

Zoology Graduate Program Handbook



**Department of Zoology
University of British Columbia
2021-2022**

Zoology Graduate Program
University of British Columbia
Room 4200, 6270 University Blvd.
Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z4

www.zoology.ubc.ca
zool.gradprgm@ubc.ca

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Overview

Welcome to the Zoology Department of UBC. This handbook is meant as a guide to life as a graduate student in the Zoology Program. It is a resource for information on program policies, expectations of graduate students and supervisors, survival tips for graduate school, and where to turn for support. All students and all supervisors of graduate students should familiarize themselves with these procedures. Questions and suggestions about these procedures can be directed to the Graduate Program Manager or the Graduate Advisors.

For a wide variety of other information, please see the departmental web page at zoology.ubc.ca

Contacts and information sources

Who's who

Department Head

Dr. Vanessa Auld
Tel: (604) 827-3149
Email: head@zoology.ubc.ca

If you have any questions or concerns that cannot be answered by the Graduate Program Manager or Graduate Advisors, do not hesitate to contact the Head.

Graduate Advisors

Mike Gordon
Tel: (604) 827-4854
gordon@zoology.ubc.ca
Room 3.352 Life Sciences Centre

Colin Brauner
Tel: (604) 822-3372
brauner@zoology.ubc.ca

The Graduate Advisors are your first resource for all non-administrative issues that arise during your time in the program. They also serve as chairs of the Graduate Committee.

Graduate Committee

- Mike Gordon
- Colin Brauner
- Leticia Aviles
- Graduate Program Manager

This committee deals with all aspects of the Zoology graduate program, including admissions and awards.

The Zoology Administrative Team (Biological Sciences 4200)

- **Graduate Program Manager:** Mimi Yu
 - Tel: (604) 822-5807
 - email: mimi.yu@ubc.ca and zool.gradprgm@ubc.ca

Mimi is your resource person for all inquiries about graduate school – forms, registration, awards, pay, TA assignments, and so on.

- **Human Resources Manager:** Edythe Grant
 - Tel: (604) 822-6973
 - email: grant@zoology.ubc.ca

Edythe deals with key requisitions, faculty appointments, faculty teaching evaluations, etc.

- **Administrator:** Katie Pikor
 - Tel: (604) 822-3384
 - email: zadmin@zoology.ubc.ca

Contact Katie for non-academic issues, e.g. office space, the elevator not working, your lab has flooded, lights in the office are burned out, and so on.

- **Administrative Support:** Chunwei Huang
 - Tel: (604) 822-2131
 - email: info@zoology.ubc.ca

Chunwei takes care of the mail and reception area, room bookings, TA evaluations, and postdoctoral appointments, etc.

The Zoology Financial Team (Bio Sci 4200)

- **Finance Manager:** Olga Tosin
 - Tel: (604) 822-6895
 - email: tosin@zoology.ubc.ca
- **Senior Financial Specialist:** Jackie Carpio
 - Tel: (604) 822-0871
 - email: finclerk@zoology.ubc.ca

Takes care of travel advances, reimbursements, and petty cash.

Other Important People and Resources

- **Workshops:**
 - Bruce Gillespie (Mechanical) Biosciences 1363

- **Biology Program Office (Undergraduate):**
 - Tammy Tromba and Chanelle Chow, Biosciences Building 1103

- **Zoology Graduate Student Association (ZGSA)**

The ZGSA organize social events throughout the year, as well as the Graduate Student Symposium in April.

- **Zoology Computing Unit (ZCU)**
 - Web site: zoology.ubc.ca/zcu
 - Andy LeBlanc BRC 122, andy@zoology.ubc.ca
 - Jenny Kao BRC, BRC 123 jenny@zoology.ubc.ca
 - Nick Koubrak BRC 121, nick@zoology.ubc.ca

- **Graduate Student Society (GSS)**

- Web site: gss.ubc.ca

The GSS is an organization of graduate students dedicated to serving the academic, social and cultural interests of it's over 10,000 members.

Together with G+PS coordinates orientation sessions for new students during late August/early September.

- **Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (G+PS)**

- Web site: grad.ubc.ca

Coordinates and maintains the quality of all Master's and Doctoral programs at the University. Administers awards and scholarships, as well as policies, procedures, and guidelines for graduate students across the campus. If you have policy questions, check with the Zoology Graduate Program Manager before heading to G+PS.

- **Enrolment Services (Registrar's Office)**

- Web site: students.ubc.ca

- **Equity Office**
 - Web site: equity.ubc.ca

- **Student Health Services**
 - Web site: students.ubc.ca/health/student-health-service

- **Disability Resource Centre**
 - Web site: students.ubc.ca/campus-life/diversity-campus/disability

- **UBC Wellness Resources**
 - Web site: zoology.ubc.ca/graduate-program/wellness-resources

Where should I go for...

Start at the top of each list provided and work your way down if your issue isn't solved.

- **Procedural rules**
 1. This Handbook
 2. [Zoology Graduate Program website](#)
 3. [UBC Graduate Studies website](#)
 4. [Ask Zoology Grad Manager](#)

- **Forms**
 1. [Forms page, Zoology website](#)
 2. [UBC Graduate Studies website](#)
 3. Several key links provided later in this Handbook

- **Signed forms**
 1. Email signed forms to [Zoology Graduate Manager](#)

- **Information about pay**
 1. Check Workday profile
 - Appointment info

- Pay slips (does not differentiate between GRA vs TA appointments)
 - Check bank accounts to confirm amounts
- 2. [Ask Grad Manager](#)

- **Award information**
 1. Check SSC account
 2. [Ask Grad Manager](#)

- **Reimbursements**
 1. Check Workday
 2. Contact [Zoology Finance](#)

- **TA appointments**
 1. taship-application@biology.ubc.ca
 2. [Grad Manager](#)

- **Leaves of absence**
 1. Supervisor
 2. Graduate Advisors

- **Information on postponing tuition payments**
 1. [Apply for tuition deferral](#)
 2. [Ask Grad Manager](#)

- **Problems or conflicts involving supervisor**
 1. Your Supervisory Committee members
 2. Graduate Advisors

- **Problems or conflicts involving other students**
 1. Supervisor
 2. Graduate Advisors

- **Information on EDI**
 1. [EDI resources on Zoology website](#)

- **Wellness resources**
 1. [Find wellness resources on Zoology website](#)

- **Bullying and harassment**
 1. Graduate Advisors
 2. Department Head
 3. [UBC Equity and Inclusion Office](#)
 4. [UBC Office of the Ombudsperson](#)
 5. [UBC Investigations Office](#)

- **Mental health resources**
 1. [UBC Student Health Services](#): (604) 822-7011
 2. [UBC Counselling Services](#): (604) 822-3811
 3. [UBC Student Assistance Program](#): 1-833-590-1328 (toll free)

- **Sexual or gender-based violence, harassment, or harm**
 1. [Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Office](#): (604) 822-1588
 2. [AMS Sexual Assault Support Centre](#): (604) 827-5180
 3. RCMP University Detachment: (604) 224-1322
 4. Vancouver Police: (604) 717-3321
 5. [UBC Investigations Office](#)

- **Human rights complaints**
 1. [UBC Equity and Inclusion Office](#)

Before you arrive

Campus Housing

There are four residences on campus designed to house grad students: Fairview Crescent, Thunderbird, Marine Drive Residence, and Acadia Park. Places are given out on a first come, first served basis so apply early (before Feb 1).

vancouver.housing.ubc.ca

Acadia Park is housing dedicated to students with families:

vancouver.housing.ubc.ca/residences/acadia-park

There are three grad student residences on campus run independently of UBC Housing.

