

GRADUATE MANUAL

UNB - SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

[May 2023]

A resource for Directors of Graduate Studies,
their GAUs and graduate students

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PREAMBLE: PURPOSE OF THIS MANUAL

This manual is intended as a resource for Directors of Graduate Studies, their GAUs and graduate students. Its contents have been developed with particular attention to the role of the Director of Graduate Studies, as an aid to those in that role. However, much of what the manual contains could profitably be shared with the other members of each GAU as part of consolidating a common understanding of, and commitment to, basic policies, procedures and best practices concerning the administration and operationalization of graduate programs. The graduate students themselves might also find the manual helpful: many elements of it pertain directly to the student's own role and responsibilities in their graduate program; while other elements pertain to roles and responsibilities of the GAUs, their Graduate Directors and faculty Supervisors, which are nevertheless things the graduate students could benefit from understanding as well. Ideally, the manual will serve to promote effective, constructive and collegial relationships among all – students, Supervisors, Directors and GAUs.

The manual provides guidance and direction concerning a wide variety of graduate matters, from applications and admissions through degree completion. In many places, it provides general direction on a topic but then also points to other web resources for additional detailed information. It attempts to cover most of the most common graduate activities but cannot anticipate and cover all possible scenarios. Graduate studies is – by design – flexible and individualistic. Hence, although many scenarios have been encountered countless times before, every year also brings some entirely new scenarios. **So, the one overarching piece of advice provided to all consumers of the manual, if they find their topic missing from the manual or for any reason have uncertainty or doubts about the direction or guidance provided: “Contact the School of Graduate Studies. We’re here to help!”**

1. WHO'S WHO? ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES RELATED TO GRADUATE PROGRAMS

The School of Graduate Studies

The School of Graduate Studies (the SGS) is the overarching academic and administrative body responsible for graduate studies. The SGS is administered by a group of academic Deans and support staff. It is further supported by an Executive Committee comprising the SGS decanal team, several other ex-officio members, and faculty members representing various academic units.

The SGS (through its relationship to the Academic Senates) is responsible for overseeing the general administration of graduate programs, including:

- establishing academic standards and regulations and ensuring they are upheld
- approving and implementing new programs or changes to them
- approving and implementing changes to general graduate policies and regulations
- receiving and processing student applications and confirming admissions decisions
- coordinating student funding and payment
- assisting in resolving issues arising for students throughout their programs
- reviewing allegations of academic misconduct
- coordinating submission and defence of PhD dissertations
- coordinating program completion and convocation

The website of the ([School of Graduate Studies](#)) includes links to important information and resources regarding many aspects of graduate studies, including direction on [Graduate Policies and Regulations](#), processes surrounding [Thesis Preparation and Submission](#), and access to important [Forms](#) for various purposes. **It is expected that all graduate students, Supervisors, Graduate Directors and other members of the individual Graduate Academic Units will be familiar with and abide by all Graduate Policies and Regulations.**

The Graduate Academic Unit

The Graduate Academic Unit (commonly referred to simply as “the GAU”) refers to the academic unit that hosts a particular graduate program and is responsible for the day-to-day affairs of the program and its students. It is often equivalent to a traditional department in departmentalized Faculties (e.g., Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Math & Statistics within the Faculty of Science; Psychology, Sociology, English, History and Economics within the Faculty of Arts). In non-departmentalized Faculties (e.g., Computer Science, Kinesiology, Forestry and Environmental Management, Management, Nursing and Education), the GAU is equivalent to the Faculty itself. A list of all GAUs [is provided here](#).

Each GAU has a Director of Graduate Studies, who is the official representative of the GAU both to its graduate students and to the School of Graduate Studies. Depending on the GAU, the Director of Graduate Studies may also bear the title of Assistant or Associate Dean in their Faculty. In addition to the role and responsibilities of its Director of Graduate Studies, the GAU has general responsibility for the management and operation of its graduate programs; for

creating and sustaining a culture of integrity, fairness and success for its graduate students; and for ensuring that students are performing satisfactorily and progressing through their programs.

Many GAUs have additional guidelines specific to their programs. For example, GAUs may enforce academic standards (e.g., language requirements, GPA standards) that exceed, but never fall short of, the minimum standards established by the SGS as applying broadly to all programs. While GAUs are free to establish additional policies and regulations for students in their programs, those GAU-specific policies and regulations must align with and complement those established by the SGS for all programs and in no case would they replace or supersede existing SGS policy.

Some GAUs have a bi-campus structure with faculty members located on each of the two main campuses in Fredericton and Saint John. In such cases, it is expected that the GAU operates as a coordinated unit with regular communication and consultation among its members on both campuses.

General Guidelines for GAUs:

GAUs are ultimately responsible for the success of their students and for the quality of their supervision, and earn a reputation for both in the wider sphere of research and graduate training, which affects their continuing ability to recruit top calibre students and faculty alike. Hence, GAUs bear important responsibility for providing guidelines and other supports to both their students and their faculty supervisors. Among the priorities of a GAU should be the following:

- Fostering a positive, collegial and respectful environment in which students and faculty can thrive
- Growing a culture that demonstrably emphasizes the value of graduate study and research, scholarship and creative activity
- Promoting diversity in representation and experience
- Maintaining clear and consistent guidelines and regulations for graduate programs
- Promoting open communications about, and transparency in, GAU activities, while respecting privacy in confidential matters
- Providing students and faculty clear expectations concerning timelines for established milestones such as the completion of coursework, completion of comprehensive examinations, submission of research ethics (if relevant), submission of thesis research proposal, commencement of thesis research, and normative time to degree
- Maintaining clear and complete internal records for all students
- Creating open opportunity for students to share concerns and seek assistance and support

The Director of Graduate Studies

The Director of Graduate Studies is essential to the success of the students in their GAU. Next to the student's own faculty Supervisor, the Director is the student's first point of contact and most important resource for advice and direction concerning their program and for assistance in resolving issues that may arise. This is a significant responsibility that requires regular and open dialog with all students in the GAU. The Director of Graduate Studies is also the GAU's primary liaison to the School of Graduate Studies. Hence, **Directors have a critical bi-directional role (to their GAU and to the SGS) in the support and administration of graduate programs.**

General Guidelines for Graduate Directors:

Directors of Graduate Studies are responsible to ensure that graduate policies and regulations are followed and are administered in a fair and equitable manner within their GAU. Because graduate programs differ in their formats, and because the size and scope of GAUs also vary considerably across the University, the activities and responsibilities of Graduate Directors may differ. However, at a minimum, they will include:

- Admitting applicants to graduate programs
- Providing advice to graduate students on policies and regulations of the SGS and GAU
- Meeting regularly with and maintaining open communications with graduate students in their GAU to monitor progress, to provide general advice and assistance, and to assist in problem resolution
- Advising and assisting in the constitution of student committees for supervision and examination, and in the process of recommending External Examiners for student theses
- Advising and assisting in changes to a student's status or program.
- Coordinating financial support for graduate students, including fellowships and assistantships
- Monitoring student progress and completing and submitting Annual Progress Reports to the SGS
- Maintaining complete records for each graduate student including details of their Supervisor, Supervisory Committee Members, thesis area and topic, program of coursework, comprehensive examination schedule, copies of research ethics proposals and approvals, copies of Annual Progress Reports, etc...
- Assisting in the timely resolution of conflicts arising between students and Supervisors and enlisting the input and support of the SGS where needed
- Serving as a liaison between the GAU and the SGS
- Coordinating the activities of the GAU across campuses in cases where the GAU has a bi-campus structure, and ensuring regular communication and consultation among the members on both campuses

The Graduate Supervisor

The Graduate Supervisor is the faculty member most directly responsible for the graduate student's program. In this capacity, the supervisor assists the student in the development and conduct of their program and also ensures that the student is aware of the general regulations of the SGS and all specific requirements and expectations for their program from the GAU. This

is a substantial responsibility and entails a serious commitment. Effective supervision involves being available to students for regular mentoring, guidance and advice that facilitates and supports the student's research work and thesis. It also entails providing timely feedback and editing of student work (e.g., proposals, grants, permits, thesis) and providing access to other resources, supports and opportunities that facilitate and complement the student's research work and training. Any intellectual property that might be required for, or result from, the student's thesis work should be discussed and agreed upon in advance (see section on [Intellectual Property](#)).

In order to support the development of constructive and collegial environments for graduate student supervision and mentorship, the School of Graduate Studies has developed a [Graduate Supervision Guidelines](#) resource that outlines best practices for both Graduate Supervisors and Graduate Students. An important component of this is a document that outlines the general roles and responsibilities of both the graduate student and the Supervisor, and then provides a guide to additional important topics that should be discussed and planned between the two parties. That document must be reviewed by each student and their supervisor together in the student's first months of enrolment, and then must be submitted, at the latest, by the time of the student's first Annual Progress Report. The document is here ([Roles and Responsibilities Graduate Students and Faculty Supervisors](#))

General Guidelines for graduate Supervisors:

- Help the student to understand the general regulations of the SGS and the regulations and expectations of the GAU. Ensure that they understand the importance of academic integrity and respectful conduct
- In conjunction with the student, complete the Student-Supervisor Checklist ([weblink](#)) and submit it the SGS together with the student's first Annual Progress Report
- Assist the student in development of the student's research project and help to establish realistic timelines for completion of various phases of the work; be available for advice and feedback throughout
- Help in the constitution of a supervisory committee appropriate to the research being conducted; ensure there is appropriate expertise and other relevant research resources need to complete the project
- Maintain regular, open communication with the student to ensure they are progressing appropriately in their program and have a clear understanding of your expectations
- Complete the Annual Progress Report and include a thorough assessment of the research and other program requirements completed to date and the work remaining. Use the Progress Report to provide honest and constructive feedback concerning areas of strength and areas where improvement is needed.
- Ensure there is appropriate supervision available to the student if you are away for an extended period

The Graduate Student

Graduate students hold the primary responsibility for successful completion of their degree. In undertaking graduate work, the student is agreeing to pursue original scholarly work, to complete their degree in a timely fashion, and to be familiar with and abide by all regulations and deadlines provided by the School of Graduate Studies (SGS) and by the Graduate Academic Unit (GAU). Students must expect to do considerable independent work and are responsible for solving problems independently and mastering a body of knowledge and associated relevant skills.

