

**GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**UBC CIVIL ENGINEERING**

**2023 – 2024**

**THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA**

**Department of Civil Engineering**

## WELCOME

On behalf of all faculty and staff in the Department of Civil Engineering at UBC, I welcome you to the 2023/24 academic year. This handbook is directed to incoming and continuing graduate students in the Department. We are especially pleased to be joined by an incoming cohort of bright and motivated students from around the world. Each year, we review over 600 applications from over 50 countries, and are only able to admit a small fraction of these – your admission to one of our graduate programs is a major accomplishment that you should be proud of. Currently, there are approximately 300 graduate students enrolled in our MEng, MASc, and PhD programs.

As you review program policies and procedures, bear in mind that the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (G+PS) is responsible for the MASc and PhD degrees, whereas the Department of Civil Engineering is directly responsible for the MEng degree. That is, for many policy and progression issues relating to MASc and PhD students, the Department make recommendations and G+PS gives final approvals; whereas corresponding issues relating to MEng students are addressed by the Department directly.

This handbook summarizes the most important information that a Civil Engineering graduate student needs to know – with much of the information already available through a range of websites. The handbook begins with Key Reference Information (Section 1) – contacts within the Department and a calendar of dates and deadlines relevant to our graduate students. The next part of the handbook relates to the academic programs and research, with information relating to Program Requirements (Section 2), Coursework (Section 3), Student Status, Leaves of Absence and Extensions (Section 4), Research and Theses (Section 5) and Graduation Procedures (Section 6). The final part of the handbook refers to student support and the student environment, with information relating to Financial Support (Section 7), Health and Safety (Section 8), Department Support and Administration (Section 9), and, finally, Student Organizations (Section 10).

Your first academic assignment is to select courses. We suggest that you begin by reviewing the various program and specialization coursework requirements, then develop a draft coursework plan and discuss this with your Specialty Advisor or Research Supervisor. It is common to explore courses during the first two weeks of each term, but make sure to drop courses before the relevant deadline in order to avoid a W ("Withdrawn") appearing on your transcript.

I hope you find this handbook a useful resource, and I wish you every success in your program in Civil Engineering at UBC.

Professor Mahdi Taiebat  
Associate Head and Graduate Advisor

## CAVEAT

This Graduate Handbook is intended to provide general information and advice for graduate students in the Civil Engineering Department at UBC. It does not represent a formal statement of program requirements or of any other policies or regulations relevant to graduate students. Rather, formal statements relating to policies, regulations and requirements are provided in the University Calendar and within specific webpages of the Faculty of Graduate and Postgraduate Studies and the Department of Civil Engineering.

*Note: this version of the handbook was issued on 7/17/2023*

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# 1. KEY REFERENCE INFORMATION

## 1.1 Faculty and Staff Contacts

Graduate students may need to contact a range of Department faculty members and staff members. Relevant information on the roles and contacts is given below with respect to the Department's leadership, the Specialty Advisors and support staff.

### Program Leadership

The faculty members leading various aspects of our graduate programs are indicated below:

Position	Name	e-mail	Role / contact
Department Head	Dr. Bernard Laval	<a href="mailto:blaval@civil.ubc.ca">blaval@civil.ubc.ca</a>	[Not normally contacted by graduate students]
Graduate Advisor	Dr. Mahdi Taiebat	<a href="mailto:mtaiebat@civil.ubc.ca">mtaiebat@civil.ubc.ca</a>	*Leads development of policies and procedures; consulted by Specialty Advisors; liaison with the Civil Engineering Graduate Student Society; resolves individual student issues as necessary; approves or recommends to G+PS as necessary all aspects of individual student progression
Specialty Advisors	[See below]		

\*Note: If the Graduate Advisor's signature is needed, please do not see or e-mail Dr. Taiebat, but instead e-mail the material to [gradsupport@civil.ubc.ca](mailto:gradsupport@civil.ubc.ca) for processing. To request a meeting with Dr. Taiebat, please reach out by email and include a brief description summarizing what you would like to discuss.

## Specialty Advisors

All graduate students complete their programs within one of nine specializations, each with different coursework requirements and each one led by a Specialty Advisor. The Specialty Advisor (or Research Supervisor if known) is the primary contact for advice on course selection. The Specialty Advisors for the nine specialization areas are listed in the following table.

Specialization	Specialty Advisor	Room No.	E-mail
Civil Engineering Materials	Dr. Nemkumar Banthia	2024	<a href="mailto:banthia@civil.ubc.ca">banthia@civil.ubc.ca</a>
Environmental Fluid Mechanics	Dr. Greg Lawrence	2030	<a href="mailto:lawrence@civil.ubc.ca">lawrence@civil.ubc.ca</a>
Environmental Systems Engineering	Dr. Loretta Li	2027	<a href="mailto:lli@civil.ubc.ca">lli@civil.ubc.ca</a>
Geo-Environmental Engineering	Dr. Loretta Li	2027	<a href="mailto:lli@civil.ubc.ca">lli@civil.ubc.ca</a>
Geotechnical Engineering	Dr. Dharma Wjiewickreme	2037	<a href="mailto:dharmaw@civil.ubc.ca">dharmaw@civil.ubc.ca</a>
Hydrotechnical Engineering	Dr. Barbara Lence	2012	<a href="mailto:lence@civil.ubc.ca">lence@civil.ubc.ca</a>
Project & Construction Management	Dr. Omar Swei	2004C	<a href="mailto:oaswei@civil.ubc.ca">oaswei@civil.ubc.ca</a>
Structural & Earthquake Engineering	Dr. Tony Yang	2022	<a href="mailto:yang@civil.ubc.ca">yang@civil.ubc.ca</a>
Transportation Engineering	Dr. Alex Bigazzi	2029	<a href="mailto:abigazzi@civil.ubc.ca">abigazzi@civil.ubc.ca</a>



## Support Staff

The members of staff responsible for various aspects of our graduate programs are indicated below:

Position	Name	e-mail	Role / contact
Manager Student Services	Alex Bush	studentservices@civil.ubc.ca	Overall staff responsibility for graduate programs.
Graduate Student Support	Kevin Veltheer	gradsupport@civil.ubc.ca	<b>Primary staff contact</b> for most aspects of an individual student's progression
Undergraduate Student Support	Genna Tutland	undergradsupport@civil.ubc.ca	Back-up to Graduate Student Support
Front Desk*	Adriani Tambunan	info@civil.ubc.ca	Mail, keys and desks
Finance Office	May Liu	res-accounts@civil.ubc.ca	Appointments & expenses re. research accounts (e.g. GRA's)
	Shinko Terencio	gen-accounts@civil.ubc.ca	Appointments & expenses re. Department accounts (e.g. TA's)
Workshop Supervisor	Doug Hudniuk	dhudniuk@civil.ubc.ca	Access to and activities within the workshop and laboratories
Manager of Safety & Research Facilities	Scott Jackson	scottj@civil.ubc.ca	Safety training; safety issues

\* Hours: 8:30am – 12:00pm and 1:00pm – 4:00pm

## 1.2 Dates and Deadlines

The table below provides some of the key dates and deadlines in 2022-2023 as relevant to graduate students. Additional dates and deadlines are provided in the [University Calendar](#) and on the G+PS [deadlines](#) website.