- Green College – greencollege.ubc.ca
- St. John's College – stjohns.ubc.ca
- St. Andrew's Hall – standrews.edu

Off Campus Housing

Several resources are available to help find housing:

- Ask the Zoology Graduate Program Manager or your supervisor to send a notice out to the current grads asking if anyone has a room to rent.
- UV Rentsline – uvrentsline.com
- Housing boards and notices around campus – Grad Student Centre, SUB, at the bus loop, department notice boards, etc.
- Vancouver Sun and Courier classified ads.
- Please also visit [UBC's Living Off Campus web site](#)

Daycare and/or School for your child

UBC has an excellent day care system, as well as after school care and summer care for school age children. Note that waitlists are up to 2 1/2 years, so interim arrangements will likely be necessary. The UBC Child Care web page is:

childcare.ubc.ca

The Vancouver School Board Web page vsb.bc.ca provides school enrollment details and deadlines.

Registration

Student Service Centre (SSC)

- Web site: ssc.adm.ubc.ca

This is where you register for courses, check fees, pay fees online, and keep your address and email information up to date. The address listed here is the one that the Faculty of Graduate Postdoctoral Studies and Enrolment Services (Registrar's Office) will use, so it is essential that you keep it updated.

UBC Payroll office does not have access to student information via the SSC, so it is important that you keep your address and other information updated on Workday.

Registering for Courses

UBC has two academic sessions per year. Winter session runs from September - April (Term 1 starts in September and Term 2 starts in January). The Summer session runs from May - August.

All students must register in their thesis courses two times per year — once in September for the winter session and again in April for the Summer session. Please make sure that you are registered in the thesis course each term.

For the Winter Session:

- The 18-credit MSc thesis course is ZOOL 549, Section 001
- PhD students should register in ZOOL 649, Section 001

For the Summer Session:

- The 18-credit MSc thesis course is ZOOL 549, Section 941
- PhD students should register in ZOOL 649, Section 941

If you have any problems with registering for courses check with the Graduate Program Manager.

Adding/dropping courses

You can add and/or drop one-term courses via the SSC within the first two weeks of term. After that you must complete an add/drop change of registration form (with relevant signatures) and submit it to the Graduate Program Manager.

This form can be found on grad.ubc.ca/forms/registration-change-registration-form

Tuition Fees

Tuition fees for graduate students are paid in three installments annually. If you do not pay these fees on time, your records will be placed on “financial hold”, all registration activities will be blocked, and you will be charged a penalty fee.

Students often find it challenging to make their initial tuition payment while waiting to be paid for a GTA or GRA appointment. Students with these appointments are paid via salary every two weeks, and the first cheque arrives after tuition is due. The situation is out of the Department’s control.

One solution is to apply for a tuition deferral through [UBC Enrolment Services](#). If you cannot provide the proof of compensation that the application asks for, please contact the Zoology Graduate Program Manager.

Note that there are student fees in addition to tuition fees. These include AMS and GSS fees, Medical and Dental Extended Health Plans, Sports and Athletics, U-Pass/Compass Card, etc. Information can be found at grad.ubc.ca/prospective-students/tuition-fees-cost-living/graduate-student-fees

Tuition and fees for the year are subject to adjustment and UBC reserves the right to change them at any time without notice.

PhD students: Faculty of Science is currently covering tuition fees for students in their first four years of their PhD program. To be considered, tuition must not be funded from other sources. PhD students are responsible for paying their tuition fees from the beginning of their 5th year onwards.

The most up-to-date tuition fees for both Canadian and International PhD students can be found on the [UBC Vancouver Academic Calendar](#).

MSc students:

The most up-to-date tuition fees for both Canadian and International MSc students can be found on the [UBC Vancouver Academic Calendar](#).

International Student Award:

An International Tuition Award of up to \$3,200 is given to all International students (both MSc and PhD) who do not have an external scholarship that pays tuition. Further information can be found at grad.ubc.ca/awards/international-tuition-award

How to...

Get a Student card/Library card

Your UBC-card is also your library card. The UBC Card Office is located in the Bookstore. You must be registered to get your library card (register in the thesis course), and need to show a government-issued picture ID. Please see ubccard.ubc.ca for current information on how to apply for your UBC Card

Get a U-Pass/Compass Card

U-Pass/Compass Card: planning.ubc.ca/transportation/transit/u-pass-compass-card

U-Pass has been integrated into the Translink's new Compass Card for UBC students. Please see the link above for details on getting your card and managing your account. You must have a valid UBC Card to have a UPass (if your UBC Card has expired, you'll need to renew it before being able to receive your UPass).

Get keys

To obtain keys, please check with your supervisor. Note that a refundable deposit is required for each key to a maximum of \$80.00 for all keys. You will need to show picture ID when picking up your keys. The deposit will be refunded when the key is returned to Parking and Access Control Services.

Complete Safety Orientation Training

WorkSafeBC and UBC require that you take online safety courses. General information on safety training can be found at srs.ubc.ca/training-and-general-education-courses/mandatory-training-for-all-ubc-workers

Additional training requirements may exist, depending on your building and research lab. Please consult with your supervisor about required training.

Receive mail

Mailboxes are located in Biosci 4213. The bottom row of the mailbox is for incoming mail for grad students, and is sorted alphabetically by last name.

Set up pay

Once the Graduate Manager has set up your first appointment on Workday, you will be prompted to log in and set up your direct deposit information for your GRA and TA pay.

Paycheques for GRA and TA appointments will be deposited as one deposit on the 15th and end of each month (or the closest business day before that date).

Fellowships and awards will be assigned to your SSC account and then sent to you via direct deposit. Please make sure you have direct deposit set up on both SSC and Workday.

Set up Zoology email, computer accounts, and audio-visual equipment

All grad students will need to get a UBC email account - usually in the format lastname@zoology.ubc.ca To get a Zoology account, or for anything to do with ethernet and email services, contact the Zoology Computing Unit (ZCU):

- Andy LeBlanc (BRC 122, (604) 822-6527, andy@zoology.ubc.ca)
- Nick Koubrak (BRC 121, (604) 822-3882, nick@zoology.ubc.ca)
- Jenny Kao (BRC 123, (604) 822-2645, jenny@zoology.ubc.ca)

ZCU will require the Application for Use of the Computing Unit, which can be found at zoology.ubc.ca/files/applic.pdf

See the [ZCU main wiki page](#) for further information on local computing, including changing your password, working off-campus, minimizing spam, obtaining free anti-virus software, cloud storage of files, and accessing the Cluster for high-performance computing.