Students are also required to maintain continuous registration throughout their program and to ensure tuition and fees are paid each term according to the dates stipulated in the graduate Academic Calendar.

General Guidelines for Graduate Students:

- Read and understand the [general regulations](#) of the School of Graduate Studies and the specific regulations that apply to your particular program as stipulated by your home Graduate Academic Unit (GAU).
- Understand and abide by SGS regulations governing [academic integrity and respectful conduct](#) as well as the broader University code of conduct.
- Be proactive in all aspects of planning and completing your program and in seeking out and applying for scholarships.
- Maintain regular communication with the Director of Graduate Studies in your GAU and your faculty Supervisor (for thesis-based students) and be aware of and responsive to their expectations and guidance. They are your first point of contact for advice, program direction and help with problems you may encounter.
- Keep your Supervisor informed about your program and progress; provide them with regular updates and relevant supporting documents. Keep them apprised of evolving needs you may have related to your program or thesis work.
- Students in thesis-based programs must complete the [Student-Supervisor Checklist](#) (weblink) and submit it to the SGS together with their first Annual Progress Report. Both documents are to be completed together with your faculty Supervisor and the Director of Graduate Studies in your GAU.

2 .FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND GRADUATE STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

Financial Support for Graduate Students

Financial support is critical to the success of graduate students, particularly those in research (thesis) based programs. There are a number of different sources of funding, some of which come from the central UNB budget via the School of Graduate Studies, some coming from faculty research grants and contracts, and some coming from scholarships or awards directly to the students from external sources. Following is a brief characterization of the major categories of funding and general processes surrounding them.

Funding from the School of Graduate Studies: GRA & GSTA

The SGS budget includes dedicated funding support for graduate students in the form of Graduate Research Awards (GRA) and Graduate Student Teaching Assistantships (GSTA). GRA funding is scholarship money to support the student's own thesis research, while GSTA funds are employment income in return for which graduate students provide valuable teaching support. Funds for each purpose are allocated annually to each GAU for distribution to individual graduate students at the discretion of the GAU.

Funding from the School of Graduate Studies: Recruitment scholarships

The SGS budget also includes funding to promote the recruitment of top students at both the Masters and PhD level. Recruitment scholarships are awarded by a process in which individual GAUs nominate highly meritorious candidates from their pool of prospective (incoming) students. A call for applications for this competition goes out to GAUs in mid-winter (Nov-Jan) coinciding with the canonical annual graduate recruitment cycle. In anticipation of that call, most GAUs are preparing lists of competitive applicants from their application pool in the preceding weeks.

Funding from Graduate Supervisors: GAA and GSRA

In some programs, faculty members are eligible for funding to support their research programs from outside sources. Among these, the most common involve research grants provided to faculty members from Provincial (NBIF, NBHRF) and Federal Government Agencies (Tri-Council: NSERC, SSHRC, CIHR). Some faculty members may have external funding from research contracts with third party organizations. In either case, faculty members may provide funding to graduate students from research grants and contracts in two principal forms. One of these takes the form of a Graduate Academic Award (GAA), which like the GRA provided by the School of Graduate Studies, is provided to students as scholarship funding to assist the student in the activities of their own thesis research. Alternatively, Supervisors may provide funding to a graduate student in the form of a Graduate Student Research Assistantship (GSRA) which, like a GSTA provided by the School of Graduate Studies, is provided as employment income in return for which the student provides valuable service to the faculty member's research program. Less commonly, GAA and GSRA support may be provided by sources other than the student's supervisor.

Funding from External Scholarships

Students are eligible for an array of external scholarships, primary among them are scholarships provided by the Federal Government's Tri-Agencies (NSERC, SSHRC, CIHR) and parallel agencies at the Provincial level (NBIF, NBHRF). The School of Graduate Studies coordinates application or award procedures for a number of these scholarship programs. The SGS website provides more details on [Tri-Council Funding for Graduate Students](#), other [External Funding](#) opportunities as well as [Internal Awards for Graduate Students](#). Consult these web resources or the Student Services Officer in the SGS for further information and guidance (sgsaward@unb.ca).

Graduate Student Employment: GSTA and GSRA positions

Graduate students can be employed as either Graduate Student Teaching Assistants (GSTA) to provide support to faculty members in delivery of undergraduate courses, or they may be employed as Graduate Student Research Assistants (GSRA) to assist in a faculty member's program of research or scholarly work. Both represent valuable opportunities for graduate students to gain additional experience that supplements their thesis programs as well as serving as sources of supplemental funding. There are, however, some specific parameters surrounding graduate student employment in these capacities that students, Supervisors and GAUs are expected to understand and abide. These are described in detail on the SGS webpage for [Graduate Student Employment](#).

For starters, graduate students employed in either GSTA or GSRA positions become members of the Union of Graduate Student workers ([UGSW](#)) and are subject to the provisions of a Collective Agreement between the UGSW and UNB regulating employment conditions. There are many important provisions of this collective agreement including minimum hourly wages, working conditions, and limits on the number of hours worked. Therefore, students, Supervisors and Directors of Graduate Studies should familiarize themselves with the various provisions of this [Collective Agreement](#).

One important provision of the Collective Agreement is that graduate students are limited in the amount of time they can be employed in either GSTA or GSRA positions. Cumulatively, the limit provided in the collective agreement is an average of 10-hours/week (520 hours over the course of the calendar year). This provision acknowledges the valuable experience and supplemental funding provided by these employment opportunities but also protects student time for allocation to their primary objective, namely completion of their graduate program. Hence, in assigning employment opportunities to particular graduate students, Supervisors and Graduate Students are expected to honor this balance.

Graduate Student Employment: Graduate Student Teaching Apprenticeship

Students interested to gain experience in teaching may also be employed as instructors under a special provision of the [Collective Agreement](#) between UNB and AUNBT. This opportunity is characterized in the terms of a Graduate Student Teaching Apprenticeship. The principle of this provision of the collective agreement is that students can be prioritized for a teaching opportunity if it is provided in the form a structured environment for acquiring teaching experience which entails "shadowing" a faculty member in the delivery of a course, and engaging in collaborative dialog with the faculty member in elements of course development and delivery, after which the student is provided an opportunity to deliver the same, or similar, course "shadowed" by the faculty member. Hence, it is an apprenticeship approach to teaching skill acquisition. Only graduate programs with a formally articulated Teaching Apprenticeship program – reviewed and approved by the School of Graduate Studies – are eligible for this experience using the provision in the Collective Agreement with the AUNBT. Further details on this provision are provided in MOU 11 of the Collective Agreement.

Graduate Student Employment: Full course instruction

Graduate students may also be employed through stipend contracts as course or laboratory instructors where they will be responsible for much, are all, of the delivery of a course or lab sections. These are an additional valuable opportunity for students to supplement their graduate experience as well as supplement their funding. Students employed in this capacity are subject to the provisions of the Collective Agreement between UNB and the AUNBT ([AUNBT-CAE](#)). Students, Supervisors and Directors of Graduate Studies should be familiar and abide by the provisions of this agreement.

In considering nomination of a graduate student for full course instruction there is, as with GSTA and GSRA assignments, an obligation to balance the valuable experience teaching a full course can provide with the need to respect and protect the student's time for the primary purpose of completing their degree. From a student's point of view, financial pressures and the opportunity to showcase teaching experience on a C.V. can make the offer of a teaching position very enticing. At the same time, Supervisors, Directors of Graduate Studies and the SGS must also focus on timely degree completion. Hence, such teaching opportunities should be considered carefully and discussed frankly with students. Each student must be made aware that teaching an entire course, while valuable experience, can be a very significant undertaking in time and energy, which can potentially interfere with a student's ability to sustain progress in their academic and research program.

Because the School of Graduate Studies is ultimately responsible for the work assignments of graduate students, any students being considered for employment as contract instructors must have the appointment reviewed and approved by the SGS using [this form](#).

In reviewing potential assignments, the following considerations apply:

- The student must be registered as an unconditional full-time or part-time student in good standing (status must not be that of qualifying, probationary, or pending incomplete ESL requirements).
- The student should have demonstrated progress in their program; must not be in their initial year of study; and will normally be in the later stages of their program, having completed their research proposal and/or comprehensive examinations.
- Where teaching is approved by the SGS and accepted by the student, the student is still expected to meet all normal requirements of their graduate program within established time limits (e.g. comprehensive examination and department seminar, etc.). Accepting teaching duties is not justification for requests for extension of degree timelines.
- The student must have demonstrable acceptable, referenced teaching qualifications such as:
 - Previous documented teaching experience (e.g. TA duties, guest lectures or other);
 - Experience in a supervised teaching activity (e.g. as part of a graduate program component); or the UNB Diploma in University Teaching (or similar).
- The student will not be engaged in any GSTA duties during the term of the stipend contract, but may continue to receive GRA/GAA support.