Date	Event / deadline
September 5, 2023	First day of lectures for graduate courses in Term 1
September 5, 2023	Orientation session for new graduate students
September 8, 2023	Deadline for applications to graduate in November
September 18, 2023	Last day to drop courses <b>without</b> a W standing, Term 1
October 2, 2023	Truth and Reconciliation Day (observed), University Closed
October 9, 2023	Thanksgiving Day, University closed
October 27, 2023	Last day to drop courses <b>with</b> a W standing, Term 1
November 11, 2023	Remembrance Day, University closed
November 22 – 24, 2023	Graduation ceremonies at the Chan Centre
December 7, 2023	Last day of lectures, Term 1
December 11 – 22, 2023	Examination period, Term 1
January 8, 2024	First day of lectures, Term 2
January 22, 2024	Last day to drop courses <b>without</b> a W standing, Term 2
February 19, 2024	Family Day, University closed
February 19 – 23, 2024	Mid-term break, no scheduled classes
February 23, 2024	Deadline for application to graduate in May
March 1, 2024	Last day to drop courses <b>with</b> a W standing, Term 2
March 29, 2024	Good Friday, University closed
April 1, 2024	Easter Monday, University closed
April 12, 2024	Last day of lectures, Term 2
April 16 – 27, 2024	Examination period, Term 2
May 20, 2024	Victoria Day, University closed
May 22 – 29, 2024	Graduation ceremonies at the Chan Centre

## 2. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

### 2.1 Program Summaries

**MEng.** The *Master of Engineering in Civil Engineering* (MEng) program is a non-thesis, course-based graduate program in Civil Engineering. The program requires completion of at least 30 credits of coursework beyond the Bachelor's degree, subject to various constraints and requirements.

**MASc.** The *Master of Applied Science in Civil Engineering* (MASc) program is a research-based thesis graduate program in Civil Engineering. The program requires completion of at least 30 credits, including at least 18 credits of coursework beyond the Bachelor's degree, subject to various constraints and requirements, and completion of a 12-credit MASc thesis under the supervision of a faculty member.

**PhD.** The *Doctor of Philosophy in Civil Engineering* (PhD) program is an advanced research-based program for students who wish to pursue a program of independent research. Normally, students will have completed a Master's degree prior to admission into the PhD program. The program requires at least 30 credits of coursework beyond the Bachelor's degree, subject to various constraints and requirements, as well as the successful completion of a PhD thesis. In order to complete the thesis, PhD students are required to complete successfully a Comprehensive Examination and a formal Thesis Examination.

### 2.2 Program Requirements

The Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (G+PS) is responsible for the MASc and PhD programs, and its policies and regulations apply to these programs. Students should review and be aware of the relevant policies, regulations and administrative requirements as may be relevant. A summary is given in the University Calendar (see [Academic Regulations](#)). Additional information is available through the [G+PS website](#). The Department of Civil Engineering is solely responsible for the MEng program, and as well for specific aspects of the MASc and PhD programs.

All students should also be aware of the relevant campus-wide [Policies and Regulations](#) within the University Calendar, including the [Statement on Academic Freedom](#). They should also be aware of the relevant [University Policies](#), giving particular attention to: [Policy LR2 – Research](#); [Policy LR11 – Inventions](#); [Policy SC6 – Scholarly Integrity](#); and [Policy SC3 – Conflict of Interest and Conflict of Commitment](#).

G+PS requirements for completing the MASc and PhD programs are specified [here](#) and through related links. The Department's requirements for completing the MEng, MASc and PhD programs are specified as follows:

- Department [MEng Requirements](#)
- Department [MASc Requirements](#)
- Department [PhD Requirements](#)

## 2.3 Specialization Requirements

The Department offers its graduate programs in the following nine areas of specialization:

- Civil Engineering Materials
- Environmental Fluid Mechanics
- Environmental Systems Engineering
- Geo-Environmental Engineering
- Geotechnical Engineering
- Hydrotechnical Engineering
- Project & Construction Management
- Structural & Earthquake Engineering
- Transportation Engineering

The MASc and PhD programs are offered in all nine specializations. The MEng program is offered in all but Civil Engineering Materials, Environmental Fluid Mechanics and Geo-Environmental Engineering.

Each of the nine specializations has a set of coursework requirements as specified through the [Specializations](#) webpages.

## 3. COURSEWORK

### 3.1 Course Planning and Selection

Prior to registering in any courses, students are required to consult with the Specialty Advisor (or Research Supervisor if known) regarding a Coursework Plan, and thereby secure approval of the Plan. Students should initially develop a draft plan using the relevant form available on the [Forms](#) page. The plan must list the proposed courses and schedule, taking account of course availability (not all courses are offered every year) and term in which they are given (see [Course Schedule](#)), and may take account of prior courses and core course substitutions. This will assure adherence to course credit requirements, coursework regulations, an appropriate course load and selection, and no scheduling conflicts. Please be aware of the possibility of relying on CIVL 592 (which needs to be arranged with a particular instructor), and/or a relevant CIVL 598 section (if available, see [Course Schedule](#)), and/or on a range of elective courses that are not on the list of approved electives for the specialization. Students are allowed a maximum of six credits from CIVL 592 or CIVL 598.

### 3.2 Course Registration

Students may register directly for all courses using the online registration system, including adding or dropping courses. If you are unable to do so please complete the [course request form](#) and obtain the instructor's signature before submitting it to Graduate Support for the Graduate Advisor's approval. Graduate students are allowed a maximum six credits of undergraduate coursework to be used towards completion of their graduate program. For these courses, students must fill out the online [undergraduate course registration form](#). For courses in other departments, please contact that department directly.

### 3.3 Auditing Courses

Students must be approved to audit ("sit in" on) courses. They are expected to complete all course requirements except the final exam, and may be given a failing grade for the course if their performance is not satisfactory. Students auditing a course may not change to regular status during the term, nor may a regular student change to audit status after the normal date for adding and dropping courses. The code "AUD" will be recorded on the transcript. To audit a course, download and complete the [course request form](#), obtain the approval of the instructor, and submit the form to [gradsupport@civil.ubc.ca](mailto:gradsupport@civil.ubc.ca) to obtain the approval of the Graduate Advisor. Note that a course that is audited does not count towards the credit requirements of a program.

### 3.4 Transfer Credits and Credit Exemptions

**MASc and MEng programs.** Students may apply for a maximum of 12 credits of coursework as transfer credits towards the MEng or MASc programs, for courses taken prior to beginning their program. The courses cannot have been used to satisfy the requirements of another credential; they cannot have been used as a basis for admission to the current program; they must have been taken within five years of admission to the current program; and a standing of a least 74% must be obtained in the relevant courses. Also, for each such course, the Graduate Advisor will need to approve the appropriate course level (i.e. undergraduate / graduate) and category (i.e. civil

engineering / other). For courses taken prior to admission, it is important to seek approval shortly after the program commences (using the relevant form available at [here](#)), so that there are no undue expectations regarding such courses. For courses to be taken at another institution, either in Canada or elsewhere, after admission, it is critical that approval is obtained prior to finalizing arrangements for taking such courses.

**PhD program.** For the PhD program, transfer credits are not granted, but instead exemptions may be granted for a maximum of 18 credits of coursework taken after the Bachelors degree for courses with a standing of at least 74%.

### 3.5 CIVL 597

All graduate students are required to register once in the appropriate section of CIVL 597 *Graduate Seminar* (1 credit, Pass/Fail mark); however, all students must attend the seminar series (without subsequent registration) throughout the program. All MASc students are required to give at least one seminar presentation within CIVL 597 during the program.

The different specialization seminar series corresponding to different sections of CIVL 597 as follows:

Section	Specialty series
CIVL 597-002	Hydrotechnical
CIVL 597-003	Environmental
CIVL 597-004	Structural & Earthquake
CIVL 597-005	Project & Construction Management
CIVL 597-006	Transportation
CIVL 597-007	Geotechnical
CIVL 597-008	Materials

Please register for the appropriate section of CIVL 597 ONCE ONLY, but attend the seminars throughout your time in the program.

### 3.6 Examinations

Most courses have final examinations during the University’s designated exam periods in December and April. Prepare well in advance to write exams successfully. In addition to studying, please be aware of important exam dates, and understand the expectations for student conduct during exams.