The ZCU also handles computer, projector and other equipment loans – book these items ahead of time for important events (thesis defences, etc.).

Join mailing lists

Make sure you are added to the “zoograds” mailing list when you sign up for an email account.

See the [ZCU wiki about mailing lists](#) to add yourself to other relevant email lists.

Place orders for lab supplies and equipment

Please consult with your supervisor when ordering supplies.

Find Seminars

Notices are distributed by email and posted on the Zoology website each week advertising upcoming seminars and lectures. Most research groups within the department have their own seminar series on a regular date and time throughout the year.

Subscribe to the “seminars” mailing list by following the instructions [at the ZCU Mail Lists wiki](#). Use this mailing list to announce any and all seminars, instead of posting to multiple lists.

Information for International Students

International House

A good source of information is International Student Advising in the Life Building (6138 Student Union Blvd). If you have any questions regarding visas, health care, etc., you can contact them. Check out their International Student Guide located at students.ubc.ca/international-student-guide.

Also, please check out the UBC Pre-arrival checklist for International Students: students.ubc.ca/new-to-ubc/travelling-to-canada

Social Insurance Number

Once you arrive to Vancouver, drop by Service Canada to apply for a social insurance number or [apply online](#). You will need your study permit, passport and possibly [other documents](#). Service Canada will require these documents in order to issue you the number. Please forward a copy of your study permit and SIN confirmation receipt to the Graduate Program Manager as soon as they are available – you cannot be paid without them.

Note that SIN's have expiry dates that correspond to the study permit expiry date – you must keep both up to date.

More information on applying for a SIN can be found here:

canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/sin/apply.html

Study Permit or Visa

You must provide a copy of your study permit to the Graduate Program Manager as soon as possible – you cannot receive any form of payment from UBC until a copy of the study permit has been submitted. Study permit extensions take some time to process, so plan ahead. Immigration and Citizenship Canada website: canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/study-canada/study-permit.html.

Health Coverage

Basic health insurance covers visits to doctors, hospitals and many medical specialists are free.

Extended Health and Dental Plan (part of your student fees) covers prescription drugs, dental visits, vision care, health practitioners, travel health coverage and more. See calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=14,298,0,0

Basic Health Insurance

You must apply for coverage for the Medical Services Plan as soon as you arrive in BC – there is a waiting period of 3 months from the date of entry to BC, before you are eligible for coverage. Check online for more information at www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/health-drug-coverage/msp/bc-residents/eligibility-and-enrolment/how-to-enrol

All international students are provided with mandatory temporary medical coverage ([iMed](#)) for the first 3 months in the program – the \$225 fee is assessed as part of the student fees.

If you are moving from another province within Canada, you should arrange for coverage with your former medical plan during the wait period.

Extended Health and Dental Plan

Graduate students are automatically enrolled in the AMS/GSS Extended Health and Dental Plan, which requires a fee. Fees are assessed with your student fees. You can opt out if you have proof of equivalent coverage, but you must do it by the deadline – you can find details from the Graduate Student Society at studentcare.ca/rte/en/UniversityofBritishColumbiaAMSGSS_Home.

Funding

Zoology Funding Policy

The Department of Zoology has a minimum funding policy for all Graduate students, which guarantees a minimum stipend. Stipend funding can be from a combination of teaching assistantships (TA) from the Department, awards/scholarships from various sources, and research assistantships (GRA) paid from the supervisor's research grants. Current stipend levels are posted at zoology.ubc.ca/graduate-program/funding. Currently, the minimum stipend for MSc and PhD students is \$28,000.

All students making satisfactory progress will continue to be supported throughout their graduate degree at the minimum level or higher.

All financial support is contingent on satisfactory performance and subject to yearly review as part of your thesis committee meeting.

To achieve the minimum level of support a student may be required to TA up to two terms per year. Graduate students in Zoology are not permitted to TA more than two times in an academic year.

Paying your tuition

Students are responsible for paying their assessed tuition and student fees at the start of each term. Although your stipend is intended to include money to pay for tuition fees, it is important to consider that the timing of pay disbursement can vary. Fellowships may be disbursed at the start of each term, whereas pay cheques are deposited twice per month. **In other words, you may not have received enough pay to cover your full fees at the time those fees are due.** If you have questions or concerns about paying your tuition and student fees or are unable to do so on time, please consult with your supervisor and contact [Student Enrollment Services](#) as far in advance as possible.

Note: Tuition fee deferral may be available to you. Please see students.ubc.ca/enrolment/finances/payroll-deferral

Teaching Assistantships

Applications for TAships usually open in late spring or early summer for the

following academic year. Prospective TAs will be assigned to an appropriate TA position prior to the start of the fall term. Students should contact the instructor directly regarding duties and scheduling issues and contact the Graduate Program Manager as soon as possible about any scheduling conflicts between assigned positions and courses. There is a preference system for hiring TAs, based on length in program and experience (see cupe2278.ca for full details).

The maximum time allowed for TA work is determined through the CUPE collective agreement. The current rules are that the total time commitment for an academic term cannot exceed 192 hours. The average number of hours per week is 12 and the maximum hours per week is 24. One-day duties cannot exceed eight hours without the TAs consent.

Graduate Research Assistantships (GRAs)

Many students are paid Graduate Research Assistantships directly from their supervisor's research grant. This represents a major way in which a student's pay is brought up from the amount given by teaching assistantships and awards to the minimum stipend required by the department.

GRA's are given in support of the student's own research towards their degree. Satisfactory progress towards the student's research is expected for payment of a GRA, but work not related to the student's research program should not be required. Graduate students may be hired for additional wages for work unrelated to their degree, but these wages should not be counted towards their minimum level of support (unless both supervisor and student agree that extra work can be done in lieu of a TA-ship).

All students and other members of each lab, whether paid by GRA or not, are expected to contribute to the shared chores of a lab and to fulfil weekly requirements of the supervisor. The latter category can include lab meetings, one-on-one meetings, seminar attendance, etc. The total time for tasks required by the supervisor can be up to an average of five hours per week across the four academic terms in the year. Thus, because the two winter terms are 15 weeks each and the two summer terms are seven weeks each, supervisors can request a total of 210 hours (42 weeks x 5 hours) for shared lab chores, meetings, seminars, etc. over a 12-month period. Any additional work not directly related to a trainee's own research must be paid either through an hourly wage at the [GTA1 marking rate](#) or through an additional GRA.

