



Handbook for EEB Graduate Students

(2019-2020)
(updated September 3, 2019)



WELCOME to the new EEB Graduate Students

From Helen Rodd and Aneil Agrawal:

I am very pleased to welcome you to the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology (EEB) at the University of Toronto. I hope that your graduate experience here will be scientifically challenging and exciting, and that you will find worthy mentors and collaborators, and lasting friends among the faculty and your fellow students. This is a great department and I urge you to get involved in the life of the department to help to make it an even more lively and interesting place.

I look forward to meeting and interacting with you soon.

Regards,

Helen Rodd, Professor and Graduate Coordinator

Aneil Agrawal, Professor and Associate Chair of Graduate Studies

On behalf of the Ecology and Evolutionary Biology Graduate Student Association (EGSA):

Welcome to EEB at the University of Toronto!

As a graduate student in EEB at U of T, you are joining an active, vibrant community. We aim to foster an environment ripe for the exchange of knowledge and ideas but also to support each other in times of need and stress. Being a graduate student will be an exciting and uniquely challenging experience for many of you, and EGSA is here to address both these facets of grad life.

All graduate students in EEB are members of the EGSA. The EGSA represents students from all three campuses and is a great resource for keeping grad life in check. New graduate students are introduced to the department through our mentorship program and the KSR retreat. Throughout the year, our executive committee works with faculty to address departmental matters related to the graduate program, and connects EEB students with the graduate community at large through the Graduate Students' Union and CUPE 3902 Unit 1 (the teaching assistants' workers' union). We aim to keep our graduate students informed about departmental and university affairs through emails and EGSA meetings, and also provide funding for conference travel. Finally, to help alleviate some of the woes of graduate school and reward your hard work, we also host several social events, such as Halloween, winter holiday, and Darwin Day celebrations.

Be sure to attend the EGSA meetings in September and throughout the year to find out what we are up to and what's new on campus: there will be plenty of opportunities for you to contribute to and become involved in all areas of the department. We hope that you will enjoy your time as a graduate student in EEB as you meet friends, make professional contacts, and develop skills that you will take with you to the next stage of your career.

For more information on the EGSA, please see:

- The EGSA website

<http://egsa.sa.utoronto.ca/>

- The EGSA section on the departmental website

<http://www.eeb.utoronto.ca/grad/egsa.htm>

- The Facebook group Ecology & Evolutionary Biology Graduate Students Association (UofT)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/184155518261184/>

All graduate students in EEB are members of the EGSA

Again, welcome to EEB! We look forward to getting to know you!

Rosemary Martin & Leila Forsyth

EGSA Co-presidents 2019-2020

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NOTE: Every effort was made to ensure the information in this Handbook was accurate at press time (September 3, 2019). This handbook is available on the Current EEB Graduate Student webpage under Forms and Documents. Revised versions of the handbook will be posted as they become available

GRADUATE CONTACTS

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Ecology & Evolutionary Biology Graduate Student Association

Co-Presidents (2019-2020): Rosie Martin and Leila Forsyth
Email: Rosemary Martin (rosemary.martin@mail.utoronto.ca) and Leila Forsyth (Leila.forsyth@utoronto.ca)
Website: <http://www.eeb.utoronto.ca/grad/egsa.htm>

EEB Graduate Studies Website: <http://www.eeb.utoronto.ca/grad/current.htm>

Email for MSc defenses and PhD appraisal exams: grad.eeb@utoronto.ca

School of Graduate Studies (SGS), Student Services Office

Website: <http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/currentstudents/Pages/Services-for-Students.aspx>
63 St. George Street, Room 102
Phone: 416-978-6614

Graduate Student Union

Website: <https://www.utgsu.ca/>
16 Bancroft Avenue
Phone: 416-946-8699

*****For many other U of Toronto services available to EEB graduate students, please see the Campus Life section at the end of this handbook *****

IMPORTANT DEADLINES

It is the student's responsibility to be aware of all relevant deadlines.