The start and end dates of the exam periods are published in the UBC Academic Calendar (and are provided in this handbook). All students should be available for the duration of the exam period – avoid making travel plans until the exact dates of your scheduled exams are known. The detailed examination schedule is released by mid-October for December exams, and by mid-February for April exams. Please note that the first exam schedule released may be subject to change.

A *Deferred Examination* may be taken when a student misses an exam due to illness or other

unforeseeable event, and applies to write an exam at a later date (referred to as an "academic concession"). Instructions on how to apply for academic concession are given [here](#).

*Supplemental examinations* are not available to graduate students.

## 4. STUDENT STATUS, LEAVES AND EXTENSIONS

### 4.1 Student Status

All students hold either full-time or part-time status. MEng and MASc students are normally considered full-time, but may apply for part-time status (such changes in status impact the level of tuition fees charged). PhD students must be full-time only.

### 4.2 Program Duration

Regardless of whether students hold part-time or full-time status, the MEng and MASc programs must be completed within 5 years of initial registration, and the PhD program must be completed within 6 years of initial registration. It is possible that extensions may be granted under certain circumstances (see below).

### 4.3 Typical Progress

**MEng students.** MEng students are required to pay tuition fees for at least three terms, so we recommend that students spread out their courses accordingly. A typical approach is to take three courses in Term 1, four courses in Term 2, and three courses in Term 1 of the following year. Since few courses are offered in the summer it is common for MEng students to seek a Leave of Absence for the summer to avoid paying tuition fees while not taking courses. However, please be aware that leaves of absences can affect visas or student loans. Part-time MEng students (tuition fee payments according to "Schedule B") progress with widely variable schedules. Please note that we are unable to change program status back to full-time once a program has started.

**MASc students.** The MASc program is expected to take about 24 months to complete. All students, regardless of full-time or part-time status (tuition fee payments according to "Schedule B"), must complete the degree within 5 years of initial registration. With the 18-credit course requirement, it is typical to take three courses in Term 1, three courses in Term 2, and then spend the subsequent summer and academic year conducting research for completion of the MASc thesis.

**PhD students.** Students should aim to complete their coursework requirements within the first 12 – 18 months of their PhD. All students must complete their comprehensive exam within 24 months of their PhD start date. After completion of the comprehensive exam, the remaining time in of the PhD program is dedicated to research towards the completion of the dissertation. PhD students are often exempted from up to 18 credits of coursework of the total 30-credit course requirement, based on courses taken for the Master's degree, so that it is typical to take two courses in Term 1, and two courses in Term 2. Students should strive to complete their PhD within four years.

PhD students must submit annual progress reports to their thesis committee to ensure that they are remaining on track.



## 4.4 Leaves and Extensions

Students may apply for a leave of absence to have time away from their academic responsibilities. Leave is granted for personal, health, professional, or other reasons. Leave, not including parental leave or leave to pursue concurrent programs, is limited to one year for Master's students and two years for PhD students. A leave will normally begin on the September 1, January 1 or May 1, and will extend for a period of four, eight, or twelve months. As mentioned above, some MEng students may seek a Leave of Absence for the summer in order to avoid paying tuition fees while not taking courses. Please be aware that summer Leaves of Absences can affect student loans or study permits.

Students granted a leave-of-absence or parental leave retain the full value of any fellowship or award whose terms and conditions are established by G+PS. However, award payments will be suspended at the onset of the leave and reinstated at the termination of the leave period, provided the student then returns to full-time study. Other awards will be paid in accordance to the conditions established by the donor or granting agency.

Both the Department and G+PS must approve all leaves of absence, and requests for leaves for medical reasons must be accompanied by a doctor's note recommending the leave. It is understood that students with on-leave status will not undertake any academic or research work, or use any University facilities during the period of leave. Students must inform the University immediately upon return. Building access requests during leaves will be denied. The time spent on leave is not counted as part of the allowed time for completion of the degree.

**Parental Leave.** Any graduate student who is welcoming a child into their family is eligible for parental leave. Students are permitted a leave of between 4 and 12 months.

**Extension.** Extenuating circumstances may justify additional time to complete the degree program. A request for a one-year extension must be justified and supported by the student's Research Supervisor, but this requires a compelling rationale. A second year's extension requires a compelling rationale from the Research Supervisor and an explanation of the special circumstances that would justify the exception. All extension requests must be made through the Department by emailing [gradsupport@civil.ubc.ca](mailto:gradsupport@civil.ubc.ca) and must include a schedule showing how the thesis will be completed in the period requested. Extensions will not be granted beyond two years.

## 4.5 Transfers Between Programs

Transfers between programs are uncommon but may be possible under special circumstances. The following transfers may be possible.

- **MASc to/from MEng.** A transfer from the MEng to the MASc is usually based on an invitation from a faculty member.
- **MASc to PhD.** A transfer from the MASc to the PhD is usually based on an invitation from a faculty member, and needs to be initiated within the two terms of the MASc program.

- **PhD to MEng/MASc.** Students may apply to transfer from doctoral to master's programs. More information is available [here](#).
- **Program transfers involving other Departments.** Such program transfers are possible if the original and intended disciplines are closely related. Otherwise, if the intended transfer is to a distinct discipline, then it is treated as a new admission.
- **Transfer of Specializations.** It is also possible to transfer between specializations within the same program. Transfer requests will be considered after completion of Term 1 courses.

The following requirements relate to the various transfers:

- All transfers must be supported by a strong rationale relating to the student's personal or professional goals and a review of the student's academic qualifications.
- All transfers need be approved by the current and intended Research Supervisors / Specialty Advisors and the Graduate Advisor.
- The effective date of transfer must correspond with the beginning of a term, and must not be earlier than the beginning of the term in which the transfer is recommended.
- A program transfer does not change the maximum time allowed for completion of degree program, so that the start date of the intended program is taken as the start date of the original program.
- Transfers between programs involving a change of discipline are treated as new admissions.
- Bear in mind that transfers between programs may have implications for student funding.

Additional information is available on the G+PS website. The relevant forms, which indicating the supporting materials and approvals required, are available [here](#).

## 4.6 Academic Progress

**PhD Students.** A minimum of 68% (B-) must be achieved in all coursework taken for credit. Where a grade of less than 68% (B-) is obtained in a course, and on the recommendation of the graduate program and the approval of the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, the student may repeat the course for higher standing or take an alternate course. If the graduate program advisor does not make such a recommendation, or if the recommendation is not approved by the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, the student will be required to withdraw. A student who obtains a grade of less than 68% in more than one course will normally be required to withdraw. If progress in research is unsatisfactory, a student will be required to withdraw.

**Master's Students.** The minimum passing grade in any course taken by a student enrolled in a master's program is 60%. However, only 6 credits of courses with grades in the C to C+ range (60-67%) may be counted towards a master's program. For all other courses, a minimum of 68% must be obtained. Some graduate programs may require a higher passing grade for specific courses.

Where a failing grade is obtained in a course, and on the recommendation of the graduate program and the approval of the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, the

student may repeat a course for higher standing or take an alternate course. If the graduate program does not make such a recommendation, or if the recommendation is not approved by the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, the student will be required to withdraw. A student who obtains a grade of less than 68% in more than 6 credits will normally be required to withdraw for inadequate academic progress.

***Unsatisfactory progress form.*** For grades below 60% (68% for PhD students), students are required to complete the Unsatisfactory Academic Progress Form, which is posted [here](#). Please note that required a minimum grade of 74% is required when a course is retaken or replaced. Supplemental examinations are not granted to graduate students.