Awards

All students are strongly encouraged to apply for all financial awards for which they are eligible. These may include NSERC Scholarships (for Canadians and permanent residents), Affiliated Fellowships, Four Year Doctoral Fellowships, and Killam Doctoral Scholarships. In addition, Zoology will hold a departmental awards competition in the winter.

A list of Award Opportunities can be found at grad.ubc.ca/scholarships-awards-funding/award-opportunities

Travel Awards

Zoology Graduate Student Travel Award

Zoology will give travel awards of up to \$500 each to be used for expenses to attend a conference in the following fiscal year (April 1 - March 31). Application deadline is in December. A set number of awards is available each year and preference may be given to students who have already received or applied for the Graduate Student Travel Fund (below) and those who are presenting a poster or talk at the conference.

Grad Student Travel and Research Dissemination Fund

All graduate students are eligible for the Graduate Student Travel Fund, once per degree program from G+PS. The Fund provides one-time travel/research dissemination support to a maximum of \$500 per graduate student who presents a paper or poster at an official conference or symposium. Full details at grad.ubc.ca/awards/graduate-student-travel-research-dissemination-fund

Graduate student-supervisor working relationships

Guidelines and communication

All students and supervisors should read the [Handbook of Graduate Supervision](#) provided by G+PS, in particular the [The Supervisory Committee](#) section, the [Roles and Responsibilities](#) section, as well as the [The Graduate Thesis](#) section.

Also consult the [Intellectual Property Guide](#) for issues related to intellectual property, plagiarism, and publication.

In addition, the supervisor and students should discuss at the beginning of the term of study such things as:

- Expected work hours, vacation times, etc.
- Frequency and scheduling of regular meetings between supervisor and student
- Lab policies and etiquette, sharing of resources, sharing of lab duties
- Expectations about lab meetings, departmental seminars, journal clubs, etc.
- Policies about opportunities to attend scientific meetings
- Policies about authorship on papers and intellectual property
- Policies about leave (illness, parental, etc.)

Expectations and what to do if they are not being met

Every supervisor and graduate student will have a different relationship, and standards for these relationships differ between fields. Nevertheless, we strongly recommend that all students and supervisors read the [Roles and Responsibilities](#) document from G+PS, which lays out general expectations of supervisors and graduate students.

In addition, the Zoology Graduate Program expects that every student will:

- Have access to regular meetings with their supervisor.
- Receive enough guidance and intellectual support to fulfill the research goals agreed upon by the student/supervisor/committee.
- Receive clear guidance and requirements for graduation from their thesis committee.

- Be treated without bias with respect to (but not limited to) gender, race, age, sexual orientation, gender expression, disability, religious or political affiliations, family status, country of origin, and mental/physical health.
- Have a working environment free from bullying, harassment, and microaggressions.
- Have their scientific contributions recognized fairly (e.g. authorship, acknowledgement, etc.)
- Have lab duties and requirements not directly related to their research limited to 210 hours per 12-month period.
- Have reasonable freedom to direct their research goals within the framework of their supervisor's research program.

If you feel that any of these expectations are not being met, please seek support. How to proceed may depend on the nature of the problem, and some resources for help are listed above in the “where should I go for...” section. However, no matter what the issue, the Graduate Advisors are always available to listen and work on solutions.

Solutions to serious problems in your degree can take many forms, including:

- Identifying concrete actions to work around the problem.
- Mediated meetings between involved parties.
- Having an advocate (usually Graduate Advisor) present at a meeting (usually a committee meeting).
- Changing the composition of the Supervisory committee to create more support.
- Referral to other sources of support who are trained in dealing with specific issues (e.g. bullying, authorship disputes).
- In irreconcilable cases, a student may be switched to a new supervisor.

Supervisory committees

All graduate students are required to have a Supervisory Committee. Supervisory committees are to be composed primarily of research faculty members belonging to the Zoology graduate program who hold tenure stream professorial board

appointments. Research Faculty, Associate Members, and Emeriti are included under this label, but Adjunct and Affiliate Members are not (see zoology.ubc.ca/people to learn about the appointments of various Zoology faculty members). Adding any committee member who does not have a research, tenure stream professorial board appointment at UBC requires the approval of the Graduate Advisor and [G+PS](#). The proposed committee member must:

- 1) Provide expertise that is not already available from a UBC faculty member.
- 2) Provide an independent voice from other committee members.
- 3) Have the qualifications to supervise graduate research at the standard of excellence at UBC.

A memo from the supervisor addressing all three criteria is required for approval.

Zoology Master's students must have a minimum of three faculty members on their committee (including the supervisor). One committee member can be either an Adjunct Member of the Zoology graduate program ([list of Adjunct Members](#)) or a non-Zoology UBC research faculty with a tenure stream professorial board appointment.

Zoology Doctoral students must have a minimum of four faculty members on their committee (including the supervisor). One committee member can be either an Adjunct Member of the Zoology graduate program ([list of Adjunct Members](#)) or a non-Zoology UBC research faculty with a tenure stream professorial board appointment. Adding a second faculty member from outside of the Zoology graduate program to a PhD committee requires a formal request and written permission from the Graduate Advisor.

Supervisory committees must conform to the policies listed in this section and should be formed within the first academic term. Consult with your supervisor regarding faculty members suitable to act as members of your committee. Choice of members of the supervisory committee is a joint decision between the student and supervisor. Once your supervisory committee has been formed, you are required to fill out the [Supervisory Committee Form](#), which must be signed by the student, the supervisor, and the Graduate Advisor. The same form must be used to indicate any change in the supervisory committee.

Degree Progress

Annual Committee Meetings

Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies requires that graduate students meet with their full committee at least once a year. **Students who have not had a supervisory committee meeting within the previous 12 months are not eligible for awards, and their supervisors are not eligible to accept new graduate students.** All new students are encouraged to meet with their committee within the first six months of starting the program.

Prior to a committee meeting, students should provide the members of the committee with a brief progress report of 1-2 pages. If the first meeting of the supervisory committee occurs within six months of the program start date, the student can provide a brief introduction and training history with a general plan for research. For PhD supervisory committee meetings that also serve as the proposal defence, the student will provide the full dissertation proposal instead of the brief progress report. For all other supervisory committee meetings, the short progress report should include the following content: (1) date the student started in the program, (2) list of course taken and grades, (3) summary of research conducted so far, (4) research plan for the future, (5) sources of funding, and (6) papers published or in preparation.

Supervisory committee meetings will normally last 1 hour. Students should deliver a brief presentation at the start of the meeting on research progress and future planning. The rest of the time is normally left for open discussion.

After each supervisory committee meeting, the [Committee Meeting Form](#) and the Student Progress Report must be submitted to the Graduate Program Manager.

Leaves of absence

Leave can be granted for personal, health, professional, or other reasons when a student is best advised to have time completely away from their academic responsibilities. The leave period is not counted as part of the time period for completion of the degree. Leave is normally one year or less. A leave will begin on the first day of term, for a period of four, eight or 12 months. International graduate students should consult International Student Advising before pursuing a leave of absence to understand the impact on their ability to stay in Canada, study permit, and later post-graduation plans.

