethics submissions, in that 12-month period. Taking the required courses in the first year is strongly encouraged, to prepare students for their proposal writing, and staging them for research that will usually be undertaken in the second year. While it is possible to move to part-time in the second year, students should carefully check to see how this may affect access to external funding, loans, etc. Full time students who set themselves the goal of finishing the MA in twelve months may do so, especially if they elect to do a thesis that does not require fieldwork/data gathering and ethics approval (for example, an analysis of existing texts or datasets in the public domain). Students who choose to do fieldwork or gather original data generally take between 18 and 24 months to finish the MA. All students are expected to remain in regular contact with their committees, including during the summer months.

Prior to arrival, each student shall have been assigned a temporary advisor based on the student's "Letter of Intent" (submitted as part of the application process). This advisor shall help the student to select their courses and Area Program Committee, including its Chair. The Area Program Committee oversees the student's Area Essays Examination. See" b)" below.

Coursework and Registration

MA students complete their course requirements, consisting of 18 credit hours, from September to April.

Sociology students must complete/register for:

- a) a thesis (SOSA 9000)
- b) an Area Essay Examination (SOSA 5300) (must register in the fall & winter term)
- c) the Graduate Seminar (SOSA 5200) (must register in the fall & winter term)
- d) plus **two** elective graduate classes

Social Anthropology students must complete/register for: *Update*

- a) a thesis (SOSA 9001)
- b) an Area Essay Examination (SOSA 5300) (must register in the fall & winter term)
- c) the Graduate Seminar (SOSA 5200) (must register in the fall & winter term)
- d) Contemporary Perspectives in Ethnography (SOSA 5003). *Students who have taken SOSA 4003.03 normally shall not take SOSA 5003 and instead shall select an additional graduate elective.
- e) plus **one** elective graduate class

MA Course Registration Numbers

In addition to registering for your coursework classes, you will be required to register for the following registration course numbers:

1. *REGN 9999-Registration Course Graduate* every term

2. *SOSA 9000-SOSA MA Thesis for Sociology or SOSA 9001-SOSA MA Thesis for Social Anthropology* (depending upon your program) every term until your program is complete
3. *SOSA 9416-Thesis Proposal Masters* every term until completion

Area Essay Examination (SOSA 5300)

In the Area Essay examination, students produce a critical synthesis of key literature in their field(s) of study. For most students, the area essays provide background literature for the thesis project. The focus of the examination is flexible to allow students, in consultation with their committees, to obtain the necessary background for their thesis work. It may include, for example, some sources on a specific research method, a theoretical tradition, and a substantive empirical literature; or it may focus on two or three competing perspectives in a substantive subfield of sociology or social anthropology. The examination is overseen by the Area Program Committee, which normally consists of two faculty members and is set by the end of the student's first month in the program (i.e. September 30th). The members of the Area Program Committee are usually chosen from within the Department but may on occasion include one qualified person external to the Department. The Department's Graduate Education Committee (GEC) must approve the composition of all Area Program Committees and the selection of a defined subject area.

By the end of October, the student, in close consultation with the Area Program Committee, shall prepare a 1- 2 page area statement outlining the student's area(s) and an accompanying reading list. The reading list should consist of no more than 30 sources, that is, 10 books or monographs and 20 journal articles or book chapters

that are key writings in the field(s) under investigation. The reading list is expected to provide the literature review for the eventual thesis, which ordinarily focuses on a research question within the defined area. The Area Program Committee, in collaboration with the student, shall develop 2-3 Area Essay questions. Answering these 'reading questions' in essay format guides the student in a critical synthesis of important themes in the literature. The supervisor sends the final and approved items to the Graduate Secretary via e- mail.

The Area Program Committee Chair/Supervisor emails (1) the committee-approved reading list, (2) the reading questions, and (3) the area statement to the GEC for final approval. The completed area essays are due at the end of January, with a deadline date set by the Graduate Coordinator. Students are asked to electronically submit their work to both their Area Program Committee Chair and the Graduate Secretary no later than 4 p.m. of the deadline date. Part-time students should discuss the timing of their Area Essays with their Area Program Committee Chairs. The area essays should total no more than 30 pages in length (double-spaced).