The application for a student to teach must be supported by a positive recommendation from the Supervisor and the Director of Graduate Studies of the GAU, as well as the relevant Department Chair or Faculty Dean.

Graduate Students Teaching Graduate Courses

Normally, graduate students will not be approved for teaching courses involving other graduate students, even where a graduate student's qualifications are otherwise relevant to teaching the course and the GAU is willing to provide both supervision and collegial interaction. Such activity necessarily involves a graduate student evaluating the work of other graduate students.

Without pre-judgement of any kind, such situations raise the specter of potential bias (positive or negative) and conflict of interest, with potentially deleterious consequences for those in both the instructor and the student role. Only in exceptional circumstances will the SGS consider such assignments, including, at the least, a guarantee there is no opportunity for such biases to exist.

Funding Offers to Incoming Students:

Students must be apprised of the funding they will receive during their program. This should come in the form of a letter from the GAU to the student **following final acceptance by the School of Graduate Studies**. On final acceptance, the School of Graduate Studies communicates formal acceptance to the student. At that point, the GAU should follow with a letter outlining the funding package for the student. Prior to this, it is appropriate for the Director of Graduate Studies to have informal discussion of funding with the prospective student, which will often be an important factor in the student's own considerations, but no formal offer of funding is to be made until final acceptance and notification to the student has been made by the School of Graduate Studies.

Note that international students seeking visas must have a formal letter of admission and an official letter offering financial support to a level deemed adequate by the IRCC (Immigration, Refugees & Citizenship Canada) before Canadian Immigration Officers in foreign countries will consider their visas applications.

Note also that Supervisors and Directors of Graduate Studies should know the terms of the UGSW Collective Agreement around GSTA and GSRA positions and the associated funding for them (see above sections on Graduate Student Employment – GSTS and GSRA positions).

Articles 13 and 14 of this [Collective Agreement](#) include very clear provisions with binding terms concerning the required duration of time for which such positions and their funding must be made available to a student **if such funding opportunities are noted as part of a student's initial letter of funding**.

Offers of Financial Assistance to International Students

To minimize immigration difficulties for international graduate students, an offer of financial assistance must be made. A template for this letter is available from the SGS.

The following points should be noted:

1. Offers of financial assistance must not be sent to students until **after** they have been officially notified of their admission by the SGS
2. A letter must be provided for all students who have, or will have, student visas
3. Each offer must be sent to the SGS for signing by the Dean or Associate Dean with a copy to the International Student Advisor
4. Please note that there is a separate form for Canadian Citizens and Landed Immigrants.

WHICH STUDENTS CAN BE PAID WHAT?

The eligibility of a student to receive various forms of scholarship and employment is determined by their status. The table below provides general guidelines for eligibility which will prevail in most cases.

	GRA (Scholarship)	GAA (Scholarship)	GSTA (Employment)	GSRA (Employment)	Full Course Teaching (Employment)
FT Students Eligible?	Y	Y ⁺	Y ⁺	Y ⁺	Y
P/T Students Eligible?	N	Y [*]	Y	Y	Y
Qualifying Students?	N	N	Y	Y	N
Count toward “Hours per week Limits”	N	N	Y	Y	Y
Payment Authorization	SGS	SGS	B1 form from per collective agreement	B2 form as per collective agreement	Collective agreement for part time faculty
Income Reporting	T4A	T4A	T4	T4	T4

* Note that some external agencies have limits on how much students may work. Some granting agencies have limits on how much a student can be paid.

* Note this may depend on the funding agency.

3. TUITION AND FEES

General Guidelines for Tuition and Fees

Graduate students must register and pay tuition and associated fees continuously each term throughout their program to maintain their student standing and access to all associated benefits (email, library, gym, health & dental insurance, etc.). International students risk jeopardizing their formal visa status and their eligibility for a Post Graduate Work Permit if there are any gaps in their registration and tuition status. The only exception to continuous

registration and tuition payment concerns students on a formal leave from their program approved by the SGS. A Leave of Absence has important consequences not only for student standing and benefits but also for student funding. Hence, before any student is granted a leave of absence, there needs to be careful reflection on the circumstances relevant to the specific student and discussion and coordination between the student, the GAU and the SGS. For more information, see section on [Leave of Absence](#).

Final Term Tuition and Fees

The final step in program completion for research-based Masters and PhD programs involves submission and defense of the thesis. Naturally enough, the timeline for completion of this final step often varies greatly for individual students and doesn't necessarily coincide neatly with the regular Fall, Winter and Spring end-of-term timelines that apply to course-based graduate and undergraduate programs. Some students will end up submitting and defending their thesis in the early or middle portion of a new term, which is fine. However, the question that then arises is whether students in this situation need to register and pay tuition if they're likely to need only a portion of it to complete their programs? The answer is **"Yes"** because it is difficult – impossible – to predict in advance exactly when a student will be fully done, given the vagaries of scheduling defenses, coordinating examiner feedback, and anticipating the prospect of required thesis revisions. It is important to understand that students risk losing access to important services and benefits, as well as their visa status and Post-Graduate Work Permit eligibility if they're international students and are not registered. However, to introduce greater flexibility into the completion process and timelines for thesis-based students and their associated tuition and fee obligations, the SGS has developed the following Final Term Guidelines.

Final Term Guidelines:

- Students must register and pay tuition every term, including the term that they think will be their final term: sometimes it is the final term, sometimes it is not (?!). This ensures that every student retains all their associated service accesses and benefits (email, library, health and dental insurance...). And it especially protects International students from jeopardizing their visa status and eligibility for a Post-Graduate Work Permit.
- To introduce flexibility, the SGS has coordinated with Financial Services to add an additional mid-term completion deadline each term: namely October 31 for the Fall term; March 1 for the Winter term; June 30 for the Summer term.
- Hence, for research-based graduate students there are effectively 6 exit points throughout the calendar year, rather than the standard 3 exit points associated with the end of the Fall, Winter and Spring terms.
- So, research-based students can officially exit every 2-months: October 31, December 31, March 1, April 30, June 30 and August 31.
- With this flexibility, research-based students who complete their thesis and all degree requirements by the mid-point of any term are responsible only for tuition and fees to that point. Only students requiring the bulk of their final term to complete are responsible for full term tuition and fees.

- Students can also make arrangements with Financial Services to pay their term tuition and fees on an instalment schedule across the term rather than all at once at the beginning of term. This introduces additional flexibility in tuition payment tracking the student's final term progress on thesis completion.

Full-Time (FT) versus Full-Time Continuing (FTC) Status

By default, graduate students register and study as full-time students. For students in research-based Masters and PhD programs, the expectation is that students are dedicating themselves fully to their coursework and to the program of research and scholarship that is the basis of their thesis/dissertation. The nominal program duration for research-based Masters degrees is 2-years, while that for the PhD is 3-years (beyond the Masters). For both degree types, these are the period for which Full-Time (FT) tuition and fee rates apply. It is also the period for which students are eligible for canonical sources of University-based funding support (GRA, GSTA as outlined above). Following the period of nominal program duration, students in research-based Masters and PhD students move to Full-Time Continuing (FTC) status (i.e., Year 3 for Masters students and Year 4 PhD students). FTC status is associated with a reduction in the rates for tuition and fees, notionally because students at this stage of their program are finishing their thesis and are no longer taking courses or making heavy use of other university services and infrastructure.

Part-Time (PT) Status

Graduate students generally do not study on a part-time basis. There are some exceptions, however. For example, students in some course-based (professional) programs undertake their studies on a part-time basis because they are employed full-time in the same profession in which they are seeking advanced educational qualifications, as is the case for many students in the Faculty of Education (MEd), and some students in the Faculty of Nursing, for example. Students in this circumstance sometimes opt to take only one or two courses per term, or only a couple of courses in a given year to complete their degree over an extended period while continuing to work full-time in the same field in which they are studying. These students have Part-Time (PT) status and pay tuition and fees on a per-course basis.

In exceptional circumstances, students in a research-based Masters or PhD program may want to move to PT status, sometimes because they have undertaken outside employment or have other onerous outside commitments. However, PT students are not eligible for University-based funding and may lose other benefits and supports. It is sometimes also difficult for PT students to make effective progress on their thesis to complete their degree in a timely fashion. Hence, students considering moving to PT status must be made aware of these additional consequences, and the decision requires consultation between and approval by both the GAU and the SGS (using the [change of status](#) form on the SGS website).

Tuition and Fee Schedules

Current information on FT, FTC, and PT tuition and fee schedules for domestic and international students in both course-based and research-based graduate programs is available on the Financial Services website here: [Graduate Tuition & Fees](#)

VISITING GRADUATE STUDENTS - FEE STRUCTURE

A student is designated as a "Visiting Graduate Students" if no formal acceptance to a diploma or a degree program has been requested by the student or granted by the School of Graduate Studies (i.e. the student is not and does not intend to become a regular graduate student at UNB). For a Visiting Graduate Student, the following represents the fee structure:

- a) Visiting either campus for a year/term for the purpose of research, while engaged in a graduate program at another institution: The eligibility requirements, application procedures and tuition are [specified by UNB Global Learning and Engagement](#).
- b) Visiting either campus as a part-time student taking no more than two courses per year: Such a student will pay tuition at the undergraduate course rate plus the non-Canadian fee differential, if applicable.
- c) Visiting either campus as a full-time student: Such a student will pay tuition at the undergraduate rate plus the non-Canadian fee differential, if applicable.
- d) Visiting either campus, with full fees paid to the home university and student is not a participant of an exchange program with UNB: Such a student should arrange for the home university institution to accept our invoice for the appropriate fees and provide UNB with a letter of confirmation or be prepared to pay fees from his/her own resources.
- e) Visiting either campus as a participant of an exchange program with UNB, fees will be paid in accordance with the applicable exchange agreement.

