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SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

Graduate Program Directors' Orientation
Fall 2017

Amir G. Aghdam
Associate Dean
Student Affairs and Postdoctoral
Studies

Vivek Venkatesh
Associate Dean
Recruitment and Awards

Brad Nelson
Associate Dean
Academic Programs and
Development

Paula Wood-Adams
Dean of Graduate Studies

School of Graduate Studies (Mandate)

- Provides *advice* on best practices
- Monitors student performance from admission to completion
- Monitors the thesis defence process
- Ensures that all Calendar regulations are followed
- Organizes, adjudicates and administers awards

School of Graduate Studies (Mandate)

- Assists students, faculty members and GPDs to resolve individual and systemic problems (formally and informally)

- Advises on and administers the development of new programs and curriculum change

- Convenes regular meetings of its Council

- Monitors and benchmarks trends and practices in graduate education

- Delivers the GradProSkills program

Working Together: Roles and Responsibilities of Graduate Program Directors

- Chairs the departmental committee for graduate admissions and/or policy
- Coordinates admission decisions/ recommendations
- Serves as the primary contact/liaison with SGS
- Ensures that students are matched with supervisors and supervisory committees
- Coordinates nominations for fellowships, scholarships and awards
- Instructs students and informs department about University deadlines, policies and procedures
- Develops, documents and upholds department regulations/policies

- Reviews the academic progress of graduate students
- Makes either decisions or recommendations on student service requests
- Coordinates the development of graduate courses
- Coordinates the development of new programs and/or curriculum changes
- Administers candidacy and comprehensive examinations
- Checks graduation lists
- Mediates in problematic situations involving students and faculty
- Serves as contact person when problems or appeals go beyond the department level
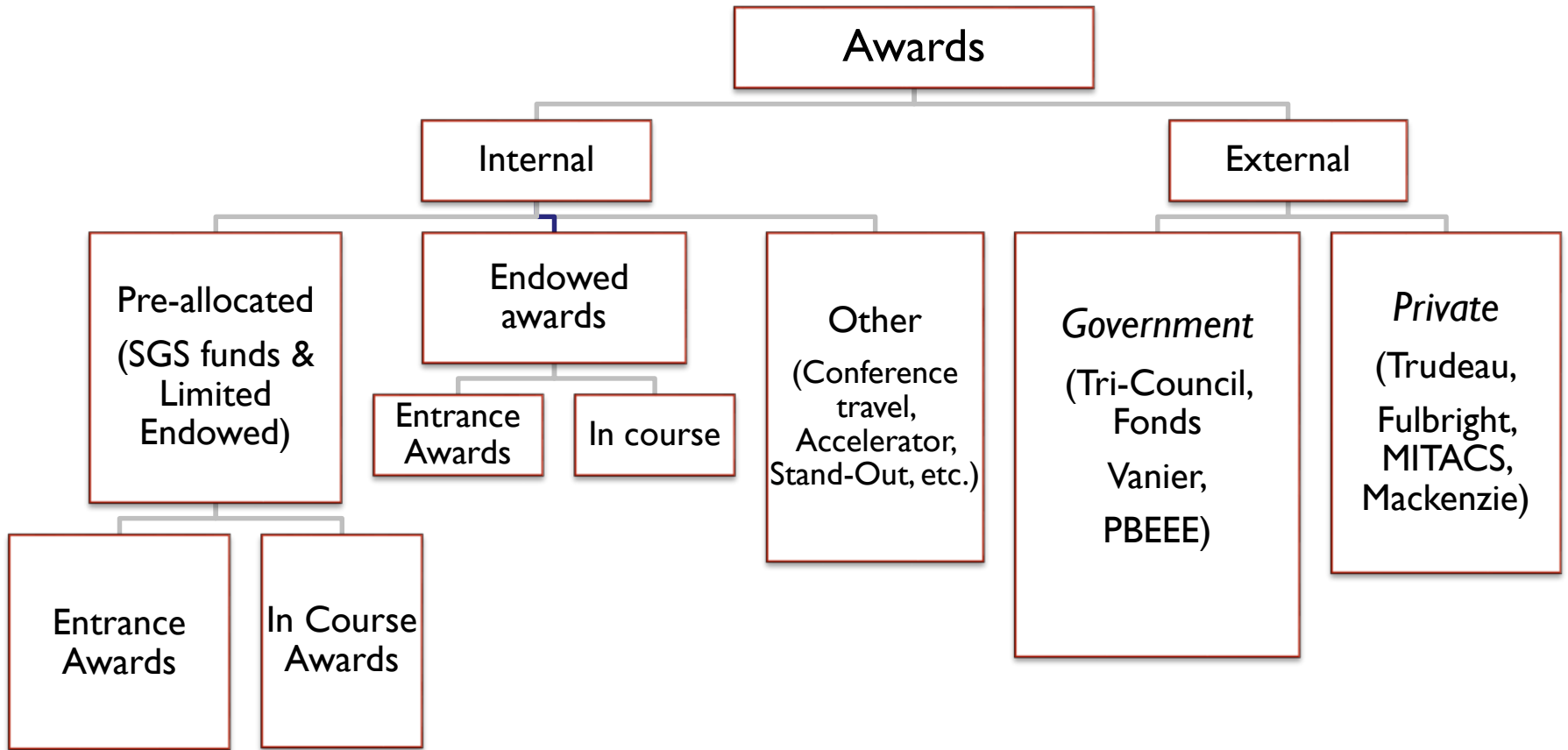
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Recruitment