The Area Program Committee members agree upon a grade for the area essays, which is submitted by the Area Program Committee Chair to the GEC for review. The standard grades are A or A-. Any other grade requires a detailed written explanation from the Area Program Committee, which the GEC shall review. Once the GEC has approved the grades, students are notified of their area essay grade, roughly three weeks after the submission of the area essay. Please note that late area essays will not be accepted except in cases of illness, emergency, or other strong mitigating circumstances. For short-term absences (3 days or less) that prevent students from meeting the deadline, they must submit a Student Declaration of Absence (SDA) form to the graduate coordinator and their Area Program Committee Chair. Longer periods of absence that result in late essays must be discussed with the committee and the graduate coordinator as soon as the problem becomes apparent. Please note that no re-writes are permitted on area essays.

The Graduate Seminar (SOSA 5200)

The Graduate Seminar is structured to assist students in a process of cohort-building and professional development, as well as to facilitate a student's general progress through the graduate program. The seminar runs in both fall and winter terms for MA students.

Contemporary Perspectives in Ethnography (SOSA 5003)

This class is required for students registered in the MA in the Social Anthropology program. It examines ethnographies and critical writings which grapple with questions of theory and interpretation in a range of contexts--near and far, familiar and strange, local and global.

Elective Class(es)

In special cases, an MA student may take a reading course with a SOSA faculty member, or a graduate-level class offered by another department of the University as an elective. In such cases the student must first obtain the approval of the Graduate Coordinator. However, students cannot substitute their required graduate courses for Reading Courses. The regulations which govern Independent Study, Directed Reading, and Special Topics classes at Dalhousie can be found in the Graduate Calendar (Section 7.6.5).

MA Thesis (SOSA 9000, SOSA 9001)

Thesis Committee: Following the completion of the Area Essays, the student's Area Program Committee is replaced by a Thesis Committee. This committee normally consists of two faculty members (a supervisor and second reader). The Thesis Committee is responsible for supervising the preparation of the student's thesis proposal and eventual thesis.

Thesis: The student should prepare a schedule for thesis research, writing, examination, and submission to the examination committee and make any revisions to the thesis required by the Examination Committee.

Thesis Examination Committee: The Thesis Examination Committee consists of the Thesis Committee plus an additional, "external" faculty member who has not been involved in the direct supervision of the thesis. The "external" faculty member can be from the Department, be a member of the Faculty of Graduate Studies external to the Department, be a member of the graduate faculty of another university or be an adjunct professor. They may request revisions to the thesis prior to final submission, a process which is overseen by the Thesis Examination Committee.

SOSA follows the written defence model outlined in [FGS regulation 10.3.1](#). Students must be aware of the FGS deadlines for submission. They should give the Thesis Examination Committee sufficient time to provide feedback on the thesis, and to make any required changes, ahead of this deadline. They should provide a penultimate draft, which has been approved by the Thesis Committee, to the "external" examiner at least four weeks before the FGS deadline for submission. This allows adequate time for the third reader to read and comment on the thesis, and for the student to respond to any criticisms and revise if required. Students also need adequate time to [format their thesis according to FGS Regulations](#).

MA Thesis Proposal (SOSA 9416)

The thesis topic and proposal are prepared by the student under the direction of the supervisor, with the assistance of the second reader. The proposal usually emerges from the student's Area Essay reading and is subject to defence. Toward the end of the winter term, the student shall make a public presentation of

the proposal to the Department. The thesis proposal presentation is part of the Graduate Seminar (SOSA 5200.06) and all faculty and Honours and graduate students are invited. Approval from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Ethics Board or the Health Sciences Research Ethics Board must be obtained for any research involving human subjects. For more information on ethics approval, click [here](#).

MA Programs: Milestones Timeline

Please note that these timelines should serve as guidelines for students, and specific deadlines for program requirements will be determined with supervisory committees, to be reviewed and monitored by GEC.