"Visiting Graduate Students" will be eligible for UNB student health & accident insurance (minimum of one term) plus participation in the Graduate Student Association.

4. APPLICATION AND ADMISSIONS

General Procedures

Students apply to graduate studies via a common web-based portal maintained by the SGS. Students may contact GAUs, and individual faculty members, prior to submitting their application to the SGS (application fee is \$65 for Domestic students and \$125 for International students). Indeed, this is common practise in many programs, particularly for students considering research-based Masters and PhD degrees who often consult extensively with prospective faculty supervisors before undertaking to submit a formal application. Student applications are received and compiled in the SGS and, once complete, are forwarded to the relevant GAU for their review and consideration. GAUs then recommend to the SGS which student applicants they wish to admit, which recommendations the SGS reviews for final approval and admission to graduate studies at UNB.

Additional details concerning the application process are available on the SGS Regulations and Guidelines website ([3.Applications Procedures](#)).

Admission Process and Standards

As just outlined, the process for admission involves collaboration between the GAU and the SGS. However, final responsibility for admission to graduate studies at UNB lies with the SGS. Hence, GAUs must be careful in their correspondence with prospective graduate students not to promise admission before the process is complete.

Admission to graduate studies at UNB can be unconditional or conditional in a variety of ways. For example, sometimes a student has the requisite academic background and is qualified in other respects but their formal grade performance in the pre-degree was not entirely satisfactory. Such a student may be admitted on a Probationary basis, with final unconditional admission contingent on satisfactory performance in coursework selected to demonstrate the requisite academic ability. Alternatively, some students may have satisfactory grades but their background training is not entirely appropriate to the field of study proposed for their Masters or PhD. Such a student may be admitted to a Qualifying year which provides the opportunity to supplement the student's background with preparation more specifically in the relevant field/s of study. Both forms of conditional admission are described more fully below.

Because admissions are competitive, many students will not be suitable for admission. Students may not be admitted for any or all of the following reasons:

- they do not meet the academic standards of a program
- they lack the requisite academic background
- they are missing other relevant experience
- they do not demonstrate sufficient fluency in English
- there is no suitable academic Supervisor
- there is no available space in the specific program
- there is a lack of other necessary resources or infrastructure

For any of these reasons the GAU or the SGS may reject an applicant. The SGS would not normally admit a student that the GAU did not recommend. However, the SGS may fail to admit a student recommended for admission by the GAU. The latter decision would entail consultation with the GAU.

Additional details concerning the admission process are available on the SGS Regulations and Guidelines website ([4.Admissions](#)).

Offers of Admission

Formal offers of admission to graduate studies at UNB come from the SGS. Such offers specify the program to which the student is admitted and the timeframe for which the offer is open. Students must register on or before the term date specified in the SGS offer of admission. After that time, offers of admission are no longer valid and students must re-apply, or request an extension of their admission eligibility.

The GAU will also provide a letter to the student reiterating their admission and spelling out in detail any conditions of admission (e.g., probationary requirements, remedial English language requirements), any other pertinent program details, as well as details of the funding support to be provided to the student during their program.

Conditional Admission: Qualifying Year

Students admitted conditionally and subject to a qualifying year (or other time-period) are normally those whose academic performance would otherwise entitle them for admission to graduate studies but whose background training is not considered fully appropriate for advanced coursework and research in the proposed field of study. Qualifying Student status is thus an opportunity for the student to obtain the requisite background to the standard needed for full admission to the proposed program area. Normally, the qualifying year consists of a set of courses, and other possible activities, as determined by the Director of Graduate Studies in the GAU concerned. The student will not commence their research program until they have successfully completed the Qualifying period and been provided full admission to the graduate degree program.

Assuming the student's performance during the Qualifying period is satisfactory to the GAU and to the SGS, full admission as a degree candidate will be granted. Normally, courses taken during the qualifying year are not credited towards the degree program but exceptions may be considered for certain advanced level courses. Note also that credit towards the residency requirements for a degree will not be granted for the time spent as a Qualifying Student nor will tuition and fees paid during a Qualifying period be credited towards the program fees for the subsequent postgraduate program.

Qualifying students are not eligible for financial assistance from the SGS through GRAs because they are in a qualifying year and specifically not yet authorized to undertake research towards the formal degree program. However, at the discretion of the GAU, they may be eligible for other support from the GAU. On successful completion of the Qualifying period and full

admission to the degree program, students are eligible for all normal forms of financial support. However, admission to a graduate program from the Qualifying Year does not imply any guarantee of financial support in the subsequent degree program. This is an especially important consideration for international student applicants because, even with subsequent full admission to a degree program, such students may not be allowed to remain in Canada by virtue of lacking adequate funding support. This factor must, therefore, be considered carefully when recommending an International student for admission on a Qualifying basis.

Conditional Admission: Probation

Students admitted on a probationary basis typically have the requisite academic background and are qualified in other respects but their formal grade performance in the pre-degree was not entirely satisfactory. Such a student may be admitted on a Probationary basis, with final unconditional admission contingent on successful performance in coursework selected to demonstrate performance competence. The duration of the probationary period and the number of courses required may vary depending on the student. The performance standard required may also vary but cannot involve any grades below a B- and must entail an overall average grade point of 3.0 (B or higher).

Students admitted on probation will receive a standard letter similar to the following to ensure consistent messaging and adherence to the principles and requirements just noted.

It is a pleasure to inform that you have been admitted to graduate studies at UNB on a probationary basis. Under the conditions of this offer, your status for unconditional admission to graduate studies will be evaluated following the completion of the first XX credit hours of your program. Probationary admission is granted only in exceptional situations where an applicant's academic performance in the pre-degree program does not meet all the standards normally required for admission by the School of Graduate Studies but where there are other strong indicators of the potential for graduate work.

Because you will be on academic probation for the first XX of your program, your progress will be closely monitored during this time. Full-time students on academic probation are required to take at least two graduate level courses per term, and to meet the following standards: No mark below B- and an overall grade point average of at least 3.0 at the end of each term. There will be no option to repeat or replace courses in which performance does not meet the above-noted standards. Probation will not, under any circumstances, be extended beyond one year for full-time students. For part-time students, probation will continue until the completion of at least four, one-term graduate courses. Failure to meet the above standards upon the completion of any term will result in immediate termination of the program and withdrawal.

You should be aware that these terms represent the minimum level of performance required by the School of Graduate Studies of students on probation. Individual departments or programs may require more stringent performance levels. If this is the case in the department or program to which you have been admitted, you will be advised

in writing by that Director of Graduate Studies (DoGS) of those conditions and approved by the School of Graduate Studies.

In all other respects, your status and associated responsibilities and privileges will be that normally associated with a graduate student.

It is hoped that you will take advantage of this opportunity and that both you and the university will benefit from your studies. In anticipation of your acceptance of this offer, I am pleased to welcome you to the School of Graduate Studies at the University of New Brunswick.

On successful completion of all probationary requirements the student may request that the “Admitted on Probation” notation be removed from their graduate transcript.

English Language Requirements

In general, International students whose first language is not English are required to submit documentation attesting to their proficiency in English. This normally takes the form of satisfactory scores on a standard test of English administered by a recognized testing organization. This is the current list of [English Proficiency Tests](#) and the threshold performance scores recognized by the SGS.

Students who are marginal in their official test score results may be required to take and obtain an acceptable grade in an English as a Second Language course as part of their degree requirements.

Proficiency in English may also be demonstrated through the completion of a minimum of two years of university level education within the past five years, where the language of both instruction and examination was English. Where this university is not in a country such as Canada, United States, Great Britain, Australia, or New Zealand for which an official transcript is accepted as sufficient documentation, the required documentation to be submitted will be a copy of the official transcript plus a certified letter (from the Registrar or equivalent university official) indicating the specific courses from the transcript for which both the "instruction and examination were in English" .

Some GAUs may wish to apply a higher standard for English proficiency than that recognized by the SGS as the minimum that is acceptable for UNB programs broadly.

5. PROGRAM PLANNING AND REGISTRATION

Graduate students in all programs must maintain continuous registration¹ in the School of Graduate Studies from the date of initial enrolment through to final completion of all degree

¹ With the exception of some course-based programs that have a term that includes a scheduled break.

requirements regardless of whether courses are being taken or not. Failure to maintain registration will be interpreted as withdrawal from the graduate program.

General Procedures

Students register for courses, online, in consultation with their graduate Supervisor and Supervisory Committee, and the Director of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Administrative support person in their GAU. Courses taken by graduate students may be taken for credit, non-credit, or audit and may be evaluated by traditional letter grade or as Pass/NoPass (CR/NCR).

Credit Courses

Credit courses may be at the graduate or undergraduate levels and may be taken in the home department (GAU) or other departments/GAUs. Courses taken in the home department/GAU will normally be graduate courses, with the possibility of a limited number of advanced undergraduate courses. Courses taken in other departments/GAUS may be either graduate or undergraduate, but credit will not normally be given for elementary undergraduate courses.