- GPDs workshops on recruitment best practices

- Graduate Viewbook

- SGS will attend recruitment fairs across Canada and selected international venues

- Inform us of your recruitment needs/challenges/goals

Graduate Awards Illustration

Pre-allocation Exercise

Scope

- Fairness & Transparency

- Reward "good behaviour"

- Induce "good behaviour"

- Incorporate strategic directions of the university

- Consulted with 4 other Canadian Universities that follow a similar system (Queens, Simon Fraser, Waterloo, Guelph)

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Pre-allocation Exercise

Criteria for program Grade (2013-2014-2015)

- Popularity (Acceptance Rate) 18%:

  # of Stud. Accepted / # of Stud. Applied

- Capture Rate 18%:

  # of Stud. Registered / # of Stud. Accepted

- Time to Completion (TTC) Rate Normalized by National Sector Averages 18%:

  TTC-Sector Average / Sector average

- External Awards per non-visa students 18%

- Attrition (terminated students)12%

- Research Activity 16%

  Normalized (per tri-council ratios) mainstream grant $$$ per capita

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Endowed Awards
Entrance or In Course

- Departmental or Faculty awards* (Donor-Based Awards)

 Nominations:

From Departments or Faculties to SGS

 Available funding quotas communicated by SGS to Departments or Faculties

Rolling deadline based on department competition dates:

 All nominations must be received by SGS by

January 31

*Subject to eligibility requirements

- *If you encounter problems disbursing endowed awards (eg. tight restrictions)* communicate with us ASAP.

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External Awards-
Government Granting Agencies

Federal

Master's: $17,500 for one year

PhD: $21,000 to $35,000 up to 3 years

SSHRC: The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council

NSERC: The Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada

CIHR: Canadian Institutes of Health Research

Provincial

Master's: $15,000/year

PhD: $20,000/year

FRQSC: Fonds de recherche du Quebec – Societé et culture

FRQNT: Fonds de recherche du Quebec – Nature et technologies

FRSQ: Fonds de recherce santé du Quebec

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External Awards –
Tri Council Master's (new process)

- Our Quotas as per Tri-Council's Formula

  CIHR   0.34%   2 out of 400

  NSERC   1.56%   12 out of 800 +6 NSER-Internal

  SSHRC   2.7%   34 out of 1300

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External Awards –
Tri Council Master's (new process)

In order to

- Facilitate Recruitment

- Optimize the work of the GPD

- Optimize the work of the adjudication committee

- Improve our acceptance rate with the Tri Council

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External Awards –
Tri Council Master's (GPD's role)

Pre-Adjudication

- Eliminate uninterested candidates

- Rank with recruitment and fairness in mind

- **Provide explanatory appraisals with comparative explanations**

Post-Adjudication

- Imperative not to communicate results to candidates-embargo imposed by tri-council.

- However, a conditional financial commitment can be made early on.

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Travel Funding

- **Funding for Conference Presentations**
  - Gain practical experience with presenting YOUR research.
  - presentations at major scholarly conferences, or artistic exhibitions in a peer-reviewed or juried context.
  - Up to $1,000 per term for the first five years
  - Deadline date is prior to the event
  - Apply at SGS

Focus on Dissertation

- **Accelerator Award**
  - $5,000 for PhD students
  - May be held between the 9th and 14th term of the doctoral program.
  - Allows students to focus on the last stage of the doctoral program – the thesis.
  - Apply at SGS

Rewarding Your Success

- **Special Entrance Awards**
  - Offered to students who accept their admission to Concordia and who have received an award offer from one of the designated provincial and federal granting agencies.
  - $6,000 top-up for master's students
  - $10,000 top-up for doctoral students
  - No need to apply

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International Students

1- Federal Tri-Council Granting Agencies

- Tri-Council Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship
  - Value: $50,000/year for 3 years TAX FREE.
  - Open to international students.
  - Applicants must be invited by the department to submit an application to the competitions.
  - Deadline: announced every Spring, Sept. 2017

Internal department procedures
(Things that will make your life easier)

- Graduate studies committee

  – makes decisions in regard to students, program developments, curriculum changes

- Thorough record keeping and documentation practices

- Clear and accessible information for students re: departmental expectations

Curriculum changes

Examples: new courses, changes in prerequisites, adding an option to a program, changing requirements for a program, creating a new program...