Timeline for MA programs based in fieldwork and/or other forms of primary data collection with human subjects and REB application (18-month target plan)

Year/Term(s)	Degree requirement(s) to complete
Year 1 Fall and Winter terms, September-April	3 seminar course credits; area essays (lists/questions typically due October 31; essays typically due January 31)
Year 1 Winter term, March-April	Proposal presentation to SOSA department; research proposal submitted to committee for approval
Year 1 Summer term, May-June	Submit REB application for May or June deadline (note that REB does not meet or process files in August)
Year 1 Summer term, July-August	Data collection/analysis
Year 2 Fall term, September-December	Complete data collection if still ongoing; begin analysis and thesis writing
Year 2 Winter term, January-March*	Complete thesis, secure supervisor's approval, and circulate to second and third readers in time to graduate in the spring (check FGS thesis submission deadlines) *GEC is mindful that some students' thesis projects may require them to exceed this 18-month plan, yet recommends this timeline as a target for which all students should aim

Timeline for MA programs is based on an analysis of existing data sets or publicly available content; no REB application (12-month target plan)

Year/Term(s)	Degree requirement(s) to complete
Year 1 Fall and Winter terms, September-April	3 seminar course credits; area essays (lists/questions typically due October 31; essays typically due January 31)
Year 1 Winter term, March-April	Proposal presentation to SOSA department; research proposal submitted to committee for approval -begin data analysis once proposal is approved
Year 1 Summer term, May-June	Data analysis and writing

Year 1 Summer term*, July	Secure supervisor's approval, and circulate to second and third readers in time to graduate in the fall (check FGS thesis submission deadlines) *GEC is mindful that it can take time to access data sets such that students may exceed this 12-month plan, yet recommends it as a target for which all students should aim
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THE DOCTORAL PROGRAM

The doctoral program is designed to be completed in four years, although many students in our disciplines find that their fieldwork and writing require them to take a fifth or even sixth year to complete the degree. The goal of the first year is to develop and broaden the students' intellectual foundation and to permit the Department to assess the students' strengths and weaknesses. During the first year, the student registers for six half classes. The second year is spent preparing for and writing the comprehensive examinations. By the end of that year, the student shall have written two interrelated comprehensive examinations, normally one in theory and one in either a substantive area or methodology. The student is required to pass both comprehensive examinations in order to continue in the PhD program.

Following successful completion of both comps in year 2, the student will develop a formal dissertation proposal, which is presented to the Department Colloquium. The student must also demonstrate a working knowledge of a language other than English which is relevant to the student's studies and research. The third year and beyond are devoted to conducting research, analysis, and writing the thesis. In accordance with Faculty regulations.

The Program Committee

Prior to arrival, the student shall have been assigned a Program Committee Chair by the Graduate Education Committee (GEC) on the basis of their "Statement of Interest" and communications with the Graduate Coordinator. The Program Committee Chair shall consult with the student to choose the second member of the student's Program Committee and shall pass this information about committee composition to the GEC. The Program Committee, in consultation with the student, shall plan the first-year program in light of the students' interests, strengths, and weaknesses. It shall be responsible for the creation of the students' Comprehensive Examination committees and, with the Graduate Coordinator, for the formal approval of the students' program forms. The Program Committee continues its supervisory role until the student has completed the Comprehensive Examinations (when it shall be replaced by the Doctoral Dissertation Committee). Changes in the membership of the Program Committee shall be considered by the GEC upon request either by the student or by a Committee member. The student and Committee Chair should be in regular communication with one another throughout each term.

Coursework and Registration

The First Year: Coursework

The first year is intended to strengthen the student's foundational knowledge in the discipline by broadening its base while filling in any gaps and deepening the student's understanding of specific areas of the discipline.

During the first week, each incoming student is encouraged to make a get-acquainted appointment with faculty members in the student's area of interest who are eligible to supervise graduate work. This develops contacts that may be useful in the comprehensive examinations and thesis stages.

Under the guidance of the Program Committee, the student shall register for six half-courses for the first year: the PhD Seminar (SOSA 5600), which runs in the fall term; and five electives consisting of a combination of formal classes and reading classes. Students' coursework shall be graded by their respective instructors, who shall use the usual grade scale and submit the final grades to the Office of the Registrar. In order to make informed decisions in selecting courses, students are encouraged to attend appropriate seminar classes during the first one or two weeks. The student's first-year program must be submitted by the program Committee Chair to the GEC for approval by the end of September.