The decision as to whether credit will be allowed for an undergraduate course, whether in the department of study or in a related department, will rest with the student's GAU and is subject to the approval of the SGS.

Non-Credit Courses

Subject to the approval of a student's own GAU and of the instructor concerned, a graduate student may register for a course, graduate or undergraduate, as a non-credit course. The grade obtained in such courses will appear on the student's transcript but shall have no bearing upon the student's degree candidacy.

Audit Courses

Graduate students may also officially register for one (or more) course/s on an AUDIT basis. The Director of Graduate Studies for the student's GAU must approve the course, and the instructor of the course must agree to accept the student on a clearly defined basis as an AUDIT. If, at the end of the course, the student has fulfilled all the requirements set forth by the instructor and agreed to by the student, the instructor will inform the Registrar, and the course will be retained as an AUDIT course on the transcript. If the student does not fulfill the requirements, the course will be deleted from the transcript.

Transfer of Registration

It sometimes arises that a student must be moved from one degree program to another (e.g., MScE to MEng; or Masters to PhD; or Qualifying Year to Degree program). Such changes are initiated by the Director of Graduate Studies by way of a memo to the relevant Associate Dean in the SGS explaining the circumstances and recommending the change. Subject to SGS review and approval, the student is advised with copy to the Director of Graduate Studies and the Registrar's Office so that the student's record is adjusted accordingly.

Admission in some programs is to an integrated Masters-PhD program, where students transfer formally into the PhD program after successful completion of a first year of study. Such transfers are not automatic, however. They require use of the above-noted procedure.

Transfer Credit

On admission to graduate studies at UNB, or while registered in a UNB graduate program, students may be eligible to transfer credit toward their UNB degree from courses taken at other institutions. The number of courses that can be credited in this way is limited (no more than ½ of the credit hours for a given program to maximum of 12 credit hours) and is subject to review and approval by the SGS at the admission stage. Where a student is already in a UNB graduate program and wishes to take courses elsewhere for transfer to their UNB program, the request must be reviewed and pre-approved by the GAU and the SGS (i.e., BEFORE the courses are taken). The process for credit transfer requires the Director of Graduate Studies to obtain a detailed course description and syllabus for the course taken elsewhere and show how it covers the same ground as the corresponding course at UNB for which credit is being requested. Credit transfer is contingent on receipt of an official transcript documenting the course/s taken and grades achieved.

Residence Requirements for Research-Based Degrees

Full-time enrolment is the default mode in research-based programs, and it is strongly recommended that students be in residence in order that they may benefit from close association with faculty members and other graduate students working in their field of study. Some GAUs have a minimum residence requirement – that is, a minimum time when the student must be physically present on campus. Students should consult their GAU regarding specific residency requirements. Additional details concerning residency requirements for research-based Masters and PhD programs are provided on the SGS website ([7.General regulations concerning research-based degrees](#)).

Time Limits on Degrees

Research-based Masters degrees are nominally 2-years in duration, while PhD degrees are 3-years in duration. In reality, many students in both degree programs take somewhat longer to complete their programs. The recognized maximum time permitted for the Masters degree is 4-years from the date of initial registration, while that for the PhD is 7-years.

For a master's degree taken entirely on a part-time basis, the recognized maximum time is 5-years. It is rare that the PhD is undertaken entirely on a part time basis, but the time limit for completion remains the same, 7-years.

Extension of Time Limit on Degrees

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate to extend the maximum time to degree for a student. Such circumstances are considered on a case-by-case basis. The process is initiated by the Director of Graduate Studies, normally during the course of the Annual Progress Report process. The Director should explain clearly why the program for a student merits extension and confirm that such extension has the endorsement of the student, Supervisor and GAU.

Extensions may be granted only by the School of Graduate Studies. Where an extension is justified, it may be approved by the Dean or Associate Deans of the SGS.

Grade Standards

All students must maintain a cumulative average GPA (cGPA) of 3.0 throughout their program to remain in good standing. The performance of a student who obtains a cGPA less than 3.0, or who obtains one or more grades in the range of D to F, shall be considered unsatisfactory, and appropriate action will be taken by the GAU in consultation with the School of Graduate Studies. Normally a student whose performance is considered unsatisfactory will be required to withdraw from their program or will be placed on probation. Where the unsatisfactory performance is due to a grade in a single course, a student may petition the SGS to repeat the course or to take a single course to replace it. Where the Dean, after consultation with the GAU, approves this petition, the mark in the repeated or replaced course will be substituted for the grade originally obtained.

A more complete description of the grades and standards required to maintain registration in good standing is available on the SGS website ([6.General postgraduate degree regulations](#)).

Grade Remediation

The performance of any student who has not achieved the required standing in a single course(s) must be reviewed by the Director of Graduate Studies. One of the following remedies may be considered:

1. The student be required to withdraw;
2. The deficient course(s) be repeated to obtain a satisfactory grade;
3. The deficient course(s) be replaced with suitable alternatives.

The procedure to be followed for Option 1. is outlined in the section on Withdrawals. Options 2 and 3 must be undertaken in consultation with, and approval of, the SGS.

Grades for Graduate Courses

Grades for graduate courses are submitted on-line in the same manner as grades for undergraduate courses. INC (Incomplete) is assigned only on the basis of illness supported by medical evidence, or compassionate grounds, or other extenuating circumstance based on recommendation of the faculty member concerned, and with the approval of the Director of Graduate Studies. INC grades convert automatically to “F” if not completed in a timely manner the following term on the same schedule as applies to undergraduate programs.

INP (In Progress) may be used for courses which are not completed in a normal term cycle, or which continue across multiple terms, such as the thesis course used to track a student’s Masters or PhD thesis work throughout their program until degree completion. The INP designation allows the course to appear each term without the grade changing automatically to an F.

Withdrawals

For a variety of reasons, it may become necessary or desirable for a student to be withdrawn from their program. Sometimes this happens because a student's formal performance in their program is unsatisfactory. Other times it may be because the student has not made tangible progress on their thesis work for an extended time. In either circumstance, the prospect of program withdrawal is a very consequential step. Hence, it MUST involve thorough consultation between the Director of Graduate Studies and the student, as well the Supervisor in the case of a research-based graduate student, so that all relevant parties understand the implications of withdrawal and the circumstances leading to it. It is also mandatory that the SGS be engaged in this discussion, and at an early stage, to help facilitate a constructive and smooth consideration of options that minimizes potential stress for the student. When program withdrawals are processed summarily, students are often either surprised or upset, and usually both, with the effect that they (understandably) appeal the decision, which magnifies the complications and stresses for all involved. The SGS can assist in any considerations of program withdrawal.

Voluntary Withdrawal

A student who is in good standing may nevertheless voluntarily withdraw from their program for other reasons (e.g., to take employment, or to focus on personal matters). Such a student may be re-admitted to their program at a later date on the basis of a recommendation from their GAU. This recommendation must specify the grounds for re-admission and provide a detailed schedule for the student's degree completion. Should students take courses from another institution while away from their UNB program, they must ensure that updated transcripts are attached to the documentation forwarded to the SGS on return, if they are interested to have those courses credited toward their UNB program degree. Applications for re-admission are considered individually, and there is no guarantee of re-admission for any student. The decision concerning readmission is made by the Dean or Associate Dean of the Graduate School based upon the recommendation of the GAU. The decision is final and not subject to appeal.

Normally, a letter is provided to any student who withdraws voluntarily confirming the withdrawal and stipulating the time period and conditions around which they can be readmitted without re-application or penalty.

Students who wish to withdraw from their graduate program should be advised of the following:

1. A student who withdraws and later is re-admitted to their original program, nevertheless returns to the program under the rules and regulations in force at the time of readmission; and
2. Re-admission is not guaranteed and may be denied due to a number of factors, including: the GAU's academic emphasis or staffing complement has changed such that there are no longer appropriate personnel, or other resources and supports available for their supervision.

Compulsory Withdrawal

A student may be withdrawn by the School of Graduate Studies on the basis of unsatisfactory performance, either in formal graded coursework (as outlined in previous sections: see Grade Standards) or in their program of thesis research and scholarship. Such withdrawal can only happen on the approval of the School of Graduate Studies in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies, the student, and their Supervisor, so that all relevant parties are engaged in the matter and understand the process.

If a student’s performance in thesis work has been unsatisfactory for such a sustained period that it might warrant program withdrawal, then it should have been documented in the sequence of Annual Progress Reports developed in and submitted by the GAU for the student in preceding years. The Annual Progress Report is the formal opportunity to document such concerns, as well as to document proposals to remedy the situation (e.g., specific additional resources, supports or other interventions aimed at promoting the student’s progress).

If satisfactory performance is still not attained, despite additional supports and opportunities provided, then it may be necessary to consider withdrawing the student. In that circumstance, the following additional steps must be taken for the protection of all parties:

Procedure for Compulsory Withdrawal

1. The Director of Graduate Studies and Supervisor will meet together with the student to review concerns about their performance.
2. The student is to be given opportunity to address the concerns and share any relevant extenuating circumstances contributing to the performance issues.
3. Collectively, a suitable course of action to remedy performance will then be developed, a so-called ‘road-map’ to success, which identifies clear and tangible tasks or deliverables for the student, each with a clear timeline. These must be reasonable, mutually agreeable and documented.
4. This road-map document then serves as the basis for followup and evaluation.
5. Should the ‘road-map’ deliverables and timelines not be met, the supervisor may formally recommend to the Director of Graduate Studies that the student be withdrawn from their program. Accompanying this request will be all documentation related to the road-map and evaluation of it.
6. The Director of Graduate Studies will communicate this outcome to the SGS and share the associated documentation.
7. The SGS will then make a final determination concerning withdrawal or development of some further alternative remedy.