A [request for leave](#) must be submitted to the department in writing and must be approved by G+PS. Leave policies are set by the University ([see here for details](#)).

Your supervisor cannot prevent you taking leave, but may be able to provide additional support. Whether and what form the additional support takes should be discussed between the student and supervisor. More information is available here: grad.ubc.ca/current-students/managing-your-program/leave-absence

Parental leave

A graduate student who is bearing a child or who has primary responsibility for the care of an infant or young child immediately following a birth or adoption of a child is eligible for parental leave. A [request for parental leave](#) should be made through the student's Department for a minimum leave of four months to a maximum leave of twelve months. The leave period is not counted in the time period for completion of the degree.

Extensions

MSc students are expected to complete their degree in approximately two years, and PhD students within five years. If an MSc is not completed within five years or a PhD is not completed within six years, an extension will be required. If an extension is needed, the research supervisor must make a request to the department Graduate Advisor. The request must explain the reasons for the extension and include a detailed timeline for completion. Extension requests will not be approved without a committee meeting in the prior 12 months and the timeline for completion must be approved by the supervisory committee. For more information visit: grad.ubc.ca/current-students/managing-your-program/program-extensions

Courses

A minimum of 68% must be obtained in any course taken by a graduate student. However, up to 6 credits of coursework with grades of 60-67% may be counted towards a master's program without penalty. See below for more details.

Zoology 548 Graduate Modules

Most years, the Zoology program offers nine one credit graduate modules.

Three of the modules cover general skills in Zoology: Science Writing (BIOL 548I), Visual and Oral Presentations (BIOL 548L), and Dealing with Data (BIOL 548O).

Three of the modules teach concept in Ecology: Community Ecology (BIOL 548G), Ecosystem Ecology (BIOL 548J), and Population Ecology (BIOL 548M).

Three of the modules cover concepts in Comparative Physiology: Ethics in Animal Research (BIOL 548P), Metabolic rates and Measurements (BIOL 548Q), and Mass and Temperature Effects on Metabolic Rates (BIOL 548S).

Please refer to the [Zoology Website](#) for up-to-date listings of module offerings.

Other relevant courses

The three-credit course Quantitative Methods in Ecology and Evolution (BIOL 501) covers data analysis and study design concepts as well as workshops on the R scripting language. It is recommended for all Zoology students.

Other three credit courses include BIOL 530: Cell Biology and BIOL 509: Population Genetics.

[A list of graduate courses relevant to Zoology](#) students is available on the Zoology Website.

Directed Studies

A directed studies course (Zoology 500) must be approved by the Graduate Advisor. It is an ideal vehicle for students to study with different faculty and expand their knowledge into a specific area that is not covered by an existing course. The workload is similar to that in other courses, as is the expected grade. The grade assigned must

be based, in part, on written work.

Master's Students

Master's students are required to complete a minimum of 30 credits, made up of 18 credits of thesis and 12 credits of coursework. At least nine of these 12 credits must be at the 500 level, but the remaining three credits can be at the 300-400 level.

Coursework is initially set through consultation with the student's supervisor, but the supervisory committee may also have suggestions. Three credits of Directed Studies (ZOOL 500) may be taken.

Master's students must obtain a minimum of 60% in any course to be granted pass standing, but only 6 credits of pass standing are counted towards the master's program. For all other courses, a minimum of 68% must be obtained. If a student repeats a failed required course, a minimum mark of 74% is required. A student whose grade does not improve by repeating the course or taking an alternate course may be required to withdraw from your graduate program. For more information, visit: grad.ubc.ca/current-students/managing-your-program/satisfactory-progress-masters-students.

Doctoral Students

Doctoral students who enter with a Master's degree are not required to take any courses. However, the supervisory committee may recommend that the student take courses relevant to his or her area of research.

Students entering directly from a Bachelor's degree must, during the first year of study, complete 12 credits with a first class average of which at least nine credits must be at the 500 level, to maintain registration as a doctoral student. Master's students who wish to transfer to the PhD program must also, by G+PS rules, complete 12 credits of coursework.

Students are required to complete all courses with a passing grade of 68%. By G+PS policy, students failing a course require a departmental recommendation to continue. A student who obtains more than one grade below 68% will normally be required to withdraw. For more information, visit: grad.ubc.ca/current-students/managing-your-program/satisfactory-progress-doctoral-students

Being a Master's student

Degree requirements

A Master's degree is expected to take approximately two years.

The M.Sc. degree requires a combination of course work and research for a total of 30 credits. Twelve (12) credits of courses are typically taken, with the remaining 18 credits being thesis research. Single courses typically range from 1-3 credits each. Students have considerable flexibility in their choice of courses including graduate and senior undergraduate courses in Zoology, Botany, Microbiology, Cell and Developmental Biology, Fisheries, Genetics, Conservation, and Earth and Oceans Sciences, as well as several other departments.

M.Sc. students are also required to conduct research towards their degrees. Although research conceived independently of the student's supervisor is encouraged, the minimum requirement for the M.Sc. degree is to successfully complete directed research. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to provide a suitable project that can be completed within two years.

The project should be of publishable quality, but need not extend beyond the equivalent of a single paper and may constitute part of a larger body of work.

Consult the G+PS pages for further information on thesis preparation:
grad.ubc.ca/current-students/dissertation-thesis-preparation

Transferring to a PhD

To transfer to the PhD program without completing the MSc, a student needs to meet the following requirements:

- The student must have completed 12 credits of course-work with a First-class average (80%+) within the first 18 months of study.
- After completion of the required coursework, and within 18 months of starting date, the MSc supervisory committee (minimum three members) must recommend in writing to the Graduate Advisor that the student be transferred to the PhD program. This is usually accomplished as part of a committee meeting form. The committee should discuss who to add to the committee (four total members required) and submit a revised [supervisory committee form](#).
- A PhD thesis proposal must be approved at a meeting by the full four-person

committee. The Department will then make a recommendation to the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies for this transfer. A [transfer to PhD form](#) should be filled by the student and supervisor, signed and then sent to the Graduate Manager for additional signatures and forwarding to G+PS. All transfers have to be approved by the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

- Once the thesis proposal has been approved, the Comprehensive Exam can be scheduled to take place no sooner than two weeks from the date of approval. Students are expected to complete their exam and advance to candidacy within 24 months of starting graduate school at UBC, even for students transferring from the MSc to PhD program.

Master's Thesis Defence

M.Sc. exams are scheduled by the Graduate Program Manager. After approval by the Supervisor, copies of the thesis must be distributed to the members of the student's Supervisory Committee for approval, with at least two weeks allowed for reading and comments. After the thesis has been approved by the committee the exam may be scheduled. One PDF copy of the thesis must be given to the Graduate Program Manager, together with the signed [Master's Thesis Approval Form](#). A minimum of two weeks must be allowed between submission of the thesis to the Graduate Program Manager and the examination.