The student is expected to attend the regularly scheduled Friday afternoon departmental seminars. In addition, the Faculty of Graduate Studies provides funding for one presentation at a professional meeting for each doctoral student, and students are strongly encouraged to avail themselves of this opportunity during their first or any subsequent year.

The student is normally expected to complete all of the requirements of the six half-classes by the middle of April.

In general, continued funding is not available for students who fail to achieve an A- average in their six half- course grades. PhD students complete their course requirements, consisting of the PhD Seminar (SOSA 5600) plus five additional electives, from September to April.

PhD Course Registration Numbers

In addition to registering for the *SOSA 5600-PhD Seminar* in your first year, you will be required to register for the following registration course numbers:

1. *REGN 9999-Registration Course Graduate* every term
2. *SOSA 9405-Language Requirement* every term until completion.
3. *SOSA 9413-Comprehensive Examination* every term until your two comprehensives are complete.
4. *SOSA 9417 Doctoral Thesis Proposal* every term until completion.
5. *SOSA 9530-Doctoral Thesis* every term until your program is complete.

The First Year Review

By May 15th of the first year, the Program Committee must: 1) review all six course grades, sending them to the GEC for its information; 2) submit its recommendations to the GEC concerning whether a) the student should continue in the program, and b) if so, whether the student should receive continued university funding; 3) select the members of the students' Comprehensive Examination Committees; 4) schedule the students' comprehensive examinations; and 5) send comprehensive examination committee memberships and the examination schedule to the GEC for approval.

The Second Year: Comprehensive Examinations

The comprehensives consist of two examinations: normally, one in theory and one in either a substantive area or methodology. A comprehensive is not a narrative or a literature review; it is a discussion of key issues and controversies and is expected to be synthetic, analytical, and critical. Both

comps are subject to defense at a meeting with the comp committee following the submission of the written comp.

The theory comp is required, because it is crucial for disciplinary training. The second comp may be in a substantive area or in methods, according to the supervisory committee's evaluation of the students' needs. Committees may consider that methods can be covered in the student's research proposal rather than a comp and that many students may be best served by focusing on a substantive area. Alternatively, since students devise 2-3 questions to address in each comp, one question in comp 2 could pertain to methodology and how social scientists have studied the topic. Committees will use their expertise to ascertain student needs and ensure that all students acquire appropriate training for their projects in theory, methods, and substantive areas before undertaking data collection and analysis.

For each comprehensive examination, the Program Committee chooses two or three faculty members (some of whom may be Program Committee members) and seeks assurance that the faculty members involved shall be available during the requisite time period. The composition of the Comprehensive Examination Committees must be approved by the GEC.

Before each comprehensive examination, the student in collaboration with the Comprehensive Examination Committee develops a one-page statement describing and providing a rationale for the area of the examination, linking it to the student's field of research, as well as a reading list of 30 sources (10 books/monographs and 20 journal articles) considered to be key works in the field. The Committee develops 2-3 examination questions in consultation with the student as part of the process of developing the reading list. The Comprehensive Examination Committee Chair submits to the GEC for approval the student's Committee-approved statement and reading list, and the Committee's examination questions, with a copy to the student's Program Committee Chair. Following GEC approval, the student commences the reading and writes essay responses to the questions. Regardless of whether the Committee and student devise 2 or 3 questions, each comp must be 35-40 double-spaced pages in length (not including references/bibliography), 12pt standard font, and standard margins.

Should a student's comp exceed 40 pages, the comp will be returned to the student for revision before the committee will consider it, since part of academic training is to learn to write effectively within imposed word limits. Similarly, if a comp is less than 35 pages, it will be returned to the student for revision before the committee considers it. Should the comp be returned to the student, this will constitute an official re-write as detailed below.

The Comprehensive Examination is normally a take-home exam. Under special circumstances, including but not limited to a student's accommodation plan, the Comprehensive Examination Committee, after consulting with the student, may use a "sit-down exam" format. After the student has completed their reading list, the Committee provides its questions and one week later, the examination is held. The examination period is six hours, and no notes or references are permitted. Standards of grading are somewhat less stringent than those used in the "take-home" format.