If you find yourself struggling in a course, please discuss this with the instructor. If your problems persist, or if you have failed a course (< 68%) then you should immediately write to the Graduate Advisor, with a copy of your transcript to date and your coursework plan form. This way, it may be possible to tailor your course-plan to improve the likelihood of successful completion of your program. If you receive a grade below 60% in more than two courses you will normally be required to withdraw from the program.

## 5. RESEARCH AND THESES

*This Section does not apply to MEng students.*

### 5.1 Research Supervisor

All MASc and PhD students will need to arrange for a [Research Supervisor](#) who will guide them through the program. Depending on the specialization, MASc students may be admitted without an assigned supervisor. The student-supervisor relationship is sometimes established only after more than one term in the program. The same may be the case for PhD students, but more often a PhD student will have an assigned supervisor from the program start date. Any students who have been enrolled in our program for two terms and still do not have a research supervisor need to contact the Graduate Advisor immediately.

All MASc students must arrange for a faculty member to serve as the Research Supervisor by April of the first full year of study; all PhD students must arrange for a faculty member to serve as the Research Supervisor within six months of initial registration in the PhD program. The principal roles of the Research Supervisor are to provide direction on the selection of coursework, to collaborate on and supervise the research effort, and to provide guidance on preparation of the thesis. On occasion, a student may be co-supervised by two faculty members.

Prior to identifying a Research Supervisor, the student may be assigned an interim supervisor, usually the [Specialty Advisor](#). If the Research Supervisor is on study leave or other leave exceeding two months, it is recommended that an interim co-supervisor be appointed.

### 5.2 Supervisory Committee

*MASc students do not require a formal supervisory committee. Instead the Research Supervisor appoints a "second reader" near the time of thesis completion.*

PhD students require a formal [Supervisory Committee](#) comprised of at least three members, including the Research Supervisor who normally chairs the committee. The Supervisory Committee is established by the Research Supervisor in consultation with the Graduate Advisor, within **12 months** of the student's registration in the PhD program. The Committee membership is approved by G+PS. Preferably, the committee should include one member from outside the Department, who need not be a [member of G+PS](#). Regular [annual progress reports](#) are to be prepared by the student and submitted to the supervisory committee for approval.

### 5.3 MASc Thesis Preparation and Completion

All MASc students must register in *CIVL 599 MASc Thesis*, the 12-credit research thesis. The thesis is prepared under the guidance of the Research Supervisor. The Research Supervisor, in consultation with a second reader, may request revisions to the thesis and must approve the thesis. They assign a grade to the thesis. A minimum grade of 68% must be obtained in order to submit the thesis and request approval for graduation.

## 5.4 PhD Thesis Preparation and Completion

All PhD students must register and maintain registration in *CIVL 699 Doctoral Dissertation* in order to complete the PhD thesis. The thesis is prepared under the guidance of your Research Supervisor and supervisory committee. The supervisory committee is to be formed within 12 months of the student's start date. In order to complete the thesis, PhD students are required to successfully complete the following three milestones:

- Comprehensive Exam
- Advancement to Candidacy
- Thesis Defense

These are outlined in turn:

***Comprehensive Examination.*** Each PhD student in Civil Engineering is required to present in writing, and to defend orally, a research proposal. The purpose of the research proposal and its subsequent oral examination is to demonstrate to the Candidate's supervisory committee that the Candidate has the knowledge and ability to pursue a PhD in their chosen field. The Comprehensive Examination will include questions of a fundamental nature that are relevant to the proposed research topic. All candidates shall complete the research proposal and schedule the oral examination within 24 months of starting their PhD program. The Comprehensive Exam cannot be held until a student has successfully completed their coursework. Written letters need to be submitted to the graduate advisor from the student and their supervisor if an extension for the comprehensive exam is required for special cases, with a maximum of one-year extension. PhD students who do not complete their Comprehensive Examination within 24 months shall submit the annual progress form every 3 months until the comprehensive exam is held. The guidelines and forms required are available [here](#).

***Advancement to Candidacy.*** Once the comprehensive exam is successfully completed, the student is admitted to candidacy through the submission and approval of the relevant [G+PS form](#). All doctoral students must be admitted to candidacy within 24 months of initial registration in the PhD program.

***Thesis Defense.*** For detailed information on the final doctoral examination, including appointment of the External Examiner, the constitution of the Examination Committee, and the oral defense, refer to [Final Doctoral Examination](#).

## 5.5 Academic Integrity

### Syllabi Statements

Many course syllabi include a statement similar to the following:

***Academic Integrity.*** Students should not cheat, copy, plagiarize or mislead others with respect to their individual work. All student submissions should be original work undertaken by the student alone (except for team assignments), with attribution given as appropriate to all other sources of information and ideas. In examinations, students should not seek aid from

others, nor give aid to others, nor make use of unauthorized materials or aids. More generally, students are deemed to be aware of and adhere to the relevant University regulations as provided in [Campus-wide Policies and Regulations](#), and in particular those relating to *Academic Honesty and Standards* and to *Student Conduct and Discipline*. All cases of suspected academic misconduct must be reported and addressed. When academic misconduct is found to have occurred, the consequences are serious.

We urge that all graduate students carefully review the above statement. Never copy or reformulate any part of any work without providing a citation to that work. Bear in mind that all work submitted by students (including, without limitation, essays, dissertations, theses, examinations, tests, reports, presentations, problem sets, and tutorial assignments) may be subjected to review by the University for authenticity and originality. The University may use software tools and third-party services to do so. By submitting work, you consent to your work undergoing such review and being retained in a database for comparison with other work submitted by students.

### **Proper Citations – Avoiding Plagiarism**

Academic scholarship requires honest and accurate reporting of other people’s ideas and material. All submitted work must always acknowledge the original source whenever someone else’s words (phrases, sentences, or paragraphs), ideas, or figures are used. The citation can be placed in the text, footnotes, or endnotes. Where direct quotations are made, they must be clearly delineated, for example, within quotation marks or separately indented.

Where part of a figure or the entire figure comes from another source, the citation must be provided adjacent to the figure or in the figure caption.

Failure to provide proper citation is, in the best case, poor scholarship (when there is no intent to deceive), and, in the worst case, plagiarism. Anyone who is in doubt about citation requirements should consult the instructor before handing in any work.

In this modern era, it has become very easy to cut-and-paste text or figures from one document to another. One of the most common forms of poor scholarship and plagiarism is the use of figures from other documents or the web without any citation. Any included figures must be properly cited.

When using a figure or other content from a web page, provide as much of the following information as is known: name of author(s), title of the work (in quotes), title of web page (in italics), date of last revision, URL, date accessed.

The UBC Library provides a guide for citing sources, documenting research, reporting results and avoiding plagiarism, available [here](#).

## **5.6 Supervisor-Student Relationship**

The Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies has issued a [Handbook of Graduate Supervision](#) that provides detailed advice relating to the supervisor-graduate student relationship, so as to assure a productive, effective and positive experience in the development of the thesis

and the research record. In particular, [this webpage](#) contains advice relating to graduate student responsibilities. Note that this advice is distinct from formal policies and procedures relating to graduate work. Suggested graduate student responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Take personal responsibility for progress towards degree completion; make a commitment and show dedicated effort to gain the background knowledge and skills needed to pursue your research project successfully.
- Develop a plan and timetable for completion of all stages of the thesis project with your supervisor and adhere to the timetable to the extent possible.
- Meet with your supervisor when requested (varies widely) and report fully on progress, results and issues.
- Maintain orderly and detailed records of your research activities and work.
- Respond respectfully and fully to advice, comments, and criticisms received from Supervisor (and the Supervisory Committee) if any.
- Behave in a tolerant and respectful manner with peers, undergraduates, and faculty.

If you have concerns relating to the supervisor-student relationship, please first try to resolve this directly with your supervisor. If this is unsuccessful, please consult with the Graduate Advisor.