The MSc Examining Committee will be Chaired by a faculty member who has not been directly associated with the preparation of the thesis. The examining committee will be comprised of the research supervisor, one committee member, a Departmental examiner, and the Chairperson. The Chairperson is responsible to the Head of the Department and to the Faculty of Graduate Studies, and acts as moderator of the exam.

The MSc examination serves as a departmental review of the candidate and his/her research. An audience is welcome and encouraged. It will proceed as follows:

1. The student will present a brief summary of the thesis (not to exceed 25 minutes in length).
2. Members of the audience should be asked if they have any questions for the candidate. Following these questions, a short break should be announced to allow any members of the audience to leave if they desire.
3. Each examiner should ask questions for 15-20 min, with the option of a brief

second round for follow-up questions. The Chairperson May ask a question or two out of interest or for purposes of clarification but is not normally expected to do so.

4. Following the examination, the candidate and audience members will be asked to leave the room and the Committee will hold an *in camera* session. The Chairperson will ask the Supervisor to give an opinion of the student and the student's performance during the examination.
5. At this it will be at the Chairperson's discretion to ask the supervisor to submit either a pass or fail grade and leave the room. If the supervisor is asked to leave, the written grade will not be revealed to the other Committee Members but will be included in the final determination.
6. Each of the remaining members of the Committee will then assign either a pass or fail for the thesis. The Chairperson does not vote. The examining Committee may recommend that the thesis is acceptable in the form presented, or it may request changes be made to the thesis before the title page is signed. Responsibility for ensuring that such changes are made will lie with the Supervisor.
7. At this point if the thesis is deemed "outstanding" a note should be made in the chair report that the committee feels the thesis should be put forward for a thesis award and the rationale for doing so.
8. A fail will be assigned if at least two of the three examiners assign a failing grade and must be accompanied by a written summary outlining the reasons for this decision. There is no recourse for a student who fails the exam.
9. The Chairperson will then recall the student (and Supervisor) and announce the decision. The Chairperson May ask at this time that the Thesis Approval Form be signed by the Committee or may ask that the student first make required revisions.
10. The Chairperson will complete a M.Sc. Examination Report and submit it, with the supervisor's signature, to the Graduate Secretary in a timely manner.

After members of the Examining Committee have signed the [Thesis Approval Form](#), the candidate will submit the thesis electronically as a single pdf file to Faculty of Graduate Studies through the UBC online information, [clRcle](#). The thesis grade will not be entered until the final copy of the thesis is received.

Being a PhD student

Degree Requirements

Original research supervised by a faculty member constitutes the major component of work toward the Ph.D. degree. Ph.D. students are not required to complete course work unless it is recommended by the thesis committee *or* unless the student has been admitted without a Master's degree, in which case 12 credits of coursework are required by G+PS rules. All Ph.D. students are expected to have their research proposal approved and pass a comprehensive examination on their research area within 24 months of registering at the University. If a student does not advance to candidacy within 36 months, they may have to withdraw. Extensions are possible in exceptional circumstances: grad.ubc.ca/current-students/managing-your-program/advancement-candidacy

Each Ph.D. student is expected to deliver a one-hour lecture on their completed doctoral research in one of the departmental lecture series before their doctoral dissertation examination. This must be *scheduled* before the department will forward the dissertation to Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

Proposal

Each Ph.D. student is required to submit to the department a research proposal that has been accepted by his/her supervisor and Supervisory Committee prior to scheduling the comprehensive exam. The comprehensive examination is separate and distinct from the evaluation of the thesis proposal.

The candidate is expected to review the literature and develop the questions and methodologies to be used in the research carried out for the dissertation requirement of the PhD degree. The proposal *should not* exceed 25 double-spaced pages in length, using a 12-point font size. The proposal might spend 5-10 pages on background and 3-4 pages on each on 3-4 projects, discussing research questions and methods. Different fields tend to follow slightly different formats for their proposals, and students are encouraged to discuss the most effective format with their supervisor.

General procedures:

1. The student should discuss the contents of the proposal with his/her supervisor.
2. The supervisor should then approve a draft of the proposal before it is sent to the Supervisory Committee. This reading should be done in a timely fashion by the

supervisor (within two weeks of receiving the draft). Committee members should be advised ahead of time that the proposal will be given to them on a particular date, so that time conflicts can be addressed.

3. The Supervisory Committee should be given hard copies of the proposal and allowed a minimum of two weeks for reading and comments.
4. The student and Supervisory Committee should meet to discuss the contents of the proposal and the proposed research. This meeting should be a discussion, not an examination, but the committee must be able to make a decision about whether the proposed thesis is feasible for the student to do. At the end of this meeting, the committee should make a decision (*in camera* if requested by any member) about whether to approve the proposal. Until the proposal is accepted, the student may not proceed with the Comprehensive Exam. The Comprehensive Exam cannot be *officially* scheduled until the proposal is approved, although a projected time may be set to be left free in everyone's calendars
5. To allow time for preparation for the Comprehensive Exam, the committee meeting to discuss the research proposal should be held no less than two weeks in advance of the Comprehensive Exam. Thus, the Supervisory committee should be given the proposal no less than four weeks prior to the expected date of the Comprehensive Exam. Many proposals require some re-writing before approval, so allowing even more time before the expected Comprehensive Exam date is recommended.

Comprehensive Exam

All PhD students are required to take an oral comprehensive exam given by at least 4 members of their supervisory committee. To schedule a comprehensive exam, students must use the [Comprehensive Examination Checklist](#).

Purpose: The comprehensive exam serves two functions: (1) to create an opportunity for general learning in student's field of study and (2) to evaluate the preparation of the student for doctoral level study.

Scope: The comprehensive examination is intended to test the student's understanding of the chosen field of study as a whole and the student's preparation for the thesis

research to follow. This examination is not a thesis defence and is not designed to query the specifics of the student's proposed research. The examination will cover the general area of the student's research. Each candidate is expected to be able to discuss any other areas that are closely related to their own research work.

Timing: Students are expected to complete their examination within 24 months of initial registration. Thus, an MSc student who transfers to the PhD degree program after one year will have only 12 months after the date of transfer to complete the examination. Students are advised to complete the examination before becoming deeply involved in their research work.

A student who is not admitted to candidacy within 36 months from date of initial registration may be required to withdraw from the program. Extensions to this deadline are possible under certain circumstances. Please check with the Graduate Manager.

Scheduling: You must include the exam Chair (currently Eric Taylor, etaylor@zoology.ubc.ca) in the initially scheduling emails and polls. If you wait to contact the Chair until *after* you have scheduled your exam, you risk having to reschedule it if the Chair is not available. If the exam Chair is a member of your committee (and thus cannot chair the exam), you must contact and include in the scheduling emails and polls one of several alternate Chairs. Currently, alternate Chairs are Colin Brauner (brauner@zoology.ubc.ca), Linda Matsuuchi (matsuuchi@zoology.ubc.ca) and Michael Gordon (gordon@zoology.ubc.ca).

