

SoCS Graduate Studies Updates

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Major grad scholarship deadlines

More info: <https://graduatestudies.uoguelph.ca/current/funding/scholarships>

Sept 28, 2023 - NSERC PGS D - \$21,000 / year for 3 years

- NSERC CGS D - \$35,000 / year for 3 years

Dec 1, 2023 - NSERC CGS M - \$17,500, 1 year, non-renewable

Note: **Nov 20th** deadline to order free UofG transcripts

Jan 31, 2024 – OGS / QEII-GSST- \$15,000, 1 year

Note: renewable (M: max 2 years; PhD: max 4 years)

Jan 31, 2024 – OGS / QEII-GSST- \$15,000, 1 year

Mid-Feb 2024 (was Feb 22 last year) – Arrell Food Scholarships (Entrance only)

- \$50K M, up to 2 years

- \$50K PhD, up to 4 years

Early July 2024 (July 3rd last year) – Food From Thought Scholarships (Entrance & In-Course)

- \$10,000, non-renewable

Major grad scholarships: Reminders

More info: <https://graduatestudies.uoguelph.ca/current/funding/scholarships>

Support your students!

- **encourage both ugrads & grads to apply**, even if you don't think they are particularly competitive
 - Some years only a few applicants, you never know; changing criteria over time – more focus on IMPACT rather than NUMBERS
- Provide example applications / encourage students to help each other
- Review their applications
- **write STRONG letters**
 - detailed,
 - focused on the assessment criteria of the award,
 - highlight notable achievements, put achievements in context (e.g., is a conference prestigious? Are conferences important in your field? Etc.)
 - If you are too busy, ask student to draft the letter and then just modify it

Grad Recruitment / Grad Preview Day

- OGPS staff cuts: providing no / minimal support for grad recruiting
- Dean's office is offering support
 - Targeted online recruiting (social media ads, etc.)
 - Organizing **Grad Preview Day** on **Oct 25th** (4-6:30pm) for selected CEPS programs (those who expressed interest)
 - **Booth** – staffed by SoCS faculty, students, staff (thank you!)
 - **10 min hybrid info sessions** – Stacey will present on Masters & PhD thesis programs; Rick will present on MCTI program
 - Sessions will be recorded and used for website / online promotions

Clarification on Qualifying Exam Procedures

- Currently no specific university-wide policies on QE procedures
 - Each unit handles these differently
- To reducing confusion during QEs, it would be helpful to have specific, agreed-upon procedure for QE process. Currently we have open presentation, brief time (10 minutes) for audience questions, and (usually) closed committee Q&A
 - PhD.CSCI and PhD.CS handbooks on wiki state: “The oral presentation is announced publicly and is open to any attendees, but the questioning period is closed.”
 - Ambiguity around questions from audience, and whether closed Q&A reduces learning opportunities for others (e.g., Defence Q&As are open)

For context:

- Engineering: open presentation, semi-closed Q&A (Engineering faculty can observe Q&A; not allowed to ask questions)
- Physics: presentation and questions closed (oral directly follows written exam)
- Chemistry: N/A: run by Waterloo portion of joint program
- Math/Stats: unclear (no response to inquiries)

Motion (Qualifying Exam Procedures)

- Move for the Council to approve the following proposed procedure for Qualifying Examinations for both the **PhD.CSCI** and **PhD.CS** programs:
 - Oral presentation from candidate - open to public (30 mins)
 - Audience questions – open to public (10 mins)
 - Short Break (5 mins)
 - Question & Answer period – closed to candidate and examination committee (90 mins)
 - 2 Rounds, with short break between, if needed

Graduate Committee Membership Discussion

- Observed issue: some SoCS committees are quite large, and involve many external candidates
 - Have received student complaints about lack of advice provided from some members, lack of access / availability of advisors, especially external advisors
 - Non-committed advisory members can delay student progress
 - All committee members need to sign off on progress reports, sign degree forms (QEs, Seminars, Defences, etc.)
 - Large committees can provide conflicting feedback to students, introduce delays for gaining approvals
- Would like Council feedback on value of introducing restrictions to SoCS advisory committee structures (size, membership) to safeguard progress and appropriate evaluation of students

Some context for discussion

- Some units, e.g., Math/Stats provide restrictions (based on conversation with M/S faculty, could not find the following documented):
 - Master's: supervisor (Math/Stats) + 1 additional member (Math/Stats or other)
 - PhD: supervisor (Math/Stats) + 2 additional members (1 must be Math/Stats)
(note, if co-supervised, this replaces the 1 supervisor, but not committee members)
 - Exceptions must have **very strong** reasons / value add for student
- Collaborators do not always make suitable advisory committee members
 - Industry collaborators may lack experience with Master's / PhD theses for suitable calibration of expected scope of contributions
 - Different fields / types of programs, even different countries have very different expectations for scope / outcomes of Master's / PhD programs

MCTI update (brief)

- Ali will be returning from parental leave earlier than scheduled: Nov 1
- Ali will manage industry internship process for MCTI
 - Industry recruitment / project identifying potential Mitacs projects / project supervisors
- Stacey will continue to manage other administrative aspects of MCTI program until Spring

Questions?