## 6. GRADUATION PROCEDURES

When the time comes to graduate, students must confirm that all program requirements have been met and all fees have been paid, and then formally apply to graduate (Section 6.3 below). Prior to doing so, each MASc and PhD student must complete their thesis and obtain approval of their thesis (Section 6.1 below for MASc students and Section 6.2 below for PhD students). All graduating students are invited to attend graduation ceremonies at which the degree parchments are issued (Section 6.4). Further information on these component steps is given below.

### 6.1 MASc Thesis Completion and Submission

For detailed information on thesis preparation, refer to [Dissertation & Thesis Preparation](#). When the thesis has been completed and approved by the Research Supervisor and second reader<sup>1</sup>, students must arrange for the submission of completed and signed Department and G+PS [Thesis Approval Forms](#), and the thesis must then be submitted electronically following the G+PS [Instructions](#). The thesis must be approved by G+PS before a student becomes eligible to graduate. When the thesis meets all G+PS requirements, it will be added to the [UBC Library's cIRcle Institutional Repository](#). The submitted thesis must be complete and accurate – it cannot be subsequently changed and re-submitted. IMPORTANT: Anyone wishing their thesis to be [delayed from publication](#) must obtain G+PS approval **before** thesis submission.

### 6.2 PhD Thesis Completion and Submission

**Thesis Completion.** For detailed information on thesis preparation, refer to: [Dissertation & Thesis Preparation](#). Normally, early drafts of the PhD thesis are prepared with guidance from the Research Supervisor, who must agree to its technical content and findings. In preparing the final draft, the thesis should be circulated to all other members of the Supervisory Committee for comments and suggestions. Upon receiving a recommendation from the Supervisory Committee, the Graduate Advisor gives approval that the thesis is ready to be submitted for examination.

**Final Doctoral Examination.** For detailed information on the final doctoral examination, including the appointment of the External Examiner, the constitution of the Examination Committee, and the oral defense, refer to [Final Doctoral Examination](#).

**Thesis Submission.** Once a student has successfully defended their thesis and received approval from the Examination Committee, the student must arrange for the submission of completed and signed G+PS [Dissertation Approval Form](#), and the thesis must be submitted electronically following the relevant [G+PS Instructions](#). The thesis must be approved by G+PS before a student becomes eligible to graduate. When the thesis meets all G+PS requirements, it will be added to the [UBC Library's cIRcle Institutional Repository](#). The submitted thesis must be complete and accurate – it cannot be subsequently changed and re-submitted. IMPORTANT: Anyone wishing their thesis to be [delayed from publication](#) must obtain G+PS approval **before** thesis submission.

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<sup>1</sup> The second reader signs the G+PS *Thesis Approval Form* and needs to be identified on the Department *Thesis Approval Form*.



### 6.3 Degree Application

Students are responsible for ensuring that all program requirements have been met and all fees have been paid. Please contact the Civil Engineering [Graduate Support Office](#) with any questions. Once all program requirements have been completed, students must apply for graduation through the [Application for Graduation](#) website, and immediately thereafter inform the Civil Engineering [Graduate Support Office](#).

### 6.4 Graduation Ceremonies

Graduation ceremonies take place twice a year at the Chan Centre, once in November and once in May. Attendance is not mandatory but is highly recommended – the ceremony will show you an additional aspect of academic life and give you a sense of the proud traditions of our academic community. If your graduation does not exactly match the date of a graduation ceremony, please consider coming back to campus for the next one; it will be worth it to celebrate this occasion with your mentors and peers.

Note that MAsC and PhD students are able to have their degrees awarded on any one of four dates in a given year. Once Senate awards the degree, a notation will appear on the transcript. However, formal conferral at Congregation ceremonies and the degree parchments are only available in May and November only.

## 7. FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND EXPENSES

### 7.1 Personal Budget

Students should develop a personal budget for their time in the program. This can greatly improve your success in your studies.

On the revenue side, MASc and PhD students in the Department may receive financial support from a variety of sources and in a variety of forms, as described in Section 7.2. Standard funding models do not exist and multiple arrangements are possible, often contain a mix from several sources.

On the expense side, students are expected to cover their living costs and the costs of their education. For more information, please visit [this page](#) to help prepare for the costs of tuition, housing, meal plans, and textbooks. Note that fees, including tuition, program, course, special, and student society fees, are approved by the Board of Governors following consultation with students and are subject to change. Information on such fees is available [here](#).

### 7.2 Funding Sources

Most MASc and PhD students receive financial support from a primary source, and from one or more supplementary sources. In general MEng students do not receive financial support, except from Teaching Assistant and Marker positions. The most common primary and supplementary sources of funds are as follows:

#### Primary Sources

- Graduate Research Assistantships (GRA)
- Four-Year Doctoral Fellowships (4YF)
- NSERC Scholarships
- Civil Engineering Excellence Awards
- Affiliated Fellowships
- Other Awards

#### Supplementary Sources

- Top-Ups
- International Student Tuition Fee Awards
- Teaching Assistantships & Marker Positions (TA)
- Other Opportunities

Department information on these various sources is provided [here](#). As well, further information about scholarships, awards, and funding is available at [this page](#) maintained by the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies and [this page](#) at UBC Student Services.

### 7.3 Employment Opportunities

Beyond the funding sources identified above, students may also earn a salary and gain work experience through paid employment opportunities – provided you are able to secure suitable employment, having sufficient time available, and have completed the necessary documentation and approvals. Two such opportunities that relate to student status in the Department are the Co-op Program and the Work Learn Program, as summarized below.

**Co-op Program.** MEng students have the opportunity to apply to the Co-op Program in order to gain paid work experience during their program at UBC. Typically, the program starts with a mandatory pre-employment training workshop in the Fall; then, after completing two terms of study, the students proceed with two four-month work terms (in the summer and fall), and then return to campus to complete their programs as necessary. MEng students [apply here](#).

**Work Learn Program.** The [Work Learn Program](#) supports and subsidizes work experiences on campus so as to offer students the opportunity to develop their professional skills and learn in a work environment.

### 7.4 Student Fees

Student fees, including tuition, student society and other fees, are detailed on the following sites:

- For the MEng (referred to as a "Specialized Master's Degree Program") and the MASc (referred to as a "Standard Master's Degree Program"), please see: [Master's Program Fees](#)
- For the PhD, please see: [Doctoral Program Fees](#)

### 7.5 Research and Travel Expenses

Most commonly, the direct expenses of your research will be covered by grants and/or contracts held by your Research Supervisor. In addition, MASc and PhD students may apply for support from the Graduate Student Travel Fund as detailed below.

### 7.6 Graduate Student Travel Fund

Graduate students are eligible for reimbursement from the Graduate Student Travel Fund once per degree program. The Travel Fund provides travel support to a maximum of \$500 per graduate student. To be eligible for the Travel Fund:

- Students must be registered in a graduate program administered by G+PS.
- Students must present a paper or poster at an official conference or symposium (student workshops are ineligible), participate in a music competition, or perform by invitation at a music professional conference
- The conference or competition must take place while the student is enrolled full-time in a graduate degree program. Students on official on-leave status are not enrolled full-time. Full-time enrolment ceases at the end of the month when all degree requirements are completed, not at the time of convocation

- Only one student may receive travel funding per paper / poster / performance. In cases where there are multiple presenters of a co-authored paper or poster, the student who made the greatest contribution to the paper or poster should apply to Graduate Travel Award funding.
- Students must not have previously received the travel award during the same degree program.

## 8. HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING

The safety and wellbeing of students, faculty, staff and visitors is a paramount concern for the Department of Civil Engineering; the responsibility for your safety is something we all share.

