

## Foreword

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The Graduate programmes of the Philosophy Department are governed by the regulations of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies of the University of Ottawa. Students are expected to consult the Calendar of the Faculty for the details of the general regulations and procedures.

The regulations of the Office of the Vice-Dean Research are basic requirements which apply to all graduate programmes at the University. Consistent with these are additional regulations and policies of the Department of Philosophy, for which this guide is an essential reference.

## Administration of the Department and Graduate Studies

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The Graduate Studies Committee of the Department is composed of two faculty members, the Department Chairperson, and the Director of Graduate Studies, who also chairs the Committee. This Committee is responsible, at the departmental level, for assessing applications for admission to graduate programs, as well as applications for graduate scholarships, such as the Ontario Graduate Scholarship and the M.A. and Ph.D. scholarships offered by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

The Committee examines and approves proposed pairings of students with research supervisors, as well as the proposed composition of thesis committees. The Graduate Studies Committee also oversees the revision of graduate programs and recommends to the Steering Committee fields of specialization to be developed and graduate courses to be offered. The Committee consults with graduate student representatives as appropriate.

## Programmes and Regulations

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### a) Programmes offered

The Department of Philosophy offers graduate programmes leading to the M.A. (With or without thesis) and the Ph.D. in Philosophy.

There is also a programme of qualifying study that prepares students for admission to the M.A. when they lack the necessary background, and a programme of accelerated admission to the Ph.D. after only a year at the M.A. level.

### b) Master's Programme (M.A.)

#### i) Admission requirements:

Candidates must have an Honours B.A. in Philosophy (or the equivalent) with at least a B average (70%). The Department may require an entrance examination.

An application dossier must include official transcripts, two letters of recommendation and a sample of written work.

Qualifying programme: Candidates lacking the necessary background in philosophy can gain admission to the Master's programmes by way of a period of qualifying studies. The qualifying programme may involve as many as ten courses at the undergraduate level. Upon satisfactory completion of the qualifying programme, candidates must apply for a new admission to the Master's programme.

## ii) Degree Requirements:

Master's programme with thesis:

- 5 courses\* (unless otherwise stated, 'course' means 'three-credit course').
- Approval of thesis project
- Thesis and defence

Master's programme without thesis:

- 8 courses
- In exceptional cases, students may fulfill some of their course requirements by taking courses in another department.

## iii) Residence:

It is possible to prepare for the M.A. entirely on a part-time basis. A part-time student cannot take more than two courses per session.

## iv) Duration:

The Department encourages full-time M.A. students to complete the degree requirements within two years. Charts showing the recommended sequences for completion may be found further down this page.

## c) Doctoral Programme (Ph.D.)

### i) Admission Requirements :

Candidates must have an M.A. in Philosophy (or the equivalent with at least a B+ average (75%).

An application dossier must include official transcripts, two letters of recommendation, a description of the intended field or research, and a sample of written work. Candidates wishing to enter the Ph.D. Programme without an M.A. degree must include a detailed statement of research plans in their application dossier.

**Accelerated Admission:** The Department offers to students enrolled in the Master's Programme in philosophy the possibility of an accelerated entrance to the Doctoral Programme. Accelerated admission requires the completion of six courses with a minimum A- average (80%) and a major research paper. Normally these requirements can be fulfilled within twelve months. Candidates accepted into the Ph.D. Programme by this accelerated route do not require an M. A. Degree.

### ii) Degree Requirements for the Doctorate (Ph.D.):

- 6 courses
- Candidacy exam
- Approval of thesis project
- Thesis and defence

### iii) Residence:

Students in the Ph.D. Programme must spend at least four sessions (not necessarily consecutive) in residence as full-time students.

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\* Starting September 2023.

#### iv) Duration:

The Department encourages full-time Ph.D. students to complete the degree requirements within four years, although a fifth year may be necessary in some instances. See also page 22 for diagrams of sequence of completing requirements.

#### d) Language Requirements (for all programmes)

Proficiency in both English and French is strongly encouraged so that students may take advantage of the full range of activities -- lectures, personal contacts and courses -- available in the Department. (Graduate courses are normally not duplicated in the two languages).

To be eligible for a graduate degree, all students must satisfy a second-language requirement. For anglophone students, this can be done in three ways:

- Passing (50%) the FLS 1000 exam; OR
- Completing 6 credits of FLS courses at your level (as determined by the Official Languages and Bilingualism Institute); OR
- Successfully completing a Philosophy graduate seminar given in French. (N.B. As per University regulations, students may write examinations and papers in the official language of their choice.)

Ph.D students must have sufficient mastery of languages to carry out properly their research project; that is, they must be capable of studying texts in the original language.