2019

- August 23:** Deadline for payment of tuition fees if you are not deferring them.
- September 9:** Most formal graduate courses (check the EEB Grad Course webpage for details—some may begin earlier than this) and seminars begin.
- September 11:** Summer Session Grades available for viewing by students on the SWS (ACORN).
Please check your academic record and ensure all information is accurate
- September 13:** Last date to register without a late registration fee.
- September 16:** Final date to submit Ph.D. thesis to SGS to avoid fee charges for 2019-2020.
- September 23:** Final date to add full-year and Fall session courses.
- September 27:** Final date for receipt of degree recommendation and submission of MSc Thesis for November convocation and to avoid fee charges. (*Approval of Corrections to MSc Thesis form must be submitted to the Graduate Office by September 25*)
- September 27:** Final date to submit final Ph.D. thesis to SGS for Fall Convocation.
- October 28:** Final date to drop September session full-year or half-courses without academic penalty.
- November:** Fall Convocation Information and Dates are posted at:
www.convocation.utoronto.ca.
- December 23:** University closed for winter break from Monday, December 23 to Friday, January 3 inclusive.

2020

- January 6:** Most formal graduate courses (check the EEB Grad Course webpage for details) and seminars begin.
- January 15:** Final date to submit Doctoral thesis without fee payment for January (Winter) session.
- January 15:** September (Fall) Session Grades available for viewing by students on SWS.
Please check your academic record and ensure all information is accurate.
- January 20:** Final date to register for new January registrants.

January 20: Final date to add Winter session courses.

January 24: Final date to be recommended for March (in absentia) degree conferral. Final date for receipt of degree recommendations and thesis submission for March or June graduation for M.Sc students, without fees being charged for the Winter session. (*"Approval of Corrections to MSc Thesis" form must be submitted to the Graduate Office by January 22*).

February 24: Final date to drop full-year courses or January session courses without academic penalty. Final date to withdraw from a program without academic penalty.

March: March Graduation *in absentia* Information is posted at: www.convocation.utoronto.ca.

April 17: Final date to be recommended for June Convocation. Final date to submit Ph.D. theses and M.Sc theses for June Convocation.

May 1: Final date for registration for May (Summer) session.

May 13: Winter Session grades available for viewing by students on SWS (ACORN). *Please check your academic record and ensure all information is accurate.*

It is the student's responsibility to be aware of all relevant deadlines.

REGISTRATION, ENROLLMENT, AND UPDATING YOUR INFORMATION

Registration

Students must register and, unless they defer their fees (details on how to defer payment this way are below), pay fees at the beginning of each academic year (i.e., in August-September). Registration must be completed before students attend classes or otherwise make use of university facilities. A student is considered to be registered as soon as he or she has either paid tuition and incidental fees, or has made a request to register without payment (see below). A student's registration is normally for the full year (i.e. from September 1st to August 31st). The deadline for registration is September 13, 2019 or, for students registering for the first time in the Winter session, January 20, 2020. After this date, a late registration fee will be levied. Student Accounts has revised the registration invoice process and they will no longer be mailing paper invoices to students. Students can view instructions on the Student Accounts website, view their account on the Student Web Service (see next page for details), and then make payment. Fee schedules are available at www.fees.utoronto.ca.

Fees must be paid by **August 23, 2019** so that the payment is processed by **September 13, the deadline to register for Fall/Winter 2019-2020; however, we recommend that, when possible, students defer their fees. If a request is made early enough, most students can defer paying some or all of their fees, interest-free, until April 30, 2020.** The fee deferral process differs for different groups of students. *Students who are in the EEB funded cohort*, that is they are (1) in the first 12 months of their MSc, (2) in the PhD program and in the first 5 years after entering with a BSc or transferring from a MSc to a PhD, or (3) in the PhD program and in the first 4

years after entering with an MSc, may submit a request to register without payment **online** at (www.acorn.utoronto.ca); students in months 13-16 of their MSc can defer their fees by submitting a register without payment form to Kitty Lam and she will defer your fees for you (you are not required to submit proof of funding). **For students beyond the EEB funded cohort and who are receiving a major award, RA from their supervisor and/or teaching assistantship that cover the minimum payment, may defer their fees by completing this Register without Payment form** (<http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/Documents/Register-Without-Payment.pdf>) and by submitting it to Kitty Lam (gradadmin.eeb@utoronto.ca). The Register without Payment form must be submitted to Kitty by mail, fax (416-978-5878) or in person to ESC 3046 before **Tuesday, September 10, 2019**, otherwise the fee deferral will not take place. If you don't defer your fees online on ACORN SWS or submit the Register without Payment form, it is assumed that you are registering by making the minimum payment. If you miss the registration deadline and wish to register and defer fees after the registration deadline, you will have to go to SGS to register and arrange for fee deferral. Students registering late like this will be charged a late registration fee.