### 8.1 Safety Training and Assessments

The Department has instituted a comprehensive set of safety training and assessment requirements. The first of these requirements, with four components, is mandatory for all graduate students, while the remaining three requirements relate to specific circumstances.

#### 1. Mandatory Training

All students must complete the relevant online training and assessment with four components:

- A. *Department Safety Orientation and Quiz.*** (This is a Department-specific orientation.)  
For further information and to undertake the training, visit:

<http://www.civil.ubc.ca/webform/department-safety-orientation>

- B. *Bullying and Harassment On-line Training Course.*** (This is a University-wide course.)  
For further information and to undertake the training, visit:

<http://www.civil.ubc.ca/our-department/health-safety-environment-hse/workplace-online-training>

- C. *Workplace Violence Prevention Training Course.*** (This is a University-wide course.)  
For further information and to undertake the training, visit:

<http://www.civil.ubc.ca/our-department/health-safety-environment-hse/workplace-online-training>

- D. *Privacy and Information Security Fundamentals Training Course.*** (This is a University-wide course.) For further information and to undertake the training, visit:

<https://privacymatters.ubc.ca/content/training>

#### 2. Site-Specific Laboratory Training

All graduate students who work in or volunteer in any Department laboratory must take additional training specific to their laboratory. This is one-on-one training with a lab manager or lab supervisor associated with various labs. In order to participate in this training, please see one of the contacts listed below.

#### 3. Environmental / Materials Laboratory Training

All graduate students who work in or volunteer in the Environmental and/or Materials Laboratory are required to take chemical safety training. Please contact a lab manager (see

below) or the environmental lab supervisor to get details on the course required for the work to be done.

#### **4. Specialized Training**

Finally, additional safety training is required for specific situations as may be relevant. For example, this training may relate to biosafety, radiation safety, the use of lasers, wilderness survival/first aid training, operation of specific equipment or any other training deemed necessary for the situation. Please contact a lab manager (see contacts below) for the applicable specialized training requirements.

University-wide information on safety training for graduate students is available at this site:

<http://rms.ubc.ca/health-safety/student-safety/graduate-student-safety/>

#### **Applicability**

Mandatory training is required for all graduate students with any appointment (e.g. GRA, GTA, etc.) or those who engage in any laboratory work or those who are allocated a desk in the Department (i.e. MASC and PhD students). The remaining training requirements are specific to particular circumstances. The various requirements are triggered by any appointment that is made, laboratory access requests, the completion of a project proposal form, or by a desk assignment.

#### **Administration**

Scott Jackson, Manager, Labs & Department Safety, maintains the Department's Safety Training Log (spreadsheet) that tracks the successful completion of the required laboratory training. As well, Doug Hudniuk, Workshop Supervisor, maintains paper copies that track the successful completion of site-specific training and other specialized equipment training. These records are made available to relevant faculty and staff.

The Department of Civil Engineering has a Safety Team made up of faculty, staff, and students that meets monthly to discuss issues of Health, Safety and Environmental impact, and to review any safety incidents. The minutes of each meeting are available on the HSE bulletin boards in the Department.

#### **Contacts**

Students may contact the following for further information or to participate in safety training as may be relevant

- Scott Jackson, Manager, Labs & Department Safety, [scottj@civil.ubc.ca](mailto:scottj@civil.ubc.ca), 604-822-4143
- Doug Hudniuk, Workshops Supervisor, [dhudniuk@civil.ubc.ca](mailto:dhudniuk@civil.ubc.ca), 604-822-4851
- Alex Bush, Manager, Student Services, [studentservices@civil.ubc.ca](mailto:studentservices@civil.ubc.ca), 604-822-1472
- Felix Shuen, [f.shuen@civil.ubc.ca](mailto:f.shuen@civil.ubc.ca), Supervisor of Environmental Labs, 604-822-4397
- Graduate Student representative on the Department Safety Team

## 8.2 Department Safety Practices

The information below provides a general introduction to some important components of the Department's HSE Program. It does not replace formal HSE training.

### Your Responsibilities

You are responsible for following all safety rules. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Ensure you receive safety training for the work you are doing
- Use appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) correctly at all times
- Obey all warning signs
- Do not operate any equipment that you have not been trained to use
- Do not access labs after hours or on weekends, unless you have formal permission, and never work alone
- Do not engage in horseplay inside the labs
- Do not take short cuts in your work – follow all instructions and procedures fully
- Maintain good housekeeping practices at all times in your workspace
- Do not bring food or beverages inside the labs

### Preventing Common Incidents and Injuries

Two of the most common causes of incidents and injuries are:

- slips, trips or falls (often due to poor housekeeping), leading to cuts, bruises, sprains, and broken bones;
- improper material handling (lifting and moving things), causing back injuries.

You can help prevent these injuries by striving for excellence in housekeeping and using good material handling techniques. Excellence in housekeeping means cleaning up after yourself, removing trip hazards, disposing of trash promptly, keeping clear routes of access to emergency exits, phones, and fire extinguishers, and more. Factors in good material handling include assessing the weight of an object, seeking assistance if you need it, and using your legs while keeping your back straight.

### Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Incidents and injuries can also be prevented by the correct use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). PPE includes gloves, eye protection, proper footwear, respiratory protection, hearing protection and head injury protection (hard hats). Different tasks require different types of PPE – make sure you are using the correct type of equipment for your task. If you have any doubts, always ask; a TA or lab staff member can help you make sure you are using PPE correctly.

Familiarize yourself with the locations of the first aid stations in the Department:

- The workshop (RH 146)
- The Environmental lab (CEME 1301)

- The Civil Engineering front office (CEME 2002)

### Important Safety Contacts

EMERGENCY (Ambulance, Fire, Police, Spills)	911
FIRST AID (if local first aid attendant is not available and help is required)	911
HAZARDOUS MATERIALS RESPONSE	911
RCMP - POLICE (Non-emergency)	604-224-1322
CAMPUS SECURITY	604-822-2222
STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES	604-822-7011
Poison Control Centre	604-682-5050
UBC Hospital Urgent Care Department	604-822-7121
Building Emergency Directors: Sylvia Margraff	604-822-1212
Paula Parkinson	604-822-4397
TROUBLE (UBC BUILDING OPERATIONS)	604-822-2173

### Civil Engineering Facilities

The Department of Civil Engineering has several laboratories, some of which you may use during your courses, TA duties and/or research. You are not allowed in the labs without correctly wearing the appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

Laboratory	Room No	PPE Required
Structures Teaching Laboratory	CEME 1001	Closed-toe shoes and safety glasses (safety shoes and/or hard hats may be required for specific tasks)
Undergraduate Geotechnical Laboratory	CEME 1006/1008	Closed-toed shoes and safety glasses (safety shoes, gloves and/or ear plugs may be required for specific tasks)
Environmental Laboratories	CEME 1301	Lab coats, long pants, closed-toed shoes and safety glasses (gloves required for specific tasks)
Materials Laboratory	CEME 1012	Long pants, closed toed shoes and safety glasses (Lab coats, safety shoes, gloves, dust masks and ear protection required for some tasks)
Hydraulics Laboratory	RH (Rusty Hut) 139	Closed-toed shoes and safety glasses
Structures Research Laboratory	RH (Rusty Hut) 100	Hard hats, safety glasses and safety shoes
Earthquake Engineering Research Facility	EERF	Hard hats, safety glasses and safety shoes



## **Safety in the Field**

If you are visiting a construction site or some other industrial operation, you will be required to wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). You will not be allowed on site without a high visibility vest, a hard hat, safety glasses and CSA approved safety shoes.

If you are going to be working on a project in the field (off campus), you must prepare a field safety plan. The form required for this can be obtained [here](#).