## Components of Programmes and Sequences of Completion

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### a) Courses

A Graduate course consists of a three hours of contact per week between professors and students (for a period of at least 13 weeks).

In each programme, normally no more than two courses may be completed with the same professor.

### b) Candidacy Examinations (Ph.D.)

See the annex at the end of this document for detailed information.

### c) Approval of Thesis Projects

Submission of thesis project: All thesis projects, whether for the M.A. or Ph.D. are drawn up in consultation with the appointed supervisor and must be submitted in written form to the Director of Graduate Studies, together with suggested names for thesis committee members, 2 for an M.A. thesis committee, and 3 for a Ph.D. Forms for this purpose are available from the Academic Assistant. Normally thesis committee members will be both members of the philosophy department and members of the Office of the Vice-Dean Research. Of course, the student must have received the professors' agreement before putting forward their names.

Thesis Project Seminar: The seminar is held before the thesis supervisor and a committee and is chaired by a delegate from The Graduate Studies committee. It is open to the public. The candidate gives a ten to fifteen-minute oral presentation of the project. The supervisor and the consultants are entitled to be active questioners and explorers of the project, and to vote on the result. At the end of the seminar, the jury deliberates in confidence and decides either to approve or to reject the project; in the latter case, the jury gives reasons and also advises as to whether a revised project should be submitted or a new one.

Requirements and standards of evaluation for the seminar will be appropriately different for M.A. and for Ph.D. projects.

Deadlines: Full-time M.A. students (in the thesis programme) should submit their project by the end of their fourth registered session, that is, in the usual case, by the end of the fall term of their second year. Part-time M.A. students should submit their project by the end of session following completion of course requirements.

Ph.D. students should submit their project by the end of their sixth registered session, that is, by the end of their second full year.

## d) Thesis

The procedures for thesis supervision have three aims:

1. To assure the quality of the thesis.
2. To guarantee and respect the academic freedom of the thesis examiners and the candidate.
3. To furnish the candidate with the knowledge of having been judged fairly and respectfully.

After the approval of the thesis project, the candidate will carry out research under the supervision of the thesis director and the members of the thesis committee. The latter will be the supervisor's consultants until the submission of the thesis. However, the co-supervisor cannot be a member of the thesis jury. A co-supervisor may be selected at the discretion of the supervisor and with the approval of the Graduate Studies committee.

The thesis supervisor will set up with the candidate a time-table of meetings to monitor the student's progress.

The master's thesis should normally be 75-125 pages, and a Doctoral thesis should normally be 175 -250 pages. Exceptions require the approval of the thesis committee.

The jury for a Master's thesis will include at least two internal members, in addition to the jury chairperson. The jury for a Doctoral thesis will include at least three internal members, and an external member, in addition to the jury chair. In both cases, the internal members will be chosen from among the thesis consultants. In the case of a Doctoral thesis, the external examiner is chosen by the Faculty of Graduate Studies, in consultation with the thesis supervisor.

The M.A. thesis should reveal that the candidate is able to work in a scholarly manner and is acquainted with the principal works published on the subject-matter of the thesis. It should be the fruit of substantial, independent reflection and probing by the author. A systematic exposition together with some illuminating comparison, juxtaposition, or suggested critique would constitute an acceptable, and if finely done, an excellent thesis.

A Ph.D. thesis must constitute a significant contribution to knowledge in the field, embody the results of original investigation and analysis and be of such quality as to merit publication, at least in part, once the necessary revisions and corrections have been made.

## e) Sequences for Completion

As an MA student you are normally expected to register full-time for three sessions. This requirement will be waived if you complete all eight courses in the autumn and winter sessions of a single year.

If you wish to register for your third session in the fall of your second year, you are under no obligation to register in the summer session of your first year. This also applies if you have an admission scholarship covering three sessions.

You may also complete your course requirements during the summer session, subject to the availability of summer courses.

- M.A. with thesis: 5 courses\* + directed thesis research (with defence of thesis)
- M.A. without thesis: 8 courses.
- Ph.D: 6 courses, candidacy examinations, directed research and Ph.D thesis research (with defence of thesis)

The following recommended rates of progress and sequences are intended as norms and guidelines for full-time students. Adjustments may be necessary in particular cases.