Note: The Dean and/or relevant Associate Dean of the School of Graduate Studies must be kept apprised of the above steps, all of which must be carefully documented.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY

Sometimes during a student's program it is necessary or advisable for a Leave of Absence. There are a variety of possible motivators for this, outlined below. There are also a variety of important consequences related to the change in student status for retention or loss of student benefits and funding. **Hence, before any student is granted a leave of absence, there needs to be careful reflection on the circumstances relevant to the specific student and discussion and coordination between the student, the GAU and the SGS.** Ultimately, it is the responsibility and authority of the School of Graduate Studies to consider and approve any request for a Leave of Absence.

During a Leave of Absence, the student is specifically NOT registered, and tuition and fees are not assessed. Correspondingly, the student is specifically NOT to be undertaking work towards their degree, nor to be making use of University infrastructure and resources. A Leave of Absence, if granted, is normally for a 1-year period (but may be shorter) and the time on leave is NOT counted toward the maximum time permitted for degree completion. Typically, only one leave of absence will be provided during a student's program, though exceptions may occur.

Some possible reasons for a Leave of Absence:

Academic:

- The supervisor is absent from UNB and no adequate arrangements can be made for continuing supervision
- The required courses for the student's program are not offered
- Required equipment or other infrastructure needed for the student's program is unavailable for an extended period.

Family:

- Pregnancy or birth of a child (see next section on Parental Leave)
- Unusual or exceptional family care responsibilities.

Employment: [Note: Simply taking a job is not a sufficient reason for a Leave.]

- Transfer by employer of student (part-time) or partner requiring student to move to a location distant from UNB;
- Loss of employment by student (part-time)/partner

Health: Inability to pursue studies for the duration of the leave:

- Inability to continue studies due to documented medical condition (accompanied by a medical certificate)

Parental Leave

The following additional provisions apply specifically to students requesting parental leave.

- On request, a graduate student may be granted parental leave from their graduate program. Such leaves will be for the period of time specified by the student at the time of the request and will not exceed a period of one calendar year.
- Any UNB awards (i.e. GRA, GSTA, Board of Governors, etc...) held by the student at the time of the request and which otherwise would have continued during the period of leave, will be deferred in full until the student returns from leave.

- Deferral of financial support provided indirectly through the University (e.g., GAA, GSRA funding from a supervisor's grant or contract) must be discussed between the student and the supervisor. Because of the nature of this funding, any deferral provisions would be at the discretion of the grant or contract holder and the external agency providing the funds.
- Retention and deferral of awards to students from agencies external to the University (e.g., NSERC, SSHRC, CIHR scholarships) are governed by the regulations of the awarding agency.
- During the period of leave, students remain in good academic standing in their graduate program.
- During a leave, students are not required to pay graduate fees to the University.
- The above provisions on award deferral and fee payment do not apply to graduate students requesting maternity/paternity leaves of more than one calendar year.

6. STUDENT STANDING AND PROGRESS

All students must remain in good standing throughout their program in order to maintain their registration and active status. This includes maintaining the requisite Grade Standards in coursework, as outlined in the earlier section on that topic. For research (thesis) based students, good standing also entails making satisfactory progress on their program of research, scholarly or creative work as well as on the accompanying thesis. Satisfactory performance (good standing) on the research, scholarly or creative side of the student's program is evaluated and documented in the Annual Progress Report process.

Annual Progress Reports

Every year, research-based students are required to complete an Annual Progress Report. While it is expected that students and Supervisors are in regular communication about the student's program and progress in it, the Annual Progress Report process is a formally scheduled opportunity for a comprehensive check-in. It is a key opportunity for the student to take stock of their own progress in the program, to identify for themselves outstanding milestones and to set timelines for their completion in consultation with their faculty Supervisor. It is also the opportunity for them to identify additional possible resources, services, or supports they might need in order to complete their programs, and to discuss these with their faculty Supervisor.

Likewise, this Annual Progress Report process is a formal opportunity for the faculty Supervisor to take stock of the student's progress and to assist the student in identifying study priorities, milestones and timelines for them, other resources or supports needed, etc... At the same time, it is the opportunity for Supervisors to discuss very frankly, but also constructively, areas of strength but also areas where attention may be needed in the student's performance, study habits, etc... In short, this is an important annual opportunity for program review and possible constructive course correction. It should be undertaken thoroughly and earnestly to be of maximum value to both student and Supervisor alike. **As long as all participants in the evaluation process comport themselves professionally and respectfully, frank feedback –**

even feedback that is critical – can be positive and constructive and ultimately be in the interests of all concerned. Indeed, the experience of the SGS is that due attention to the Annual Progress Report process often eliminates many (anticipatable) obstacles and challenges to students' progress and facilitates expedited degree completion.

The Annual Progress Report Process is coordinated by the Director of Graduate Studies in each GAU. The Director coordinates communications on the subject to students and faculty Supervisors, reminding them of the timeline for completion of the annual reports. The Director also coordinates the submissions, provides important additional comments and context for each student's submission, and forwards the reports to the SGS. Sometimes, Directors will meet individually with the Dean or relevant Associate Dean in the SGS to discuss their GAU's annual submissions.

7. SUPERVISION

Student and Supervisor Roles and Responsibilities

Students undertaking graduate studies and faculty undertaking to supervise them are making serious commitments with considerable responsibilities.

Graduate students hold the primary responsibility for successful completion of their degree. Hence, they must expect to do considerable independent work, and are responsible for solving problems independently and mastering a body of knowledge and associated relevant skills with the ultimate goal of producing and defending an original thesis.

At the same time, it is also understood that students will receive considerable support and mentoring in these activities, and have continuing regular consultation and collaboration with their faculty supervisor. Hence, while students are making a serious commitment to their program and supervisor, their supervisors in turn are making a serious and enduring commitment to their students.

SGS has developed guidelines for faculty supervisors and graduate students pertaining to the supervisor-student relationship. This includes a [faculty-focused](#) edition and [student-focused edition](#), although there is considerable overlap. These guidelines describe the roles and responsibilities for both supervisor and student, and best practices in graduate supervision.

Best Practises in Graduate Supervision

Supervising graduate students is a rewarding but also challenging responsibility. There is no single recipe for being a good supervisor but there are some general, successful approaches and best practises, among them:

- Be friendly, but not friends: meaning, be open and accessible to your students and always be courteous and respectful with them but at the same time respect personal boundaries and resist developing any level of relationship familiarity that is beyond, or

outside the domain of, your shared professional commitment to graduate study and research.

- Be positive and enthusiastic, instill energy and enthusiasm in your students by your own example.
- Be flexible and sensitive: life happens. Research almost never goes quite as planned and students' lives can get complicated. Help students navigate these challenges by anticipating that they will occur, being sensitive to them when they arise, and being flexible and prepared to pivot when needed.
- Appreciate and respect individual differences among graduate students. Not all students are alike and that diversity is a good thing. There are a lot of ways to succeed and thrive. Different students will have different needs and will profit from different types and amounts of support. Expect this, and be prepared to provide input, feedback and assistance tailored to the needs and predilections of different students, while nevertheless treating all students fairly and equitably.
- Be 'other' focused. Focus on your students and their success, rather than your own, which ultimately reflects back on you in the end and so comes to be your success too through the student's success.
- Appreciate and encourage intellectual debate and challenge. Graduate students are like junior colleagues. Do not constrain their thinking or channel them into particular perspectives but rather respect and promote their intellectual maturation and independence.
- Embrace opportunities for broader growth and professional development of your students in areas outside the specific domain of research and training.
- Be open and transparent about issues of intellectual property and authorship. Discuss these issues explicitly. Develop a formal understanding and agreement concerning IP if appropriate.

Eligibility for Appointment as Supervisor

A supervisor is normally appointed for each incoming graduate student at the time of application/admission.

Criteria for serving as graduate Supervisor are as follows:

- A supervisor must be a tenured or tenure-track faculty member at UNB, will normally hold a PhD, and will have [full membership](#) in the School of Graduate Studies.
- Supervisors of doctoral candidates should have previous experience in graduate supervision (e.g., supervision of Masters students; co-supervision of PhD students)
- Those with affiliate appointments (e.g., Adjunct, Honorary Research Associate, Postdoctoral Fellow) are eligible to serve as a co-supervisor in conjunction with a continuing regular member of the UNB faculty.
- The supervisor must be active in the general subject area of the student's research.
- The supervisor must demonstrate continuing scholarly or creative activity.

Supervisors Away, on Sabbatical, on Leave or Retiring

From time-to-time throughout a student's program, the Supervisor may have occasion to be away for an extended period (e.g., on field research, on sabbatical or administrative leave, etc...). During any extended period away (> 2-months), arrangement for alternative continuing supervision must be made. It is the responsibility of the Supervisor, in conjunction with the Director of Graduate Studies for the GAU, to identify another faculty member in the GAU to take responsibility for official interim supervision to sustain the student's progress uninterrupted. This person, because of their accessibility to the student and their access to local university systems and supports, also inherits responsibility for official quotidian matters that would otherwise normally be the responsibility of the regular Supervisor (e.g., signing forms, requesting access to university resources for the student, etc.). These provisions are required in order to prioritize student progress and avoid any logistical delays that might otherwise arise in moving the student forward while the Supervisor is absent from campus.