Requirements and preparation

Readings: Before taking the comprehensive exam, it is recommended that students contact all members of their committees *at least two to three months in advance of the expected exam date* for suggestions on readings and other preparation for the exam.

Proposal: Before taking the comprehensive exam, a student must submit to the department a written research proposal which has been approved by his/her supervisor and Supervisory Committee. See "proposal" section above for more details.

Presentation: At the beginning of the examination, the student will present a 15-20 minute talk on the background of the questions discussed in the proposals. This presentation should discuss the state of knowledge about the questions in the defence and defend the reasons for asking those questions. This presentation is not meant to be

a discussion of the methodology in the proposal, which should be discussed in a normal committee meeting leading up to the exam.

Examination committee: The Examination Committee will consist of all members of the Supervisory committee (minimum of 4) plus the Chair. To schedule a Comprehensive Exam, please follow the instructions in the [Comprehensive Examination Checklist](#). If one member of the supervisory committee is not available because of leave, substitution may be made upon the advice of the Graduate Advisor or arrangements made for teleconferencing. Although the supervisory committee may include members who do not hold professional board appointment in the research stream, pass or fail decisions will be made by UBC research faculty members only.

Examination protocol: The exam will begin by a brief introduction by the Chair. The student will then present a 15-20 minute (or certainly no more than 30 min) discussion of the questions involved in his/her proposal (see above). Each member of the examination committee will then be given 15 minutes for questions assessing the student's general knowledge of the subject area. The supervisor is the last one to ask questions and the Chair does not pose questions. Then each committee member will be given the opportunity for a second round of questions, not to exceed five minutes each. This second round is intended for clarification of issues previously raised and not for new lines of questioning except in unusual circumstances.

Results of the examination: Following the examination, the committee will hold an in-camera session and the candidate will be asked to retire from the room. The Supervisor will be asked to discuss the candidate in general, but will not register an opinion on pass or fail until after all other committee members have discussed the exam and registered an opinion. The Supervisor *may* then be asked to retire from the meeting. The remaining Committee members will discuss the candidate and then vote which, if necessary, may be by written secret ballot. The pass/fail decision made by the Supervisor will not be revealed to the Committee members until after completion of their discussion and vote.

The pass/fail decision will be by simple majority of the votes cast by members of the Examination Committee. In the event of a tie, the deciding vote will be cast by the Chair.

In the event of a marginal pass, the committee may apply conditions (e.g., course work, directed readings). The committee must then determine the arrangements for ensuring

that the conditions are met. These should be included in the Chair's report.

The Chair will then recall the candidate and Supervisor to the meeting and announce the result of the vote. Written notification of the decision made by the Examination Committee will be sent to the Head of the Department.

The candidate will either pass or fail the examination. A candidate who fails the first attempt must pass a second examination that will be scheduled to take place within six months of the first examination. Failure to pass a second examination will result in the student being required to withdraw from the graduate program.

Once a pass is achieved, students should fill out the [advancement to candidacy form](#) and send it to the Graduate Manager for processing and forwarding to G+PS.

Dissertation and dissertation defence

PhD dissertations and defences follow UBC-wide protocols. The following links provide additional information.

Dissertation & Thesis Preparation: grad.ubc.ca/current-students/dissertation-thesis-preparation

Final Dissertation & Thesis Submission: grad.ubc.ca/current-students/final-dissertation-thesis-submission

The Doctoral Dissertation exam is administered through the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. Information about the deadlines and protocols for these examinations can be found at the G+PS website at grad.ubc.ca/current-students/final-doctoral-examination. Note that the deadlines for scheduling these exams are sometimes quite early in the term.

MSc Timeline Checklist

First month

- Meet with supervisor to discuss expectations of both the student, and supervisor, degree requirements, policies and timelines. (*recommended*)
- Introductory meeting with supervisory committee (minimum attendance: supervisor and one committee member), to discuss coursework, composition of committee, research plan. (*recommended*)

First two terms

- Full committee established. Three faculty members including supervisor, at least two members from Zoology. Students should check with the Graduate Program Manager to determine if committee members fulfill the Zoology requirement.
- Begin coursework. 12 credits must be completed within the M.Sc. degree. Note 12 credits must be completed within the first 18 months if upgrading to PhD. (*G+PS/Zoology requirement*).
- Apply for scholarship funding, if eligible. NSERC and Affiliated Fellowships have the same application process, with a deadline in mid-September (*recommended*)
- Identify research project. If this has not occurred within first 8 months, the supervisor must provide a project which can be completed in a reasonable (<18 months) time. (*Zoology requirement*).
- Convene committee meeting to discuss proposed research. (*G+PS requirement: at least one committee meeting every 12 months*).
- Begin research.

Second year

- If you and your supervisor wish you to upgrade to a PhD, ensure that you have completed the necessary requirements within first 18 months.
- Convene committee meeting to discuss research results from first year, possible further research, timeline to thesis completion (*G+PS requirement: at least one committee meeting every 12 months*).

- Complete research.
- The student will complete writing the thesis by the end of the second year.

Thesis submission

- Approval by supervisor. This may be an iterative process.
- Submit to supervisory committee members, at least two weeks before approval required.
- Obtain approval by supervisory committee.
- Identify members of the examining committee with help from the Graduate Program Manager (supervisor, one other member from supervisory committee, and departmental examiner). Schedule thesis defence date and time.
- Submit approved version to members of the M.Sc. examining committee at least two weeks before defence date.
- Examination (see section above).
- Submission of signed thesis approval form and final thesis (electronically as a single pdf file to Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies through the UBC online information, cIRcle, and one hard copy to the Zoology Graduate Program).

PhD Timeline Checklist

First month

- Meet with supervisor to discuss expectations of both student and supervisor, degree requirements, policies and timelines. (*recommended*)
- Introductory meeting with committee (minimum attendance: supervisor and one committee member), to discuss coursework, composition of committee, research plan. (*recommended*)

First two terms

- Full committee established. Four faculty members including supervisor, where one member can be non-Zoology. Addition of a second non-Zoology member requires written justification and subsequent approval by the Grad Program. Students should check with the Graduate Program Manager to determine if committee members fulfill the Zoology requirements and submit the [supervisory committee form](#).
- Begin any coursework the committee has recommended or required for students without Master's degrees. Must be completed with a passing grade (68%). (*G+PS: no formal course requirement, unless recommended by committee. If entering without MSc degree - 12 credits required, See section on 'Courses' above*).
- Apply for scholarship funding, if eligible. NSERC, Affiliated Fellowships, and Killam scholarships have the same application process, with a deadline in mid-September. Four-year fellowships are often awarded during admissions, but some are available for current students. Students in their first year of the PhD program or who have transferred from the MSc program in the past year may be considered for Four-year fellowships in January or February when Zoology Graduate Fellowships are also awarded. (*recommended*)
- Identify research project.
- Obtain reading list for comprehensive exam from each committee member. Begin preparations.
- Convene committee meeting to discuss proposed research. (*G+PS requirement: at least one committee meeting every 12 months*).