New graduate students and many continuing students will be provided with a UTF payment from their stipend package early in September; this is to assist them in becoming established here and/or in preparing for the academic year. The amount is listed as "UTF Sept. Stipend" on the FAS Funding letter and this payment will be deposited directly into the student's bank account or, if the student has not registered for direct deposit on ROSI, a cheque for the listed amount will be sent to the student's mailing address as listed on ROSI (the U of T's 'Repository of Student Information' computer system). **Using the Student Web Service on ACORN (formerly ROSI), registered students can enter/update their banking information. Students who fill this in will have their awards, scholarship, and tuition over-payment refunds deposited directly into their bank account, rather than receiving the payment as a cheque.** It is a simple process to add your bank information on ACORN/ROSI (see the link on the upper left of the U of T Home Page). After you log in, select Personal Information, then click on Direct Deposit, and follow the instructions.

For students arriving in September, the first payments from Research Assistantships (RA) (funding from their supervisor(s)) and/or TA position(s) will be deposited at the end of September and monthly thereafter, in accordance with the agreements made in early September between students and their supervisor(s) (see the stipend form and letter that you will receive from Kitty by mid-Sept.). Some University of Toronto Fellowship (UTF) allocations in your stipend package will be automatically paid toward your registration and fees in September, January and May payments. In March, **you should check your ACORN (formerly ROSI) account to determine whether you have an unpaid balance for your tuition and other fees that you need to pay off before April 30.**

Graduate students in the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology can access the Student Web Service (SWS) through ACORN (formerly ROSI). Instructions are located there and also in the document called "SWS instructions" that is posted on the EEB Grad Student webpage under 'Courses' and 'Documents, Forms and Links'. These are the services available on the SWS:

- View/Change address, telephone numbers, email
- View final grades
- View academic history
- Order transcripts

- Add/request/drop/list courses or waitlist requests
- View personal timetable or My Calendar
- View your financial account information (invoices, account details, payments)
- Update direct deposit details
- Defer payment of tuition (available to students in the funded cohort)
- Print Educational Credit tax forms (T2202A)
- Order convocation tickets
- View activity log
- Change your PIN
- Set your account up for reactivation of PIN

Academic fees paid by doctoral students in the final year of their program are pro-rated monthly. The pro-rating is based on the date the completed thesis is submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, not the date of the thesis defense. For a table of monthly charges, refer to:

http://www.fees.utoronto.ca/sessions/2019_2020/tuition_fees/fees/sgs.htm

PhD students who submit their final thesis with all corrections and modifications by September 16, 2019 do not pay tuition for the Fall session but, after this date, the tuition fees increase slightly each month (the deadline is the 15th of each month). Incidental fees are pro-rated differently: students finishing between September 16, 2019 and January 15, 2020 will pay a one-session incidental fee and those finishing between January 16, 2020 and August 31, 2020 will pay a two-session incidental fee.

Graduate students may apply for affiliation with one of the U of T Mississauga (UTM) or U of T Scarborough (UTSC) campuses, instead of with the St. George campus, if they meet specific criteria. Affiliation with UTM or UTSC gives them access to some benefits restricted to one of those campuses. Deadlines for requesting a change of campus affiliation are the same as the registration deadline at the beginning of each term. Retroactive changes are not allowed. Applications can be found at: <https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/academic-progress/student-forms-letters/>.