## **Personal Belongings: Lost and Found**

If you lose a personal item in the CEME building, check first at the Civil Front Desk. Check next at Engineering Student Services (Kaiser Building), where lost items are sometimes turned in, and finally check with UBC Campus Security. Check with UBC Campus Security right away if you have lost a personal item of high value. To learn more, and to search the online lost and found items database, see [here](#).

## **8.3 Health and Safety at UBC**

There are many campus services that support your personal security and your physical and mental health.

### **Personal Security on Campus**

UBC is generally a safe place, but the risk of crime is present, as it is on every university campus. Campus Security, the RCMP, and AMS Safewalk strive to reduce the risk to students and to enhance the security of the UBC community.

### **Campus Security**

UBC Campus Security strives to ensure the campus is a safe place to study, work, and live. Campus Security personnel patrol the UBC campus around the clock, in vehicles, on foot, and on bicycles, and you are welcome to address any of these personnel at any time if you have questions or need assistance.

They also maintain the Campus Blue Phones, which are located throughout the campus and can be used for emergencies, directions, and assistance. For crime prevention tips, security announcements, and more information on security services provided, visit: [security.ubc.ca](http://security.ubc.ca)

### **RCMP**

UBC – Vancouver Campus is under the jurisdiction of The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) for law enforcement. There is an RCMP detachment located on campus – dial 604-224-1322 for non-emergency situations. In the case of an emergency, always dial 911.

### **Safewalk**

*Safewalk* is a free service provided by AMS that provides a co-ed pair of volunteer walking

companions to any student who would prefer not to walk alone at night. The service is available most nights during the school year, and Safewalk volunteers will meet you anywhere on campus and escort you anywhere you need to go. To request Safewalk services, call 604-822-5355. For more information, go [here](#).

## **UBC Services for Living Well**

Medical services, counselling services, and more are in place to support all students on campus. For details about the services listed below, go [here](#).

***UBC Student Health Service*** – free medical care to registered students, provided year-round by family doctors and registered nurses

***Nurses on Campus*** – personalized advice, outreach, and information on a variety of topics offered by registered nurses

***UBC Counselling Services*** – free and confidential counselling for students facing challenges relating to mental health and mental illness

***Access and Diversity*** – support and advocacy for students with disabilities or ongoing medical conditions

***Sexual Assault Support Centre*** – emotional, medical, and legal support for survivors of sexual assault in the UBC community

***Student Services Wellness Centre*** – health promotion, education, and a safe space for discussion of your personal wellness, facilitated by trained student volunteers

***AMS Speakeasy*** – free and confidential peer crisis support, information, and referrals to the UBC community, provided by trained student volunteer

## **8.4 Safety Abroad**

UBC requires graduate students to register travel plans and, in some cases, seek authorization. If you anticipate travelling abroad for a University activity, please visit the Safety Abroad website for details: [safetyabroad.ubc.ca](http://safetyabroad.ubc.ca)

University activities include conferences, research, volunteering, service learning, varsity sports and studying abroad. University activities do not include activities sponsored or organized by student clubs or the AMS or the Graduate Student Society unless the activity is funded, coordinated or sponsored by UBC. Students engaged in these activities are welcome, and encouraged, to use the Student Safety Abroad resources and registry.

## **8.5 Mental Health and Wellbeing**

If you feel you are suffering from undue stress, depression or other mental health conditions, there are a number of avenues for you to seek support. Within the Department, you could initially discuss your situation with your Research Supervisor or the Graduate Advisor. Or there

may be several relevant campus services as identified above. If you are concerned about a fellow student you can either talk to the Graduate Advisor or visit [this webpage](#) for information about how to help and how to obtain support from UBC professionals or your peers.

## 8.6 Assuring a Safe and Respectful Environment

Related to physical and mental health and safety is the need to assure a safe, supportive, respectful environment, including freedom from discrimination and harassment, for all faculty, staff and students in the Department.

***Personal Code of Conduct.*** In order to contribute to such an environment, we request that all students adhere to a code of conduct that includes: treating others with respect and dignity; avoiding or declaring conflicts of interest or perceptions of conflict of interest, respecting confidentiality, demonstrating environmental responsibility, cultural sensitivity, and equity awareness.

***Respectful Language.*** Respectful language in the context of diversity should be followed in order to avoid causing discomfort to others. Suggestions include, for example the need to avoid referring to a person's race, ethnicity, or country of origin or that may imply gender inferiority or a person's disability – unless any of these are necessary in the context of a conversation.

***Getting Help.*** If you experience discrimination or harassment, it is important for you to raise your concerns as early as possible and as close to the source as possible. Within the Department, try letting the individual know about the discomfort that has been caused and how best this can be addressed. If you are uncomfortable doing so, then contact the faculty member responsible for the activity, such as the course instructor or the faculty supervisor; if that does not solve the problem or you still have concerns, then contact the Department Head. If you witness discrimination, in the form of offensive remarks or inappropriate jokes, have the courage to speak out against it, following the same sequence of possible approaches.

## 9. DEPARTMENT SUPPORT AND ADMINISTRATION

This section of the Handbook refers to such items as Department support (mailboxes, desks and keys), student appointments, document requests and health and insurance coverage. In general, many aspects of the graduate program are handled online, including course registration and fee payments. However, students may need to complete forms and obtain signatures in person. Many forms are available on our website. Please e-mail or deliver all completed forms to the Front Desk, and expect a turn-around time of at least 2 days (except for desk requests).

### Graduate Student Database

Please complete and submit a Graduate Student Data form with your new contact information when you start your program. If you change your address or e-mail address at any time, please inform the Graduate Student Support office by submitting an updated Graduate Student Data form with your new information.

### 9.1 Mailboxes, Desks and Keys

#### Student Mailboxes

Student mail is delivered to the Student Mail Slots located in CEME 1007, sorted by the first letter of the last name. Mail received for students who have completed their programs will be returned to sender.

#### Desk Requests

Desks are allocated to MASc and PhD students only. The availability of desks is dependent on previous students completing their thesis work in a timely way.

Any desk assigned to a PhD or MASc student who has been absent for more than 3 consecutive months will be reassigned. Desks are grouped in areas of specialization; therefore, priority is given to students in that group area. Students may be reassigned to desks in their specialization group space once a desk becomes available.

Desk allocations will commence during the last week of September. There is normally a waitlist, so be sure to make request a desk as soon as possible by filling out a Desk Request Form and submitting it to the Graduate Student Support office.

#### Key Requests

Please complete and submit a Key Request Form in order to obtain keys to a building entrance or study desk room. The Research Supervisor's approval is required. It will take a minimum of 48 hours to process a key request form and you will be notified by email when it is ready. A \$50 deposit is required by the Department and a \$20 deposit by Parking & Security. The deposit is refundable upon the return of the keys.

#### Key Deposit Refunds

The Civil Engineering Front Desk processes key requests. A refundable cash deposit of \$50 must be provided at the time of request. When the key is no longer needed, it must be returned to the UBC Parking and Access Control Services in the bookstore. The office clerk will provide a receipt indicating that the key(s) have been returned. Please bring the receipt from Parking and Access to the Finance Clerk to the Department for the refund of the department key deposit.

## **Printing Facilities**

A black-and-white printer for the exclusive use of graduate students is available in CEME 1007, and is administered by the CEGSS. The Department provides printer toner, while the graduate students are responsible for supplying their own paper. There is no cost to the students to use the printer. All students are expected to use the printer conservatively and only print a maximum of 30 pages per month.

## **9.2 Appointments and Payments**

### **Student Appointment Processing**

There are different types of appointments and students should discuss the applicable category with their supervisor and course instructor once he or she has committed to pay them:

- Graduate Research Assistant
- Graduate Academic Assistant
- Teaching Assistant
- Marker positions

Offer letter packages will be distributed to the students for teaching assistant and marker positions. These packages are to be completed and returned to the Front Desk for processing by Graduate Support. Research and academic assistant appointments are given to the finance clerk for processing. In order to complete the process, copies of valid work or study permits and social insurance numbers are to be submitted to the Department's Finance Office as soon as possible.