Any student may access copyediting services or use grammar/spellchecking tools for comps, but only after producing a complete draft of the comp independently and without any such tools or services. Students must retain that an initial draft for their records should any questions about academic integrity/authorship arise. Students must also disclose in a statement on the cover page of the comp what type(s) of copyediting tools they used, if any. The use of generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) or other generative writing tools (i.e. tools that generate ideas and content, rather than simply copyediting the writer's original content) are strictly not permitted on comps. This includes, but is not limited to, the use of AI chatbots, the use of translation tools, and the use of paraphrasing or summarizing tools.

After the written comp is submitted, the Comprehensive Examination Committee Chair arranges a comp

defense with the student and all committee members, either virtually or in person. The purpose of the defense is to give committee members an opportunity to ask questions and to let students elaborate on or clarify their knowledge about the content of the comp and the sources on which it is based. It is also an opportunity for students to practice and gain confidence defending their work prior to their eventual dissertation defense. Defences will normally be scheduled for a duration of 60 minutes, but in accordance with universal design, they may be scheduled for up to 80 minutes for reasons including but not limited to student accommodation plans. 80 minutes is the firm upper limit on the duration of comp defences

The comp grade will be determined based on both the written submission and the oral defense. All questions are to be graded by all Comprehensive Examination Committee members, and an overall consensus grade must be reached by the Committee. The available grades are “pass” and “fail.” Comprehensive Committee Chairs are responsible for submitting the grade to the Graduate Coordinator and Rachelle Fox (normally 3 weeks after receipt of the completed exam), justifying the grade, and reporting any irregularities. Committees should provide an explanation to students for grades on comps to ensure students understand the grounds for the grade decision and receive constructive feedback.

Ordinarily, the first comprehensive is completed by the end of August of the student’s first year in the program. The student must pass that first comprehensive before going on to the second, which is in turn normally completed by the end of January of that year.

The GEC monitors the examination process in order to ensure that students’ examinations are equivalent. They are responsible for overseeing the examination and for ensuring that students are treated equitably. The student must pass both comprehensive examinations in order to continue in the PhD program.

Comp re-writes: In the event that a first comp submission is not deemed passable, students will have an opportunity to re-write a comp. Only one rewrite is permissible over the course of the two comprehensive exams, and GEC must be formally notified by the students’ supervisor with a proposed timeline for the resubmission, normally three weeks. The student must rewrite the same comp that failed with the same questions and reading list and pass it before moving on to the next comp or stage of the degree requirements.

The Third Year: Dissertation Proposal and Language Requirement

Dissertation Committee. Within four weeks of successful completion of the Comprehensive Examinations, the Program Committee and the student are to advise the GEC of the creation of the student’s Doctoral Dissertation Committee and dissolution of the Program Committee. The committee must have at least three members: a supervisor (or two co-supervisors), plus two additional committee members.

The membership of the Dissertation Committee must be approved by the GEC, which will take into account faculty expertise, availability and accessibility. Program Committee members may continue on as members of the student’s Dissertation Committee.

Presentation and approval of dissertation proposal: Ordinarily, the student shall be ready to submit a proposal for approval by the Dissertation Committee by September of the third year. In order to permit the student to take advantage of faculty and student interest and expertise, the proposal is to be presented orally to the Department.

Language Requirement: Students must demonstrate an appropriate working knowledge of a second language. The Program Committee is responsible for informing the GEC of how the student either has met or is meeting this requirement. Under FGS regulations, GEC is authorized to make final decisions on whether and how this requirement is met. The student has several options from which to choose in demonstrating a “working knowledge”:

1. Successful completion (i.e., with a minimum grade of B-) and 6 credits of a first-year university language courses (e.g. French 1007 & 1008 or 1047 & 1048).
2. Successful completion of any private-sector university-equivalent language course.
3. Successful completion of a test administered by faculty members of the SOSA department competent in the relevant language
4. Successful completion of a university course taught in a language other than English.
5. Any other method approved in advance by the GEC.

The Fourth Year: The Dissertation

In the fourth year and beyond, the student focuses exclusively on the Dissertation, in consultation with the Dissertation Committee. The first step is often to seek appropriate [Research Ethics Board approval](#).

The Department follows the regulations of the Faculty of Graduate Studies concerning doctoral dissertation supervision and procedures for oral examination, defence, and preparation of the dissertation.