EEB GRADUATE COURSES

Course Enrolment

Academic advisors, faculty and staff are available to assist and advise students about choosing courses, but it is the student's responsibility to actually enroll in courses, to keep personal and academic information up to date at all times, and to follow all University, SGS, departmental and program regulations, requirements and deadlines. Students are automatically enrolled for their research/thesis activity but must sign up for EEB graduate courses on ACORN (formerly ROSI) via SWS. Graduate students in the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology can use the Student Web Service (SWS) to view their current courses and to request or drop courses; the Department permits students to use the Student Web Service (SWS, ACORN) to enroll in courses as long as they do so within the required deadlines. Not all departments will use ACORN for course sign up; if students wish to take a course offered by another department, see information on the EEB Graduate Student Courses webpage. Note: students need permission from their supervisor(s), their supervisory committee, and the EEB Graduate Office to take a course (for credit) from another department. See the EEB Graduate Courses webpage for further information on how to enroll for courses:

<http://www.eeb.utoronto.ca/grad/current/courses.htm>

Not all courses are offered every year and new courses (e.g. Special Topics courses on a specific themes) will be offered in future years. Those offered in 2019-20 are asterisked in the list below. Please refer to the EEB Graduate Courses webpage for a list of current and future course offerings, along with descriptions of their content and, for the current year, the term in which they are offered, and in some cases, the time and location of the classes:
<http://www.eeb.utoronto.ca/grad/current/courses.htm>. Some courses offered by other departments that might be of interest to EEB grad students are also listed on the EEB graduate courses website.

The following is a list of the graduate courses offered in 2019-2020 at the time of the September update of this document. Please see the EEB Graduate Courses webpage for information on other courses that may be offered later this year.

Courses Offered at the Graduate Level Only

- EEB 1210H* Advanced Statistics (1/4 course) [M.-J. Fortin]
- EEB 1230H Multivariate Statistics [D. Jackson]
- EEB 1250H* Spatial Statistics (1/4 course) [M.-J. Fortin]
- EEB 1310H* Philosophy and Methods [H. Rodd, N. Rollinson, J. Sztepanacz and others]
- EEB 1315H Professional Skills Development (1/4 course) [H. Rodd and others] *Note: only 2 of these 3 courses may be taken for credit: EEB1315, R, Python*
- EEB 1320H Ecology: Core Course in Ecology [B. Gilbert, M. Krkosek] (offered in alternate years; see below about EEB core courses)
- EEB 1350H* Evolution: Core Course in Evolution [A. Agrawal, S. Wright] (offered in alternate years; see below about EEB core courses)
- EEB 1357H Field Ecology and Evolution of Ontario Ecosystems
- EEB 1360H Special Topics in Behaviour: Integrative Biology of Behaviour [M. Fitzpatrick, T. Thiele, B. Richards, etc.] (may be offered in Winter 2020)
- EEB 1450H* Special Topics in Ecology and Evolution: Landscape Genetics [H. Wagner]
- EEB 1450H Special Topics in Ecology and Evolution: Classics and Cutting Edge of Ecology and Evolution
- EEB 1452H* Special Topics in Ecology: Applied Aquatic Ecology [C. Rochman]

Graduate Courses with Significant Undergraduate Content**

Note: These courses will normally constitute only a minor component of the required credits

- EEB 1328H* Physiological Ecology [R. Sage]
- EEB 1330H Systemic Botany [J. Eckenwalder]
- EEB 1340H* Comparative Plant Morphology [T. Sage]
- EEB 1420H* Special Topics in Ecology (Models in Ecology, Epidemiology, and Conservation) [P. Molnar]
- EEB 1421H Special Topics in Ecology (Plant-animal Interactions) [M. Frederickson]
- EEB 1430H* Modelling in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology [B. Gilbert, M. Krkosek]
- EEB 1440H Special topics in Evolution: Genomics [R. Ness] (may be offered in Winter 2020)
- EEB 1443H* Phylogenetic Principles
- EEB 1459H Introduction to Theoretical Population Genetics

EEB 1460H* Molecular Evolution and Genomics [D. Irwin & B. Chang]

EEB 1462H Phylogenetic Systematics [S. Kvist and S. Claramunt]

* Courses offered in 2019-2020

Suggest a special topics course: Previous special topics courses include: Parasites in Communities, Natural Selection: Levels and Landscapes, Behavioural Genetics, Field Ecol. and Evol. of Ontario Ecosystems. Find some grad students with common interests and convince one or two faculty members to put on a special topics course that is of mutual interest, then send a short description to the EEB Graduate office for approval.