A similar requirement pertains to faculty who retire with continuing graduate students under their supervision. In this case, the requirement has nothing to do with any assumption about the retiring faculty member's ability to provide continued mentorship. Indeed, it is expected that, in most cases, retiring faculty are able and will want to remain involved in their students' programs. Hence, to do so, the retiring faculty member can request continuing membership in the School of Graduate Studies (for a period of 4-years, renewable). Retired faculty may be granted Associate Membership which provides privileges including the ability to co-supervise graduate students. Such requests are made to the SGS by way of memorandum from the Director of Graduate Studies and contain the endorsement of the Director (GAU) and the Chair of Department and Dean of Faculty. The request must include identification of a continuing member of the faculty to serve as the official Supervisor for each of the continuing students. Where multiple students are involved, a different member of the continuing faculty can be identified for some number of the students concerned. The requirement for alternative official supervision is once again to ensure there is a continuing UNB faculty member responsible and accountable for all official remaining program requirements, with signing authority for the same (e.g, signing forms, requesting access to university supports and services, affirming thesis submission and completion, etc.).

7. THESIS DEFENSES AND PROGRAM COMPLETION

The final steps for research-based graduate students are submission and defense of their thesis/dissertation. This is the final and crucial step in the award of the degree. It is also a protracted step that involves multiple sub-steps. Further, the timeline for completion of all steps can be – frustratingly – rather elastic due to both anticipatable and unanticipatable delays. Anticipatable delays include time needed to distribute and return various thesis related documents and paperwork; time needed to coordinate the busy schedules of multiple faculty members (and an external examiner for PhDs); additional time sometimes needed to accommodate scheduling changes; time needed for students to complete required revisions, etc... Unanticipatable delays are... well, unanticipatable ... but sometimes happen.

All of these potential sources of delay are largely outside the control of the student, the GAU and even the SGS. So, while all of these stakeholders are motivated to expedite a student's

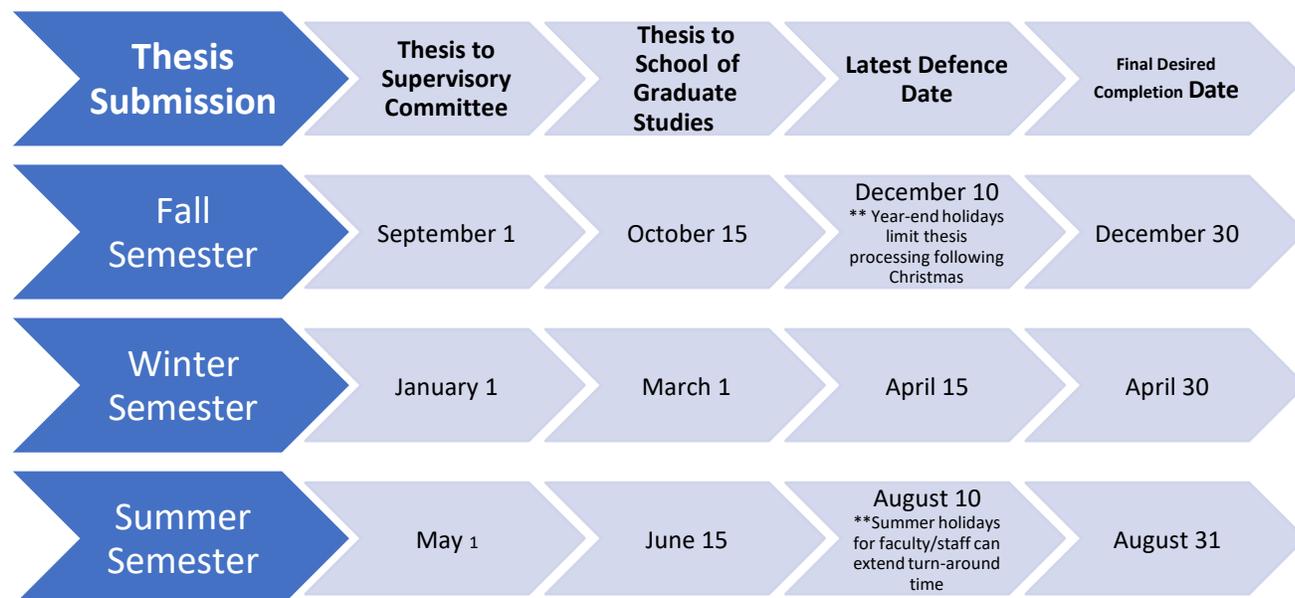
completion, and all are earnest in their efforts in this, the reality is that, collectively, we can't control what we can't control.

Hence, students must be advised by their supervisor and Director of Graduate Studies – well in advance – that the process required to submit, defend, and revise their thesis can take considerable time. Almost always at least a bit longer than their natural optimism about the process anticipates! Realistically it can often take a full term for all steps to be completed.

The timeline involved in final Thesis Review, Defense and Final Submission involves the following major steps:

- **Thesis to Supervisory Committee:** Committee members need time to review. Student needs time to revise in response to comments. Allow 4-6 weeks for this step.
- **Thesis to School of Graduate Studies:** SGS sends thesis to examiners providing 5-7 weeks for review and return of examiner reports.
- **Latest Defence Date:** Defence must occur at least 2-4 weeks prior to final desired completion date to allow time for revisions following the defense.

The following chart provides a guide to realistic deadlines (last possible dates) for each of the final stages of PhD thesis submission and defence. It should be used to advise students (and Supervisors) and provide them with realistic expectations concerning the defense process, allowing them to better plan the time needed for it. Students should not be rushed with any of these steps and deadlines, but at the same time it's important to be realistic and honest with them to avoid possible surprise and stress for them.



[Masters Thesis Defences](#)

The general requirements for thesis submission and defence for Masters students is outlined on the SGS website on the [Master's Degree Regulations](#) page. It includes details on the requirements for the constitution of an Examining Board and other elements of the process subject to SGS-level guidelines. Many elements of the process – e.g., the inclusion of an external examiner – are at the discretion of the GAU. Should a GAU choose to use an external examiner for Masters thesis defenses, they should follow the procedures used at the PhD level to ensure there is no basis for bias or a conflict of interest.

[PhD Thesis Defences](#)

The general requirements for thesis submission and defence for PhD students are also outlined on the SGS website on the [PhD Regulations](#) page. The process for the PhD is somewhat more involved and protracted, involving a larger Examining Board, a mandatory External Examiner and an open public defense. Hence, it is governed by a detailed set of procedures and regulations that are detailed in step-by-step fashion on the SGS website for [PhD Thesis Examinations](#). Some of the key steps involved are detailed further below.

[Acceptance of the PhD by the GAU and Submission of to the SGS](#)

The first step in the PhD defense process involves confirmation from the GAU that the dissertation is ready for defense. Typically, this step involves the dissertation being available to and read by faculty members within the GAU. It may also involve an internal oral examination (within the GAU) of the candidate and their thesis. These steps have proven effective and all GAUs are encouraged to adopt the approach. Ultimately, submission of the dissertation to the SGS is confirmation that it bears the stamp of approval of the GAU.

[Constitution of the Examining Committee for PhD Defenses](#)

With submission of the dissertation to the SGS, the Director of Graduate Studies – on behalf of the GAU – submits the names of proposed members of the Examining Committee. This includes submitting the names and contact information for three individuals nominated to serve as External Examiner, from which one is to be selected by the SGS (see next item for more detail).

Once the thesis has been submitted to the SGS, examiners are to have no further communications with one another (or the student) concerning the thesis, nor are they to discuss the thesis with anyone else. Once begun, the review process is entirely confidential until the point of the oral defence, which is then open to the public.

[External Examiners for PhD Defences](#)

One critical element of the PhD defence process involves selection of an appropriate External Examiner. The PhD is the highest degree awarded by a University, subject to clear and high standards that require the work to represent a significant contribution to the research and scholarly tradition of a field or discipline. The PhDs awarded by a University therefore reflect directly on the research and scholarly reputation the University develops and sustains on the national and international stage. Accordingly, the process for selecting External Examiners, who

review and endorse the work of our students, is vested with equivalent importance. External Examiners will be selected based on advanced academic rank and recognized academic expertise. This normally means the External Examiner will hold a tenured or tenure track position at the level of Associate Professor (or equivalent) at minimum. Acknowledging that the definition of academic merit and expertise may vary across disciplines, an External Examiner should have a notable publishing record in the field or topic of the dissertation, as demonstrated on their academic cv. The Director of Graduate Studies will advance three (3) possible External Examiners to the School of Graduate Studies for consideration at the time the doctoral candidate submits their dissertation. It is also of course required that External Examiners are independent of UNB with no connection to the University, the student, Supervisor or others involved in the examination process that could be interpreted as a potential source of bias or conflict of interest and that might thereby affect the perception of impartiality in their review.

The process for identifying candidates for External Examiner thus involves submission by the Director of Graduate Studies of the name and contact information of 3 nominees using the SGS form available here (Form for [Nomination of Examining Board](#)). Additional information concerning the nominee may be solicited to evaluate their suitability for the thesis in question. For example, a CV, bio and/or further explanation from the Director of a nominee's research expertise and its relevance to the thesis may be needed. The process also requires that the GAU acknowledge that none of the individuals provided as nominees for the position of External Examiner is known to have a bias or Conflict of Interest. It likewise requires the External Examiner ultimately selected to attest to the same.