Publication or Manuscript Based Thesis: The SOSA Department offers PhD students the option of submitting their Thesis as a series of manuscripts or articles that have either been published or are deemed publishable by the student’s supervisory committee. Students who pursue this option should refer to [FGS’s Thesis Format Guidelines](#).

In addition to these guidelines, SOSA requires the following:

- That the Thesis include text (e.g. Introduction and Conclusion chapters) that connects the manuscripts in a logical progression from one chapter to the next, producing a cohesive, unitary focus, and documenting a single program of research. This text should establish the student’s familiarity with their field, set out the objectives of the Thesis, situate the research in the larger context of the candidate’s discipline, and explain the overall thematic cohesiveness of the manuscripts. It should include a detailed description of how the manuscripts included in the Thesis address the question/topic being studied, and how the manuscripts each contribute to the study. The additional text may also set out recommendations for future research. Manuscripts alone do not constitute a Dissertation or thesis.
- In addition to this text, the Thesis will normally comprise three 6000 to 8000-word manuscripts (or equivalent), at least two of which should be single-authored.
- If a student includes a joint or multiple authored manuscript in their Thesis, they should have made a majority contribution to this manuscript; correspondingly, they should be first author. They should complete the ‘Student Contribution to Manuscripts in Thesis’ form available on FGS’s website, documenting on this form their majority contribution to i) research design, ii) conducting the research, iii) data analysis, and iv) manuscript preparation. Multiple-authored articles cannot be used in more than one Thesis.

Students opting to submit a manuscript-based Thesis should also note that their Thesis will be evaluated by Examiners as a unified, logically coherent document (see first dot-point above) in the same way that a traditional Thesis is evaluated. Publication of manuscripts, or acceptance for

publication, does not guarantee that the Thesis will be found acceptable.

A manuscript-based Thesis must also comply with [Dalhousie University's Policy on Conflict of Interest](#).

Finally, the research presented in a manuscript-based Thesis must have been conducted while the student was enrolled as a PhD student at Dalhousie University.

Teaching

Doctoral students normally hold teaching assistantships during at least the first two years of their program. Departmental resources permitting, doctoral students are given the opportunity to teach an undergraduate class at least once prior to the completion of their program, generally after approval of the thesis proposal.

PhD Programs: Milestones Timeline

Please note that this timeline should serve as guidelines for students, and specific deadlines for program requirements will be determined with supervisory committees, to be reviewed and monitored by GEC. We are also mindful that some doctoral projects may employ mixed quantitative and qualitative methods, though these tables should nonetheless provide guidance on timelines for completion.

Timeline for PhD programs with dissertation based in qualitative methods (4-5 year target plan)

Year/term(s)	gree requirement/tasks to complete
Year 1 fall and winter terms, September-April	-Coursework (3 credits fall, 3 credits winter) -In April of year 1, students plan comp 1 lists and questions with committee; finalize by end of April
Year 1 summer term, May-August	Comp 1 (6-7 weeks for reading and 6-7 weeks for writing/revision for high quality comps)
Year 2 fall term, September	-3 week committee evaluation period on comp 1 -Comp defense + planning lists/questions for comp 2 during wait for committee feedback; finalize by end of September
Year 2 fall term into winter term, October-January	Comp 2 (6-7 weeks for reading and 6-7 weeks for writing/revision for high quality comps)
Year 2 winter term, February	-3 week committee evaluation period on comp 2 -Comp defense + planning research proposal and (if applicable) REB application during wait for committee feedback
Year 2 winter term into summer term, March-June	-Dissertation proposal + (if applicable) submit REB application (please note REB does not meet or review files in August) -Language requirement -Proposal presentation to dept in May/June
Year 2 summer term, July-August	-Data collection/fieldwork
Year 3 fall and winter terms (September-April)	-Data collection/fieldwork (Note: for those not undertaking long-term ethnographic fieldwork or requiring time-consuming permissions for archives or other access, 1 or 2 rather than 3 terms may be sufficient for data collection)

Year 3 summer term (May-August) and Year 4 fall, winter, and summer terms (September-August)	Analysis and writing dissertation; secure supervisor's approval, circulate to other readers, and defend dissertation by end of year 4 (August) in time to graduate in the fall (check FGS thesis submission deadlines)
Optional Year 5	GEC is mindful that some projects, especially those based on long-term fieldwork or that require permissions for archives access, may exceed 4 years but strongly recommends that they do not exceed 5 years. Students should note that in such cases, funding is normally no longer provided after 4 years.

