

Physics Graduate Program Procedures Guide

Concordia University
Department of Physics
(updated September 2023)

This document details the departmental-level procedures for the MSc and PhD Programs in Physics at Concordia University. This document is a guideline, and procedures can be changed before this document is updated, so in case of questions ask the Graduate Program Assistant (GPA) or Graduate Program Director (GPD). The goal of this document is to supplement the Physics Graduate Program Policy (PGPP) with operational details. In case of conflicting information, the PGPP supersedes this document.

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1 Procedures common to all graduate students

This section lists procedures that are common to MSc and PhD students.

1.1 Establishment of the supervisory committee

The student, together with their supervisor(s) must decide on the members of the Supervisory Committee (SC). They must complete and sign the “Graduate Student Supervisory Committee” form and submit it to the GPA. With this form they should also include the one-page Research Plan. This should happen during the first term of studies.

1.2 Supervisory committee meetings

Students and supervisor(s) are responsible for scheduling the annual Supervisory Committee meetings. At least one week before the meeting, the student must fill the “Supervisory Committee Report” form and submit it to the Supervisory Committee members. After the meeting, the supervisor(s) should gather feedback from the student and Committee members, and complete the evaluation part of the report form. All Committee members and the student must sign the form. The signed form is then submitted to the GPA.

1.3 Conference funding

Attending and presenting their work in conferences is an important part of the graduate student experience. Students are highly encouraged to follow the following process to maximize the support they can receive.

1. **Before the conference:** Apply to the [Conference and Exposition Allowance](#) from the School of Graduate Studies. Note that you must apply to this at least 30 days before the start of the conference. You should apply as soon as you know you will be presenting in the conference. Check the eligibility rules (once per year for PhD students up to their fifth year, once for MSc students).
2. **Before the conference:** Discuss with your supervisor the amount of funds not covered by the SGS award they will be able to cover. If your supervisor is not able to cover all the remaining costs, ask the Department (the Assistant to the Chair or Department Administrator) to see if it can provide some support (that is not necessarily guaranteed, but you need to ask) and apply to the Faculty of Arts and Science Graduate Conference funding once you return from the conference.
3. **During the conference:** In general you will have to pay out of your pocket, and then ask for a reimbursement. Keep all your receipts for transportation, registration fees, and other travel-related expenses. Discuss with your supervisor if you will be claiming a per-diem or individual meals. If you will be claiming a per-diem, you do not need receipts for meals, but if you will claim them individually you will need the receipts.

4. **After the conference:** If the SGS award and your supervisor funding was not enough to cover the full cost, within 10 days of returning from the conference, you must apply to the [Faculty of Arts and Sciences Graduate Student Conference funding](#).
5. **After the conference:** No later than 30 days after the last day of the conference, you must apply to the [Graduate Students Association Conference Funding](#).
6. **After the different requests for support have been decided:** Once you know all the different sources of funding for the reimbursements, you will have to claim them following their instructions.

2 Masters of Science in Physics procedures

2.1 Fast-track to PhD

1. First, discuss the possibility with your supervisor(s), at least 1 term (or more) in advance.
2. If your supervisor(s) agree with the fast-track, notify the GPA and GPD of your intention to fast-track, including in which term you would like to start in the PhD program (an informal email is enough).
3. Have a formal meeting with your Supervisory Committee (it can be specially called, or it can be a regular one) to discuss the fast-track. The meeting should be scheduled at least one month before the start of the intended first term in the PhD program. Recommended meeting times are much earlier: February for Fall or Summer start, August for Winter start. The Supervisory Committee may ask for some requirements to be satisfied before agreeing to the fast-track.
4. Once the Supervisory Committee agrees, they have to write a justification for the appropriateness of fast-tracking the student to the PhD program.
5. Apply to the PhD program using the regular process to the term when you want to start the PhD. If you cannot apply to that term, apply to the next one and notify the GPD of your application. Include in the application the justification from your Supervisory Committee.
6. The Graduate Program Committee will evaluate your application and come to a decision. If accepted, you will receive an admission letter to the PhD program.

2.2 MSc thesis submission

1. First, discuss the timing for your thesis submission with your supervisor(s). Keep your program time limits in mind!
2. Fill the “Masters thesis submission form”. The form does not require signatures, but requires that you designate your Thesis Committee (it can be your Supervisory Committee) and that you select a date and time that will be appropriate to all members of the committee for the review meeting and/or defence.
3. Submit your thesis and the “Masters thesis submission form” to the GPA, at least four weeks before the date when your Thesis Committee will meet to review the thesis.
4. The GPA will send to your supervisor two forms: a “Master’s Thesis Committee Report” form, and a “Graduate Activity Grade Report” form. The first one needs to be filled and signed by the Thesis Committee after the review meeting, while the second one has to be filled and signed by your supervisor(s) once the final version of the thesis is ready.
5. The signed forms must be sent to the GPA so that the GPD will sign them. The “Master’s Thesis Committee Report” form will be forwarded to the Thesis Office, and the “Graduate Activity

Report” will be forwarded to the Associate Dean, Graduate Studies in the Faculty of Arts and Science.

6. You must upload the final version of your thesis to Spectrum before the deadline.

3 Doctorate in Physics procedures

3.1 Comprehensive examination

1. First, discuss with your supervisor(s) the timing of the exam. You should have taken all your required regular courses before you can do your comprehensive examination.
2. Discuss with your Supervisory Committee the topic of the exam, and any specific details in terms of the format the Committee may want to use (the format is specified in the PGPP, but there is a certain flexibility to allow the Supervisory Committees to adapt to the different fields of research present in the Department). This does not require a formal committee meeting (although it can be discussed during one).
3. Near the beginning of the term when you want to do the examination, notify your intent to the GPA. This can be done through an informal email. If you decide to postpone the examination, just let the GPA know.
4. Arrange the date and time of the examination with your Supervisory Committee with at least two weeks of anticipation, and notify the GPA of the date and time. The GPA may be able to help you to reserve a room for the examination if you notify them with enough time. The GPA will send to your supervisor(s) the corresponding “Graduate Activity Grade Report” form.
5. At least one week before the examination, send your Supervisory Committee your Comprehensive Examination Report, written in accordance with the PGPP.
6. At the end of the examination, your Supervisory Committee will decide whether you passed or not. If you passed, your supervisor(s) will need to fill in and sign the “Graduate Activity Grade Report” form and submit it to the GPA. If you did not pass, you need to discuss with your supervisor(s) and Supervisory Committee the steps to follow.

3.2 PhD thesis submission

The PhD thesis submission process is regulated by the Thesis Office. Please look at their [documentation](#).