Final Thesis Preparation and Submission

There are a variety of steps entailed in preparing the final thesis and submitting it to the SGS and it is important that students understand these clearly in order to expedite the degree completion process. Sometimes delays in completion arise because of confusion (or mistakes) in completing the final steps. In order to help facilitate the process for students, the SGS website has a section that provides step-by-step instructions ([Thesis Preparation and Submission](#)). In brief, the steps entail the following:

Prior to defending the thesis:

- Student formats thesis according to standard guidelines for thesis presentation
- Note that templates for this are maintained by the Library to assist students in this step

Following Thesis Defence:

- Student revises thesis and review final thesis format
- Student submits final approved thesis to SGS
- Director of Graduate Studies submits supporting documentation that all revisions have been satisfactorily completed and all degree requirements are complete
- Student submits application to graduate
- Student submits request for thesis binding (optional)
- Student submits paperwork to deposit thesis in University Library Archive (UNBScholar)
- Student submits paperwork to request embargo* (optional)

*Note: requests to embargo a thesis require a detailed rationale and subject to review and

approval by the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies. An embargo may be for a short

duration (often 1-2 years) to allow publication of a book or monograph from the thesis or to protect intellectual property for a period of time. In no case, can an embargo exceed 4-years in duration. Additional details concerning the process for requesting an embargo and the conditions surrounding it are contained on the Thesis Embargo Form.

Completion of Degree Requirements

One of the critical last steps in degree completion belongs to the Director of Graduate Studies who, as noted in the steps outlined in the previous section, must affirm on behalf of the GAU that the student has completed all program requirements. This includes affirming that all required revisions to the thesis have been made (in the case of thesis-based students), as well as all required coursework for both thesis- and course-based students. Forms for this process are available on the SGS website ([SGS Forms](#)).

9. APPEALS, DISPUTES AND RESOLUTIONS

Appeals

Sometimes during the course of a student's program, a student may have concerns about the manner in which details of their program have been evaluated. For example, a student may have concerns about the grade received in a course or on a specific piece of coursework (e.g., an examination or a paper) or about an evaluation of their progress or standing in the program more generally. In such cases, the student may appeal the outcome to the SGS.

Importantly, the grounds for appeal are limited to an argument that an evaluation was made without due regard to proper procedure and/or that the student was treated unfairly in some way, for example, that they were evaluated in a manner differently than peers or were otherwise uniquely disadvantaged in some aspect of the process.

Students are not able to appeal the merit of decisions of faculty or committees conducted with due regard to proper procedure or process; nor based on an argument that the person/s providing the evaluation are somehow unqualified or unjustified in their evaluation.

Students should be apprised of this important basic distinction. They should also be advised that they have recourse to the services of the Student Advocate to assist them in making their appeal. The Student Advocate can provide expert guidance to the student on the process, on appropriate grounds for appeal, and on how to formulate their appeal to best effect recognizing these conditions.

Details concerning appeal procedures and the settlement processes are provided in the rule of the [Graduate Calendar \(Article 13\)](#). See this material for complete details.

Disputes and Resolutions

The relationship between students and supervisors is typically close and constructive. However, at times, differences can arise. Very often, differences arise simply because of a lack of effective communication and/or a miscalibration of understanding or expectations. In such cases, the

differences can often be resolved informally. Hence, it is important to address such matters as early as possible to limit the scope of tension or distress. The supervisor and student should thus discuss issues arising immediately. The supervisor should also document such discussions as a constructive record of such details of the student's program and share this record of discussion with the student.

At times, differences between student and supervisor are more difficult to resolve in this manner. Then it becomes important to engage the Director of Graduate Studies and possibly also the School of Graduate Studies.

Role of Director of Graduate Studies and the SGS in Dispute Resolution

Resolving more substantive differences and conflicts between students and supervisors is one of the most challenging but also most important roles of the Director of Graduate Studies. Students and supervisors should seek the counsel of the Director as early as possible in an evolving conflict.

It is then the responsibility of the Director of Graduate Studies to coordinate the process of consultation and mediation. It is strongly recommended that the Director first have an individual discussion with the student and then also with the Supervisor, to be sure that they understand both perspectives on the difference or conflict between them. Depending on the nature of the difference, the Director should reach-out to the relevant Associate Dean of the School of Graduate Studies to apprise them of the situation and seek their input as well on next steps.

Very often the suggested next step will be a mediated discussion that includes the student, the supervisor and the Director (and sometimes the Associate Dean of the SGS). The goal of this meeting is to develop a comprehensive understanding of the conflict and to develop a shared plan of how to mitigate the conflict in order to move forward constructively. Open-mindedness and flexibility are critical.

If such attempts at resolution are unsuccessful and it is determined that the student-supervisor relationship is no longer tenable, the department will in good faith attempt to find alternative supervision for the student and will keep the SGS apprised of these efforts.

Where the supervisor has been providing funding to the student, that funding should continue for a reasonable period to facilitate continuation of the student's program and the transition to alternative supervision.

If the best efforts of the GAU and the SGS do not satisfy the student, the student may choose to withdraw without prejudice. Alternatively, if these best efforts fail to identify suitable alternative supervision, such that the student's program can no longer be effectively supported, the student may be required to withdraw.

10. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

What exactly is Intellectual Property?

Intellectual property (IP) is the product of intellectual or creative activity that can be protected under the law to some extent. There are various forms of legal protection, but the two which are most likely to be relevant in the University environment are *Copyright* and *Patents*.

Copyright protects original literary, musical, dramatic, or artistic works in a variety of forms, including written materials and computer software. Copyright does not protect ideas, but rather the expression of such ideas. It prevents anyone from copying, publishing, translating, or broadcasting a work without the copyright owner's permission.

Patents protect inventions – that is, creations or discoveries, which are new, not obvious and useful. It applies to many things: devices, chemical compounds, new materials or processes and, in some countries, new life forms, such as transgenic animals.

Intellectual Property for Graduate Students

Students often work closely with faculty members as their supervisors in the conduct of the student's thesis, or when employed by the University as TAs to assist faculty in course delivery, or when employed by a faculty member to assist in the faculty member's research program. Each of these scenarios can have different implications for the Intellectual Property entitlements of the graduate students. It is important therefore to have open discussion and dialog concerning the rights and obligations of graduate students and their faculty supervisors, and how those might sometimes also connect to and be influenced by third parties such as external granting agencies or companies that provide contract research support. A discussion pertaining to Intellectual Property issues relevant to the activities of graduate students should therefore take place at the start of a student's program. This issue is directly addressed in the [Student-Supervisor Checklist](#) alluded to many times throughout this manual.

In having such discussions, it is important to acknowledge from the outset that there can be considerable variation in mentorship practices and thesis research experiences across different graduate programs. For example, in some disciplines (e.g., humanities and social sciences) a student may often pursue their thesis work relatively independently. In contrast, in other disciplines (e.g., some areas of the physical and life sciences), graduate students may often conduct their thesis research as part of a team, which includes their Supervisor but possibly also other graduate students, undergraduate students, post-doctoral fellows, and research assistants or technicians. In the latter team environments, the question of Intellectual Property can be more complicated. For example,

1. Who owns the resulting data, materials or products?
2. If an important discovery is made, who should benefit from the results?
3. Who is entitled to be included as an author or creator of any resulting literary, musical, dramatic, or artistic works?

The responses to these questions are not always straightforward. That is evidence of the progressive and evolving nature of scholarly work and to be expected in a University environment that promotes creativity and collaboration. However, it is also why it is important to have early and open discussions of the Intellectual Property issues emanating from the different activities in which graduate students may engage.

While often not straightforward, there are a few scenarios in which the Intellectual Property entitlements of graduate students are relatively clear. These are:

1. Intellectual Property in Graduate Student Theses.

- Here graduate students hold unconditional *copyright* to their completed theses, project reports, or any other similar work produced as students.

2. Intellectual Property when Graduate Students are Employed by the University.

- When employed as a Graduate Student Teaching Assistant (GSTA), or as a full-course instructor (on CAE contract), the graduate student Employee shall retain ownership and copyright of any lectures or course materials created exclusively by them.
- When employed as a Graduate Student Research Assistant (GSRA) the graduate student's duties may involve a creative contribution to a research project. In this case the Graduate Student Employee and their Employment Supervisor shall, in advance, discuss, agree upon and record in writing (with a copy to the School of Graduate Studies) the proportion of ownership which shall accrue to the employee based upon the planned effort and duration of the employee's involvement.
- In the above two scenarios, graduate students, like UNB faculty, are considered creators of content that they produce and their Intellectual property rights are described in detail in the [Union of Graduate Student Workers Collective Agreement - Article 22](#) and in the [AUNBT Collective Agreement](#) (Article 38). In informal language, the entitlements are the following:

UNB waives any claim to intellectual property developed by Employee(s) through the normal use of UNB resources (or through using no UNB resources). UNB assigns ownership to the creators(s) and all rights of copyrights, patents, industrial designs or trademarks created by them.

For further information on Intellectual Property, consult that section of the SGS website ([Intellectual Property](#))

11. QUICK LINKS

- [General Regulations for Graduate Programs](#)
- [Financial Information](#)
- [Forms](#)
- [PhD Thesis Examination Process](#)
- [Thesis Preparation and Submission](#)