Timeline for PhD programs with dissertation based in quantitative methods (4-5 year target plan)

Year/term(s)	gree requirement/tasks to complete
Year 1 fall and winter terms, September-April	-Coursework (3 credits fall, 3 credits winter) -In April of year 1, students plan comp 1 lists and questions with committee; finalize by end of April
Year 1 summer term, May-August	Comp 1 (6-7 weeks for reading and 6-7 weeks for writing/revision for high quality comps)
Year 2 fall term, September	-3 week committee evaluation period on comp 1 -Comp defense + planning lists/questions for comp 2 during wait for committee feedback; finalize by end of September
Year 2 fall term into winter term, October-January	Comp 2 (6-7 weeks for reading and 6-7 weeks for writing/revision for high quality comps)
Year 2 winter term, February	-3 week committee evaluation period on comp 2 -Comp defense + planning research proposal and (if applicable) REB application during wait for committee feedback
Year 2 winter term into summer term, March-June	-Dissertation proposal + (if applicable) submit REB application (please note REB does not meet or review files in August) -For projects using existing data sets, make data access requests -For projects generating their own surveys/data sets, survey design as part of proposal/REB -Language requirement -Proposal presentation to dept in May/June
Year 2 summer term, July-August	-For using existing data sets, data access and exploration -For projects producing their own data sets, data collection/survey administration

Year 3 fall and winter terms (September-April)	-For projects using existing data sets, data analysis -For projects producing their own data sets, data collection/survey administration; begin exploratory data analysis (Note: for those not requiring time-consuming permissions for data access, 1 or 2 rather than 3 terms may be sufficient for data collection)
Year 3 summer term (May-August) and Year 4 fall, winter, and summer terms (September-August)	Analysis and writing dissertation; secure supervisor's approval, circulate to other readers, and defend dissertation by end of year 4 (August) in time to graduate in the fall (check FGS thesis submission deadlines)
Optional Year 5	GEC is mindful that some projects, especially those that require permissions for data access, may exceed 4 years but strongly recommends that they do not exceed 5 years. Students should note that in such cases, funding is normally no longer provided after 4 years.

GRADUATE STUDENT APPEALS

Grade appeals on comps, areas essays or course grades: Should a dispute arise between a student and the Committee about a grade on coursework, a final course grade, an area essay, or a comprehensive exam, students should make their best efforts, where reasonable, to resolve their concerns informally with the instructor or committee members who made the decision in question. If no satisfactory resolution of the dispute is possible, and if applicable, the matter should then be addressed to the relevant Departmental Chair or Program Coordinator, who will attempt to mediate a resolution between the parties. In cases where a conflict of interest may disqualify a Chair or Program Coordinator from serving as mediator, the FASS Assistant Dean of Student Matters would mediate.

If the matter cannot be resolved informally, the student may pursue the formal grades appeal procedure. See Graduate Calendar section 7.7.1 on Reassessment of a Final Grade for more information [here](#).

Procedural unfairness appeals: Should a dispute arise related to procedural unfairness in comprehensive exams, area essays, or coursework, rather than a disputed grade, students should make their best efforts, where reasonable, to resolve their concerns informally with the instructor or committee members who made the decision in question. If no satisfactory resolution of the dispute is possible, and if applicable, the matter should then be addressed to the relevant Departmental Chair or Program Coordinator, who will attempt to mediate a resolution between the parties. In cases where a conflict of interest may disqualify a Chair or Program Coordinator from serving as mediator, the FASS Assistant Dean of Student Matters would mediate.

If the matter cannot be resolved informally, the student may direct their procedural unfairness appeal to the FASS Academic Appeals and Student Matters Committee.

See Faculty of Graduate Studies regulations for further details on [FGS level appeals and program dismissals](#) in the event that a Committee awards the grade of “fail” on a comp after all rewrite options have been exhausted.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Departmental Colloquium

The Department runs a visiting speaker's series and colloquium. The series has a friendly and supportive atmosphere. Graduate students are expected to attend regularly.