#### MA (with thesis)

	Sept.-Dec.	Jan.-Apr.	May-Aug.
1 <sup>st</sup> Year	2 courses	2 courses	Preparation of the thesis project
	Integration seminar*		
2 <sup>nd</sup> Year	Approval of thesis project	Thesis	Defence

#### MA (coursework)

	Sept.-Dec.	Jan.-Apr.	May-Aug.
1 <sup>st</sup> Year	2 or 3 courses	2 or 3 courses	2 courses
	Integration seminar*		

Or

	Sept.-Dec.	Jan.-Apr.	May-Aug.
1 <sup>st</sup> Year	2 or 3 courses	2 or 3 courses	No registration
	Integration seminar*		
2 <sup>nd</sup> Year	2 courses		

#### Doctorate

	Sept.-Dec.	Jan.-Apr.	May-Aug.
1 <sup>st</sup> Year	2 or 3 courses	2 or 3 courses	Candidacy exams
	Integration seminar*		
2 <sup>nd</sup> Year	Candidacy exams	Approval of thesis project	Thesis
3 <sup>rd</sup> Year	Thesis	Thesis	Thesis
4 <sup>th</sup> Year	Thesis	Thesis	Defence

## Guidelines for Preparing a Thesis Project Proposal

The thesis project proposal is an outline of the work you intend to complete in writing your dissertation. According to the general regulations of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, “a Master’s thesis should reveal that the candidate is able to work in a scholarly manner and is acquainted with the principal

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\* Starting September 2023.

works published on the subject of the thesis. Insofar as it is possible, the thesis should be an original contribution. A doctoral thesis must constitute a significant contribution to knowledge, embody the results of original investigation and analysis on the part of the student and be of such quality as to merit publication.” The aim of the thesis project proposal is to demonstrate to the members of your thesis committee that your project meets the relevant criteria and that you have the knowledge and skills necessary to complete it successfully.

The thesis project proposal is to be written under the guidance of your thesis supervisor. However, you are permitted to circulate a draft of it to the members of your thesis committee for comments prior to submitting a final version for examination. There are also copies of successful proposals available at the department secretariat for you to consult.

Your proposal should include the following:

1. **PERSONAL INFORMATION:** Provide your name, address, telephone number and e-mail address. Also indicate whether you are in the M.A. or Ph.D. program and the name of your thesis supervisor.
2. **THESIS TITLE:** State the title of the thesis. Make sure it is concise and clearly indicates the thesis topic.
3. **PROJECT SUMMARY:** Give a complete and clear explanation of the aims of your research, the specific problems or questions you intend to address and the main steps in the argument of your thesis.
4. **REQUIRED LANGUAGES:** State your knowledge of the foreign languages required to carry out your project, if any.
5. **BIBLIOGRAPHY:** List the references that are relevant to your thesis project. While this list may be expanded later, it should be extensive enough to demonstrate that you have the background knowledge required to complete your project. For each work listed, provide standard bibliographical information and a brief explanation of its significance for your project (e.g. in what ways you propose to rely on or challenge it).
6. **PREVIOUS WORK IN THE FIELD:** Explain how the research you propose to do relates to the work done by others in the field and what contribution to scholarship your thesis will make.
7. **TABLE OF CONTENTS:** Provide a table of contents for your thesis. While this table may be changed later, it should demonstrate that you have a coherent argument for your thesis. Chapter and section titles should be as precise and informative as you are able to make them at this stage.

## Supervision of students

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The Director of Graduate Studies acts as interim advisor to all newly admitted graduate students, assisting them in selecting suitable courses and seeking out regular advisor (thesis supervisors). Ideally, the student is expected to have found a thesis supervisor by the end of the second session of registration.

## Financial Assistance

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### a) Scholarships from the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

The admission scholarship applies to Canadian citizens or permanent residents who will study in a Master's or a PhD program. For details, please consult the website of the Office of the Vice-Dean Research.

(Limited funding is available for international students. More information is available on the Awards and financial support for international master's student page.)

### b) External Scholarships

A number of agencies including the Ontario Graduate Scholarship Program (O.G.S.- Ontario Provincial Government), the Fonds de la recherche du Québec sur la société et la culture (F.R.Q.S.C - Quebec Provincial Government) and the Social Science and Humanities Research Council (S.S.H.R.C.- Canadian Federal Government) award graduate studies scholarships annually. Students who receive admission scholarships are now required to apply for external scholarship. Applications must be made in the early Fall. Information and forms are available from the Department.

Links

[FRQSC](#)

[OGS](#)

[SSHRC](#)

## Assistantships and part-time teaching

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The Department of Philosophy offers teaching assistantships. Although priority is given to those who hold University of Ottawa admission scholarships, the Department of Philosophy may nevertheless award assistantships to other students based on the availability of funds. Please contact our Administrative Assistant for application procedures.

Apart from these assistantships, the Department also offers part-time teaching opportunities, in which the student has full charge of the course. Such teaching is normally reserved for advanced Ph.D. students. All opportunities for part-time teaching are publicly advertised in the Department and on the Website.