For major curriculum changes, involve SGS as soon as possible. SGS can provide support in:

- Reviewing supporting documentation;
- Carrying out student surveys;
- Providing information about similar programs at other universities;
- Crafting program learning outcomes and mapping outcomes to pedagogical activities;
- Coordinating meetings among different partners;
- Consulting about BCI and Ministry processes.

Engaged Graduate Supervision

Academic mentoring & research training & career guidance

Guidelines:

- Establish supervisor/academic advisor early

- Agreement on nature and frequency of contact

- Establish clear, mutually shared expectations re:

  - timeline and goals

  - funding, publications, research ethics

  - IP, authorship & collaboration

  - language training

  - quality of writing & citations

- GPD should be willing to act as resource and/or mediator for both students and supervisors

- Cotutelle Opportunities

> **Reference:** CAGS Guiding Principles for Graduate Student Supervision – SGS website under 'publications'

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Graduate Admissions

- Standard files
  - Meets all entrance requirements (Calendar)
    - Appropriate GPA
    - Appropriate background degree/experience
    - Accredited institution (Faculty rep who then contacts SGS)
    - Acceptable degree (Faculty rep who then contacts SGS)
    - Language requirements (TOEFL etc.)

- Standard file procedure
  - Complete files screened
  - Admission letter issued by Faculty on recommendation of GPD
  - Conditions: deficiencies (QP), official results/transcripts

Graduate Admissions

- Non-standard files
  - Fast Track (bachelor's &/or incomplete master's to PhD)
  - Low GPA
  - Non-Degree
  - Non-Accredited
  - Miscellaneous (eg. GMAT, TOEFL)

- Non-Standard file procedure
  - Standard process but identified as non-St. (HG code)
  - GPD provides rationale (committee)
  - Review and decision by SGS

- Admission Audit (e.g. fulfilling deficiency & other admission requirements (GPA, TOEFL, Official Documents)

Graduate Admissions

- Great student but…
  - Qualifying program
    - Up to 24 credits of undergraduate courses
    - Complete in first three terms
    - Complete **prior** to starting bulk of graduate program
    - Avenue to use if student is not accepted into a MA/PHD program but department would like to evaluate success for a future admit term by registering them into relevant and transferable MA/PhD courses
- Shaky student but…
  - Independent program
    - Up to 12 credits of graduate courses
    - Could also be undergraduate independent

Advising, Registration and Milestones

Advising

- Academic advising information and advising sheets can be found in the registration guide.
- The program advising sheets should be updated with the most up to date information.

Registration

- Online registration
- Registration blocks (negative service indicators)
- Deficiency courses
- PhD and Master's students must maintain registration each term (course, continuing in program (CIP), leave of absence or Time Limit Extension)

Milestones

- Allow us to track students throughout their lifecycle as a graduate research student
- Major steps in the process with expected completion dates, based on the admission term
- Due dates and completion of the milestones can be updated/adjusted by the program
- Individual milestones can be added to selected students
- Examples of some major milestones can include: completion of coursework, Progress Report, Ethics clearance, Comprehensive –Oral, Comprehensive - Written exam, Thesis Proposal Defence, Intent to submit Thesis, Thesis Submission (Pre-defence or Final)

Academic Standing & Regulations
(assessing students at risk)

An ounce of prevention...
- Indicators of trouble:
  - low grades/failures/supervisor
  - late for deadlines
  - supervisor/unsatisfactory progress reports

Communicate/confirm in writing with copy to file
Interpret and apply rules
Provide options

SGS runs the academic standing process after the end of each term
- C Rule, F Rule, Low AGPA,
- notice sent to GPDs/GPAs informing of the process
- registration is blocked for failed students until department submits recommendation for continuance

Query to check the standing: CU_SR_ACAD_STDNG_GRAD

Reference: Graduate Calendar – Academic Regulations section

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Academic Standing & Regulations
(assessing students at risk)