Financial Assistance

Limited financial assistance is available in the form of Dalhousie Graduate Fellowships and Teaching Assistantships and Marker positions. Students are encouraged to apply for external funding from agencies such as the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), the Canadian Institutes of Health (CIHR), and the Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation (NSHRF); links to these agencies may be found [here](#).

Incoming students are also encouraged to apply to the scholarships awarded through Dalhousie University's Harmonized Scholarship Process. These include the Nova Scotia Graduate Scholarship and the Izaak Walton Killam Scholarships.

Please consult the Faculty of Graduate Studies page on awards for graduate students for other [funding opportunities](#).

Holders of Teaching Assistantships and Marker positions are normally assigned to one of the Department's first, second- or third-year undergraduate classes, to aid the instructor. Normally students employed as a Teaching Assistant or Marker are expected to devote no more than 90 hours per term to their task. More information about Teaching Assistantships and Marker positions, including salaries, can be found in the [CUPE Collective Agreement](#). Teaching Assistants and Markers at Dalhousie University are unionized. The Collective Agreement covering these roles requires that they be appointed in terms of a priority scheme. This is waived, however, in cases where being appointed as a TA is:

- a) required for the program in which the student is enrolled; or
- b) committed in writing to a student as part of the recruiting process with respect to a particular student. (Quoted from the Canadian Union of Public Employees, Local 3912 Collective Agreement for Part-time Academics and Teaching Assistants section 15.13).

Departmental Faculty

For a full list of [SOSA Faculty members](#), please refer to our website.

Computer and IT Facilities

Information Technology Services provides many facilities and services for students, including e-mail, student computer labs, campus computer store, training, and advice. Student Computer Labs, which provide access to PCs, are located in the Marion McCain Arts and Social Sciences Building (2nd Floor) and other locations throughout campus. Printing is also available for a fee.

Carrels

Doctoral students have access to assigned carrels depending on availability. Please see [Leola Lefebvre](#) in the SOSA office regarding your carrel assignment.

Dalhousie Association of Graduate Students

The Dalhousie Association of Graduate Students represents the interests of graduate students on campus, and all graduate students are members. DAGS operates The Grad House which contains a pub, café and meeting space. It is centrally located at 1252 LeMarchant Street. DAGS also has a small travel and professional development grant program for graduate students. Please see FGS' webpage listing links to activities and societies [here](#).

Library Support for Sociology and Social Anthropology

Each discipline is assigned a subject specialist who manages the book and journal fund for that discipline. The subject specialist for Sociology and Social Anthropology is:

Linda Bedwell

[Killam Library](#)

Email: Linda.Bedwell@dal.ca Phone: 902-494-2670

International Students at Dal

[International Students at Dal \(ISD\) has a useful website](#) which includes a New Student Guide, with information about housing, registration, health insurance, study permits, and other matters of interest to international students.

Research and Travel Grants

For information on Research and Travel Grants for graduate students administered by the Faculty of Graduate Studies, please go to FGS's website [here](#).

Research Ethics Board

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

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

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

Writing Centre

The [Writing Centre](#) offers writing and study support services to students.

University Health Service

The University operates an out-patient service, in Howe Hall at Coburg Road and LeMarchant Street, staffed by general practitioners and a psychiatrist. Further specialists' services are available in local hospitals and will be arranged through Health Services when required. All information gained about a

student by the Health Service is confidential and may not be released to anyone without signed permission by the student.

All students must have medical and hospital coverage approved by the Health Service. All Nova Scotia students are covered by Nova Scotia Medical Services Insurance. All other Canadian students must maintain coverage from their home provinces. This is especially important for residents of any province requiring payment of premiums. All non-Canadian students must be covered by medical and hospital insurance prior to registration.

The cost of any medication prescribed by a physician is recoverable under a prepaid drug plan administered by the Student Union. For more information, please visit [here](#).

***REMEMBER: You must apply to graduate via Dal Online!**

****NOTE TO SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS:** Please check to see how your scholarship payments will be affected by the submission of your finalized thesis to [DalSpace](#)!