## Annex: Candidacy Exam (PhD only)

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### Principles

The principles underlying the candidacy examination are as follows:

- In the first place, the examination aims to ensure that the candidates have (1) acquired the knowledge considered fundamental in the **area of specialization** within which their thesis topic belongs; and (2) to demonstrate that they have a sufficient mastery of the field to write and successfully defend a thesis proposal.
  - o To achieve the former goal, candidates will, in consultation with the members of the examination committee, establish a list of works to be read during the summer term of their first year of study.
  - o A candidate's attainment of the latter goal will be demonstrated by writing a literature review, which will be evaluated by the candidacy examination committee and by giving an oral presentation to the members of the department during a seminar in the autumn term.
- The candidacy examination also aims to ensure that candidates develop (1) knowledge in an **area of competence** that differs from the area of specialization as well as (2) their research (Option A) or teaching skills (Option B).
  - o There are thus two options for the second part of the candidacy examination:
    - The first option requires the candidate, under the supervision of a professor, to revise and further develop an essay written for a seminar with the aim of producing an article that is worthy of publication.
    - The second option requires the candidate to develop a teaching portfolio under the supervision of a professor with expertise in the appropriate area(s).

### Option A: Development of two areas of research

- Spring (**May**) of the first year of study
  - o The candidate submits two research proposals of 300 to 500 words of text, plus bibliographies, one for the field of thesis research (**area of specialization**), the other for a second field (**area of competence**).
    - N.B. Candidates can and should use material developed in the seminars they have taken.
  - o The Graduate Studies Committee will establish examination committees for each candidate. These committees may require additions or changes to the bibliographies.
    - **Area of specialization:** three professors
    - **Area of competence:** one professor
- Autumn term of the second year of study
  - o Students submit two texts to their committees for evaluation:



- **Area of specialization:** a literature review of approximately 8,000 words (**end of September**)
  - **Area of competence:** an article of roughly 5,000 words (**December**)
- Evaluation:
  - For each of these works, the relevant examination committee prepares a **brief report** and delivers a verdict according to the following scale:
    - **Verdict 1:** Indicates that the work meets the requirements. The student receives the mark “satisfactory” for this part of the exam, and may continue to the next stage of the program;
    - **Verdict 2:** Indicates that revisions are required (as noted in the evaluators’ report); the revised version must be submitted within 30 days from the communication of the verdict. If the revised version is found to be acceptable by the committee, the student will receive the mark “satisfactory”;
    - **Verdict 3:** Indicates that the work does not meet the requirements. In this case, the student receives the mark “unsatisfactory” for this part of the exam. Students **who have not previously received a failing grade in their program** may submit a revised version to the committee. The deadline in this case will be the end of the following semester.
- All students registered for the candidacy exam who have received a passing mark will give a brief talk (15-20 minutes), followed by a period of questions, presenting the results of their work during an event to which the entire department will be invited.
  - The talk should present the results of the literature review and provide indications of the research question that will be derived from it for the thesis project.
- The committees will attend these presentations and provide feedback to the candidates.
  - N.B. No mark will be assigned for this part of the examination.

## Option B: Development of competence in research and teaching

- Spring (**May**) of the first year of study
  - The candidate submits a research proposal of 300 to 500 words, plus bibliography, for the field of thesis research (**area of specialization**), and a second proposal for the development of a teaching portfolio (**area of competence**).
  - The Graduate Studies Committee will establish examination committees for each candidate. These committees may require additions or changes to the bibliographies.
    - **Area of specialization:** three professors
    - **Area of competence:** one professor
- Autumn term of the second year of study
  - Students submit two texts to their committees for evaluation:

- **Area of specialization:** a literature review of approximately 8,000 words (**end of September**)
  - **Area of competence:** a teaching portfolio (**December**)
- Evaluation:
  - For each of these works, the relevant examination committee prepares a **brief report** and delivers a verdict according to the following scale:
  - 1: Indicates that the work meets the requirements. The student receives the mark “satisfactory” for this part of the exam, and may continue to the next stage of the program;
  - 2: Indicates that revisions are required (as noted in the evaluators’ report); the revised version must be submitted within 30 days from the communication of the verdict. If the revised version is found to be acceptable by the committee, the student will receive the mark “satisfactory”;
  - 3: Indicates that the work does not meet the requirements. In this case, the student receives the mark “unsatisfactory” for this part of the exam. Students **who have not previously received a failing grade in their program** may submit a revised version to the committee. The deadline in this case will be the end of the following semester.
- All students registered for the candidacy exam who have received a passing mark will give a brief talk(15-20 minutes), followed by a period of questions, presenting the results of their work during an event to which the entire department will be invited.
  - The talk should present the results of the literature review and provide indications of the research question that will be derived from it for the thesis project.
- The committees will attend these presentations and provide feedback to the candidates.
  - N.B. No mark will be assigned for this part of the examination.