A safety training record is also included with and required for all appointments. An email will be sent to the student from the Finance Clerk confirming the process of their student appointment and providing Employee ID and CWL pin if this is your first appointment.

Paper copies of the pay information are not available. Students can access this information via the employee [self-service page](#). The Employee ID and CWL pin will be needed the first time you log in. Please see the UBC Finance payroll [website](#) for further information.

### **Receiving Pay**

You must set up Direct Deposit for your bank account. A direct deposit form must be submitted to UBC Payroll. Questions regarding pay can be directed to the Department Finance Office at [res-accounts@civil.ubc.ca](mailto:res-accounts@civil.ubc.ca) or [gen-accounts@civil.ubc.ca](mailto:gen-accounts@civil.ubc.ca).

## Expense Reimbursement Requests

There are three types of reimbursement requests: (i) travel expenses, (ii) general expenses, and (iii) petty cash (claims under \$50). A petty cash payment request/order form or travel [expense claim form](#) must be completed (whichever is applicable). The form must have all original, itemized receipts/invoices attached. Credit/Debit Card Machine receipts alone are insufficient. If the receipt is not available, please fill out the missing receipt memorandum. The Supervisor must approve the forms and a Speedchart must be provided before it can be processed. Reimbursement may take up to 4-6 weeks for processing. If the reimbursement has not been received within 6 weeks, please contact the Finance Office for follow up or call 604-822-0662 to book an appointment or speak with a Department representative.

## Social Insurance Number – Note to International Students

In order to work in Canada, students must obtain a nine-digit Social Insurance Number (SIN) through Service Canada. SIN applications can be mailed to Service Canada or delivered in person at the nearest Service Canada Centre. The receipt provided by Service Canada will have your SIN number and this can be used for payroll. Once you have obtained a SIN, you will need to submit a copy of your Study Permit and your SIN to the Department Finance Office.

## 9.3 Document Requests

### Proof of Enrolment Letters

Proof of Enrolment letters are available for students to download through the Student Service Centre.

*Salary Verification, Record of Employment, or Statement of Earnings Letters.* These letters can be obtained through the UBC Finance Payroll [website](#). There you may download and complete a Request for Information Form and submit it to the UBC Financial Services Department, 305-2075 Wesbrook Mall. It takes 2 to 5 business days depending on the type of letter you are requesting.

### Department Letters

In the case where a Department letter is required, a Letter Request Form must be completed then submitted to the Graduate Student Support office. Note: we will only verify current employment earnings information for Visa Renewal purposes. Students will be contacted by e-mail when the letter is ready for pick up. For all other Student Administrative Forms, please visit our [forms page](#).

### Study Permits

Do not forget that if you renew your study permit, you must also renew your MSP and SIN. You should apply for a new study permit 60-90 days before it expires.

## 9.4 Health and Insurance Coverage

### Health and Dental Plans

iMED is a temporary basic health insurance plan required for new international students, and will provide you with health insurance coverage during the three-month waiting period for BC's Medical Services Plan (MSP)

iMED is provided at a low cost for the three-month waiting period before you qualify for the BC Medical Services Plan (MSP) or for the duration of your study term if you are a one-term exchange student. Once you register for your first class, the iMED fee will be assessed to your student account and you will be covered from the coverage starting date for the term you register. An email from UBC will be sent to you about iMED coverage. For more information, visit: iMED: Temporary Health Insurance for International Students.

### BC Medical Services Plan (MSP)

MSP is BC's provincial health insurance plan. Anyone living in BC for six months or longer, including international students, is required by law to enroll in MSP and pay the plan's premiums. Apply for MSP as soon as you arrive in BC. Application forms are available on the MSP website, at the International House, at UBC Student Health Services, the AMS/GSS Health & Dental Plan, and the Student Health Plan. It is important that you have extended health and dental coverage while you are in Canada. All UBC students (domestic and international) who pay AMS fees are automatically enrolled in the AMS/GSS Health & Dental Plan. To verify that you are enrolled, check your fees online and look for the "Med/dent fee".

NOTE: This plan does not replace basic MSP (or an equivalent plan). To be eligible for all aspects of the AMS/GSS Health & Dental Plan, you must first be covered by MSP or iMED (or have equivalent coverage purchased in Canada).

### Student Insurance

All students in the Department of Civil Engineering should have the following insurance coverage provided by external agencies:

- British Columbia Medical Services Plan (basic health insurance)
- AMS/GSS Healthplan (prescription drugs, travel health coverage, vision care, psychologist, dental benefits and more).

*WCB Coverage.* Students who travel to study or work sites off-campus may be asked by the hosts at those sites to have Workers Compensation Board (WCB) coverage. Anyone who has income processed through UBC Payroll is considered to be a UBC employee and should have WCB coverage. Employees generally include full-time, part-time, sessional or casual workers and graduate and undergraduate teaching/research assistants (when they are performing their duties as teaching/research assistants). Coverage can be verified from paystubs or account ledgers, which show WCB deductions.

*Student Accident Insurance.* As an alternative to WCB, or for other reasons UBC provides the opportunity for students to purchase Student Accident Insurance at a cost of \$7/student/year. This is a defined benefits plan that is in effect “only during the involvement of the student in course work. The plan does not provide 24-hour coverage”. Student Accident Insurance is not mandatory. The Department of Civil Engineering does not provide Student Accident Insurance coverage on behalf of students. Students who wish to purchase Student Accident Insurance may do so by paying the applicable premium to the Department Finance Office. Collected premiums will be forwarded to UBC Treasury along with the purchaser’s complete name, student number and department. Students may be required to obtain verification from a course instructor that an insured activity will be, or was, performed as coursework.

## **9.5 UPass and Compass Cards**

UPass BC provides unlimited bus, SeaBus, SkyTrain, and Canada Line transit services within Metro Vancouver, as well as discounts on West Coast Express. All eligible students at UBC’s Vancouver campus have access to the U-Pass BC program. You can load your U-Pass BC onto an adult-class Compass Card, which are available from any SkyTrain Station and TransLink Fare Dealers including the UBC Bookstore. The U-Pass BC program currently costs \$41.00 per month and is assessed as part of your student fees. Students at UBC’s Vancouver campus are eligible for U-Pass if they are: registered in full-time or part-time studies with a minimum of three credits, or assessed tuition fees of more than \$170/month; fee-paying members of the AMS.



## 10. STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

### 10.1 Civil Engineering Graduate Student Society

CEGSS is the Civil Engineering chapter of the UBC Graduate Student Society. This is the student-run group representing all graduate students within the Civil Engineering Department. It is a vibrant and active organization that is active year-round, arranging social and sporting events and providing a forum for graduate student issues. The CEGSS also maintains copying and printing services. You will find more information [here](#) and you can direct inquiries to the relevant [contacts](#).

### 10.2 Graduate Student Society

The parent organization, GSS, represents and advocates on behalf of all UBC Graduate Students to the University, the Government, and the public. It provides academic, professional, social, and recreational services to their members and acts as a steward of the Thea Koerner House Graduate Student Centre. GSS is the organization that advocates for and protects the interests of graduate students at UBC; supports graduate students in their studies or facing academic problems; organizes social, sport, and recreational events; publishes *The Graduate Magazine* monthly and the annual *Graduate Student Handbook*; operates the Thea Koerner House Graduate Student Centre, including Koerner's Pub, Thea's Lounge, and more. You will find more information [here](#) and you can direct inquiries to [president@gss.ubc.ca](mailto:president@gss.ubc.ca).