What is the likelihood of improvement?
- Review each case individually
  - May Continue:
    - GPA calculator
      On Cspace: https://cspace.concordia.ca/resources/faculty/teaching/graduate-admin/changes-to-regulations.html - acadstanding

    Necessary conditions to attain good academic standing?
    - Follow-up towards a successful graduation
    - Strike a committee to decide on continuation
  - May not Continue:
    - Not easy….but sometimes necessary!!
    - May not be the end of the road
      - Later
      - Appeal need to document (e-mail with CC to files)
    - GPA calculation
- NOTE: SGS usually follows YOUR recommendation! (for better or worse)
- Office of Student Affairs is available for consultation
    - Formal
    - Informal

In-Program Progress
(assisting students & programs for timely completion)

- Progress Reports for Research Students
    - Annual Ph.D. & Master's Progress Reports (sent late January/early February)
    - Deadline to submit late March, GPD to evaluate
        - Now following-up on (sent to SGS)
    - Role of Associate Dean

- Time Limits (April 30, August 31, December 31)
    - More time needed?
    - Student must request (TLE) with timeline for completion with supervisor support
    - Must have completed progress report

- In Progress (IP) is added by the professor in consultation with the student. The student is required to submit outstanding work to the professor by the DNE of the term following registration of the course. The INC notation must not be selected by the professor as it blocks grade change entry.

- In Progress Extension Grades (IPE)
    - IPE (via Service Request) is used to indicate an extension of the IP
    - Requires confirmation of the instructor's support
    - Exceptional cases only at graduate level
    - Expired IPE grades convert to grade/INC (April 30, August 31, December 31)
    - INC cannot be changed from the Faculty Center, must be submitted via a service request
    - INC is a system generated notation indicating that the IP/IPEs have expired at the graduate level
    - IPE, MED, PEND cannot be selected in the Faculty Center

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Thesis Submission Deadlines

Spring Convocation:

- PhD First Submission: February 11 to Thesis Office

- PhD Final Submission: April 1 to Spectrum

- Master's Final Submission: April 1 to Spectrum

Fall Convocation:

- PhD First Submission: July 14 to Thesis Office

- PhD Final Submission: September 1 to Spectrum

- Master's Final Submission: September 1 to Spectrum

Master's 1st submission are submitted directly to the program

Students incur fees if the thesis is not submitted to SPECTRUM by the DNE deadline of the relevant convocation, if they have applied to graduate

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# What is the Process for Handling Violations of the Code?

1. Suspected violation of Code detected
    –   Professor, Graduate student, Invigilator
2. Incident report submitted to Dean of School of Graduate Studies. Actually Associate Dean.
    –   Make as complete as possible
    –   Any specific instructions to student on plagiarism & The Code?
3. Letter is issued (by courier to home address & email) requesting interview to discuss the charges (15 days).
4. A decision is made by the Associate Dean as to validity of the charges.
    •   If charge is not upheld, nothing further
    •   If charge is upheld, notation of academic misconduct shows up on academic record and sanction is applied.
5.   Appeals process: AHP and GAAT

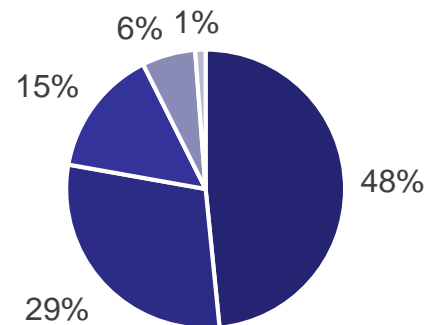UNIVERSITÉ Concordia UNIVERSITY

GradProSkills

- **Complementary training** to graduate academic programs
- Helps ensure our **student's academic success** and **integration into the labour market**
- In 2016-2017, offered **327 workshops** with total enrolment of **6,111 students**.
- Workshops are led by **campus & community partners, professors** and **graduate students**

Enrolment by Program

8% 1% 1%
23%
67%
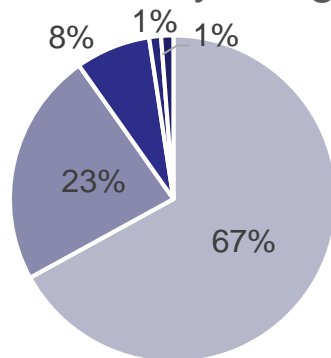
■ Master ■ PHD ■ Dip/Cert ■ Indep. ■ PostDoc

Enrolment by Faculty

6% 1%
15%
48%
29%

■ ENCS ■ AS ■ JMSB ■ FA ■ Other

concordia.ca/gradproskills

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