- Begin research.

By end of first 16 months

- Prepare the research proposal, obtain approval from supervisor. Give committee heads up that the proposal is coming their way at least a week in advance, to ensure that everyone is in town. Distribute to committee members at least two weeks in advance of committee meeting. (*Zoology requirement*)
- Convene committee meeting to discuss proposed research and the suitability of the research proposal. The committee must approve the research proposal at least two weeks before officially scheduling the comprehensive exam. (*Zoology requirement*)

By end of first 24 months

- Comprehensive exam within 24 months of starting PhD. (*G+PS/Zoology requirement*).
- To schedule a comprehensive exam, students must check with the Graduate Program Manager.

Following years.

- Convene regular committee meetings to discuss research results from first year, further research plans, coursework and timeline to thesis completion (*G+PS requirement: at least one committee meeting every 12months*).
- Complete research.
- Ideally, the student will complete writing the thesis by the end of the fourth year.

Thesis submission.

- At least three months before completing the thesis, submit external examiner form to G+PS.
- Approval by supervisor. This may be an iterative process.

- Submit to supervisory committee members, at least two weeks before approval required.
- Obtain approval by supervisory committee.
- Identify members of the examining committee (supervisor, external examiner, two university examiners, Two to three members of supervisory committee, chair). Schedule thesis defence date >8 weeks after submission of thesis to G+PS.

Examination (see *G+PS regulations*).

- Submission of thesis approval form and final thesis (electronically as a single pdf file to Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies through the UBC online information, cIRcle, and one hard copy to the Zoology Graduate Program).

Forms

All of the following forms can be found at zoology.ubc.ca/graduate-program/student-handbook-and-forms

[Supervisory Committee Form](#)

This form should be submitted to the Graduate Program Manager when you are creating or making changes to your supervisory committee.

[Committee Meeting Form](#)

This form should be taken to your annual committee meetings and signed by your supervisor and each committee member. The form must then be returned to the Graduate Program Manager.

[Directed Studies \(ZOOL 500\) Approval Form](#)

Use this form to request enrollment in the Directed Studies courses. This form should be submitted to the Graduate Program Manager.

[MSc Thesis Approval Form](#)

This form should be submitted to the Graduate Program Manager once your committee has approved your thesis for defence.

[PhD Thesis Approval Form](#)

This form should be submitted to the Graduate Program Manager once your committee has approved your thesis for defence.

[Comprehensive Examination Checklist](#)

This checklist should be followed when arranging and scheduling your research proposal and comprehensive exam.

When you are in need of additional support

Completing a graduate degree, at the best of times, is a challenging endeavor. Sometimes, you'll need help to stay on track. This is normal. Below are a number of resources available to support your success and well-being while you pursue your degree. This list is not exhaustive but hopefully can point you in a helpful direction:

Grad Advisors and Advocates

Sometimes you'll face a challenge with no immediately obvious solution. After reviewing the handbook, if you find yourself in this position, you can reach out to the program [mentorship team](#) composed of the Grad Advisors and graduate student advocates. These faculty members are available to assist with any issues that arise concerning mentoring, degree progress, or well-being. At least one person is available in each primary Zoology building: Dolph Schluter and Sally Otto in BRC; Colin Brauner in Biosci; Mike Gordon in LSC. However, all are available to anyone in the program. These mentors can provide confidential support and help connect you to additional resources.

Wellness resources

[Botany and Zoology Wellness Initiative](#)

Additional wellness resources ([link to Zoology webpage](#))

Zoology Graduate Student Association

The ZGSA is a student organization that serves Zoology grad students and represents their interests to the broader community in the department and beyond. Current officer information can be found [here](#). The ZGSA hosts new student orientation, organizes social events (e.g. Halloween and Christmas parties), represents grad student interests and concerns at faculty meetings, among other functions. Participating in the ZGSA and ZGSA-led community events and initiatives is a great way to connect with peers across the department.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion for Trainees (E.D.I.T.) Zoology

E.D.I.T. Zoology is a trainee-led group seeking to build an inclusive, equitable, diverse and just community in the Zoology department. We provide support through interpersonal relationships, community building, group actions, and education. EDIT meets weekly to discuss, plan, and work on EDI initiatives. All trainees are welcome to attend the meetings and contribute to the work that EDIT does, which includes projects such as lobbying for new policy and planning EDI symposia. EDIT also runs the Anti-Racist Reading Group (ARRG), which meets every other week to discuss EDI training modules, books, and podcasts. Looking forward to seeing new and familiar faces at both EDIT and ARRG meetings. Contact us at edit@zoology.ubc.ca or via twitter @EditZoologyUbc, and sign up for our list serve:

- To join the EDIT mailing list, send an email to edit-list-request@zoology.ubc.ca from your own account with the word "subscribe" in the subject line, without the quotation marks.
- To remove yourself from the EDIT mailing list, send an email to edit-list-request@zoology.ubc.ca from your own account with the word "unsubscribe" in the subject line, without the quotation marks. EDIT is an action-oriented and education-oriented group focused on EDI-initiatives at the graduate and postdoctoral level.

Graduate Student Society

- The GSS advocates on policies on behalf of the broader UBC graduate student body.
- Orientation events every term
- Various events throughout year
- Various classes at discounted prices
- Various services and resources
- More information [here](#).

Cost of living calculator: Can you survive as a Zoology grad student?

Graduate and postgraduate studies [cost of living calculator](#).

For reference, [a link to current Zoology funding policy](#).

Support for equity-seeking groups

- Wellness: healingincolour.com
- Campus/community groups
 - The equity and inclusion office at UBC is a fantastic resource with lots of text and in-person support available
 - A list of community resources equity.ubc.ca/get-involved/community-networks/
 - AMS affiliated student groups
 - [UBC Black Student Union](#)
 - [Color Connected Against Racism Collective](#)
 - [UBC Pride Collective](#)
 - [Women's Centre](#)

Disability support and community

Additional community resources and support can be found [here](#).

Student Life

Zoology Events

Zoology New Student Orientation
Zoology Faculty Fall Research Symposium
Zoology Graduate Student Mentoring Program
Zoology Halloween party and pumpkin carving
Zoology Christmas party and Huts skit
Spring Graduate Student Symposium
Wellness Symposium
Zoology Town Hall meetings

UBC Recreation

Various fitness class membership
Gym membership
Intramurals
Sports Clubs
Ability to use/book/rent fitness spaces
For more info: recreation.ubc.ca