Regarding EEB Core Ecology and Core Evolution Courses: These courses will cover the basics in the field (ecology or evolution). These courses are meant to be useful preparation for PhD students for the Question Bank part of the Appraisal Exam. If you have taken two or more 3rd or 4th year undergrad courses in a field (ecology or evolution), you may have sufficient background knowledge of the field already and the course for that field may not be especially useful for you—discuss whether you should take either of these courses with your supervisor and supervisory committee. If you have no or very little background in the field, you may need to sit in on undergrad lectures or do outside reading before you take one of these courses; however, if you have taken other courses in E&E (e.g., you have no background in ecology but you have taken courses in evolution, math or biological theory), ask the EEB graduate office and your supervisor and committee whether you will be equipped to take one of these courses.

In 2019-2020, graduate courses and seminars officially begin in the week of September 9th for September session courses (F) and January 6th for January session courses (S). Note: Undergraduate courses may begin earlier than this, especially on the UTM and UTSC campuses. Also, instructors frequently modify starting dates; consult first with the EEB Grad Course website and, if information is not available there, consult the course instructor so that you know the start date and location for the first class of your graduate course(s).

UPDATING YOUR ADDRESS, BANK, EMERGENCY CONTACT, ETC. INFORMATION

Students can change/update their contact information and view their academic record on the Student Web Service (SWS via ACORN (formerly ROSI); see the link on the upper left corner of the U of T Home Page).

For students who would like to receive payments by direct deposit to their bank, see the Registration section in this handbook (above) for information on how to provide banking information through ACORN on the SWS.

GENERAL GRADUATE PROGRAMME REGULATIONS FOR MSc AND PhD DEGREES

The School of Graduate Studies (SGS) establishes procedures for the completion of MSc and PhD degrees at the University of Toronto. Ecology and Evolutionary Biology (EEB) follows these procedures and has established additional or modified practices; these are detailed under MSc and PhD Program Regulations below. The SGS procedures are available in the online version of the SGS Calendar.

Graduate students in science at the University of Toronto, whether domestic or international, are provided financial support in the form of an annual stipend made up of, in 2019-2020, a base (minimum) amount of \$18,000 plus tuition and fees (including UHIP for international students) while they are in the EEB “funded cohort” (details below for each program). Departments may increase the stipend amount but cannot offer less than this minimum. EEB currently provides a minimum student income that is currently \$1300 above the Arts & Science guarantee.

A graduate student’s primary academic mentor is the research supervisor (or, in some cases, students have co-supervisors). In addition, a **Supervisory Committee** comprising the research supervisor (and co-supervisor if relevant) and other faculty members from EEB help guide students through their program of research and study. **Students must meet with their supervisory committee at least once or twice a year (see below for details) to maintain good academic standing** (see box below).

MSc students must complete one half-course and successfully defend their thesis in an oral exam. The nominal (“EEB funded cohort”) MSc program is 16 months in length. [If MSc students win external scholarship support or, by agreement with their supervisor, they can extend the MSc program to 24 months.]

PhD students are in the funded cohort for 4 years (for students entering with an MSc) or 5 years (for students entering without an MSc). After leaving the ‘funded’ cohort, some funding may be available, but income levels may drop; students and supervisor(s) should discuss this.

PhD students are examined on a research proposal and their general knowledge of ecology and evolutionary biology in a mid-program Appraisal Examination. This examination also involves a departmental seminar about their proposal. **The appraisal exam must be held 14 to 20 months after registration for students with a MSc degree and 14 to 26 months for students who entered their PhD directly from an undergraduate degree.** Please see the PhD Program regulations below and the relevant documents on this webpage: <http://www.eeb.utoronto.ca/grad/current/grad-forms.htm> for advice and more details about the appraisal exam.

Course work should be completed by the end of the third year for students with a MSc, and by the end of the 4th year for students without a MSc (direct entry students). Finally, to complete their degree, PhD students must deliver a departmental ‘exit’ seminar on their research program and orally defend their thesis.

To assist the student in completing these milestones on time, the Graduate Office may maintain tracking data for every student. While EEB will make every effort to alert students when deadlines have been missed, but it is ultimately the responsibility of the student and supervisor to ensure that each milestone is completed on time, and that appropriate documentation is submitted to the Graduate Office before and/or after committee meetings and examinations, as required. Students who do not meet the deadlines for committee meetings and the appraisal exam have not maintained good academic standing.

Failure to maintain good academic standing may result in ineligibility for external and internal fellowships, lower priority for bursaries, assistantships and travel awards, and may lead to program termination. To maintain good academic standing, courses, the appraisal exam (for PhD students) and committee meetings must be done as required (see below for details).

MSc PROGRAM REGULATIONS

In general, MSc students must demonstrate competence in independent research and would normally plan to author or co-author a paper on their research results for primary publication.

Duration and Registration

Students in the EEB MSc program are funded for 16 months. Students will normally register September 1, but may register May 1 or Jan. 1. Students whose thesis research will involve a substantial amount of fieldwork should consider starting a pilot project before they register in the program (this must be discussed with the potential supervisor). Students are expected to defend their thesis 12-16 months after registration (students may extend their time in the program, with funding, if they receive a major scholarship or the supervisor has additional funding available (this must be discussed with the potential supervisor before the student applies to the program)).

Financial Support

EEB MSc students are guaranteed financial support for 16 months in the form of a graduate stipend. For students without external scholarship support (e.g. NSERC, OGS, CIHR, Connaught), this stipend is comprised of: (1) a twelve-month stipend at the Departmental guaranteed income level, comprised of a Research Assistantship (RA), a 140-hr Teaching Assistantship (TA), a University of Toronto Fellowship (UTF), and, in some cases, an award from EEB's endowment fund; and (2) an additional four months of a Research Assistantship amounting to one-third of the Departmental base income, usually paid in the last four months of the program (when the first registration is Sept. 1 (or for those who started in May, in the first four months of the program)) and 70 hours of TAing during the last four months (usually Sept-Dec) if they occur during the academic year. For students with external scholarships, the Teaching Assistantship during the first year is reduced to 70 hours and a "top-up" may be awarded in addition to the guaranteed minimum. Further details on financial support are available on the stipend form and stipend letter distributed to students and supervisors by the EEB graduate office in late August/September. Students who do not complete their thesis within 16 months of registration continue to be eligible for TA positions (depending on availability), but are not eligible for any further financial support from the University of Toronto (UTF).

Coursework

MSc students must complete a single one-semester graduate course chosen from available courses (see **Graduate Courses** in this document and on the EEB web page). The Philosophy and Methods course (EEB1310H; helen.rodd@utoronto.ca) is specifically designed for new students but other courses also provide important, relevant background. We recommend that new students consult the full course descriptions on the EEB website and talk to their supervisor(s), and other graduate students about which course is most appropriate for them.

MSc Supervisory Committee

The student's research supervisor(s) will consult with the student about which faculty members will be useful and appropriate members of her/his Supervisory Committee. The Supervisory Committee comprises the research supervisor (and co-supervisor if any) plus two other professors from EEB. It **must meet at least twice during the 16-month program**. During the first committee meeting, which should be held **no later than three months after registration**, the student's academic background is reviewed and the proposed thesis research discussed. A second meeting of the supervisory committee must be held by the **end of the eighth month** of the MSc program in order to assess the student's academic and research progress, and to make any recommendations for completion of the degree. For students making outstanding progress, at a third meeting, the student and committee, may discuss, whether the student could switch from an MSc to a PhD program (see the section "TRANSFER FROM MSc to PhD PROGRAM"). For all committee meetings, the student must prepare a brief, written, progress report on research plans and, if there has been any, research progress, and send it to committee members **at least three full business days** in advance of the meeting. For all committee meetings, the student is responsible for printing out the committee meeting form (available on the Current EEB Graduate Student webpage, under Forms, Documents: <http://www.eeb.utoronto.ca/grad/current/grad-forms.htm>), and the supervisor is responsible for completing the form, ensuring that each committee member signs it. We recommend that the supervisor or student makes copies of the committee meeting report for both the student and the supervisor(s) before the student adds any comments at the end of the form. The student may then add their own comments to the form, must sign it, and submit it along with a copy of his/her progress report to the graduate office **within one week of the meeting**.

See Appendix A for advice on preparing for supervisory committee meetings.

Departmental Seminars

The academic culture of the department includes a vibrant set of discussion groups and seminar series. MSc students are expected to attend all seminars in the EEB or Biology departmental seminar series on their campus and to take advantage of discussion groups.

Thesis and MSc Examination

The MSc Examination Committee, jointly recommended by the supervisor(s) and student, consists of the supervisor(s), one member of the supervisory committee (the other member of the supervisory committee is welcome to attend the defense but may not ask questions and may not vote), and two other EEB faculty members who are not on the supervisory committee. The grad office will invite one of the two members who are not on the supervisory committee to chair the exam—he/she will also act as a regular member of the exam committee. These names must be sent to the graduate office (EEB Graduate Assistant <grad.eeb@utoronto.ca>) for approval, after which the student and supervisor will set a date for the exam. A written thesis following SGS guidelines must be approved for examination by the supervisor who should **complete the "Approval of MSc Thesis" form (available on the EEB grad student 'forms and links' webpage)** and send it to the Graduate Office **before scheduling the defense or circulating the thesis**. The MSc thesis must also be approved by the Associate Chair of Graduate Studies; please send a draft of the thesis (it does not need to be the final version of the thesis) to Helen Rodd or to the EEB Graduate Office (grad.eeb@utoronto.ca), as a pdf if possible, **at least 3 weeks** before the proposed examination

date. The date for the exam should be sent to the graduate office **at least two weeks** ahead of the exam date and, for those defending on the St. G. campus, the Graduate Assistant will book the exam room (feel free to make a recommendation if there is a room that you like) and for those defending at UTM and UTSC please speak to your supervisor about who can book a room for you. The Graduate Assistant will circulate the formal announcement to participants. Students are responsible for booking their own audiovisual equipment where required (note: many rooms now have data projectors but most do not have a computer). Once the thesis is approved for examination, the student should send it to examiners **at least two weekends** before the exam. The *in camera* examination will consist of a 20-minute oral summary of the thesis research by the student, approximately 1.5 – 2 hrs of questioning by the committee, and then, after the student has left the room, a discussion by the committee of the student's thesis and performance. The exam chair is responsible for **completing the "MSc Exam Form"** detailing any required minor or major revisions, and returning it to the Graduate Office immediately after the exam. The student must complete any required revisions **within four weeks** of the exam, and the person designated to approve these revisions (typically the supervisor) should complete the "Approval of Corrections" form and return send it promptly to the graduate office. If the student does not pass the thesis exam, one retake is possible **within 2 – 6 months**; if the student fails to pass the second attempt at the exam, they have failed to meet the required academic standards of the graduate program and may be advised by the Associate Chair (Graduate) that they may no longer be eligible to proceed in the program.

See the steps for completing your degree here:

<http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/currentstudents/Pages/Program-Completion.aspx>

PhD PROGRAM REGULATIONS

EEB PhD students are expected to complete original, independent research programs that make substantial and innovative contributions to their field of research. Normally, it is expected that PhD candidates will produce at least three research chapters (or equivalent, to be determined in consultation with the supervisor and supervisory committee members), based on their research, that are worthy of publication as scientific papers. When possible, EEB (and former EEB PhD students) recommend that papers are written and submitted as soon as projects are completed. Many students have published at least one of their chapters before they defend, but this is not a requirement for graduation. Students should get their supervisor's approval before submitting a manuscript for publication and, supervisory committee members should be asked if they would be able to provide feedback on manuscripts that will be included in the thesis in a timely fashion (either before, or when, the manuscript is submitted). See below for further details on the minimum requirements for the thesis.

Duration and Registration

The duration of the Ph.D. program (for the "funded cohort") is four years for those entering with an MSc degree, or five years for those entering directly from a bachelor's degree, or transferring from an MSc in EEB. First registration is normally in September, although registration in January or May is also possible.

Financial Support

PhD students in the “funded cohort” will receive a base, annual stipend for four years for those entering with a Master’s degree or five years for those entering from a Bachelor’s (or transferring from the EEB MSc program). For students without external scholarship support (e.g. NSERC, OGS, CIHR, Connaught), this stipend is comprised of some or all of the following: a Research Assistantship (RA) (i.e. funding provided by the supervisor(s)), a 140-hr Teaching Assistantship (TA), a University of Toronto Fellowship (UTF), and funding from EEB’s endowment funds. For students with external scholarships the Teaching Assistantship is reduced to 70 hours and a “top-up” may be given in addition to the guaranteed minimum. Details on each student’s funding package are described on the stipend form and stipend letter distributed to students and supervisors by the graduate office in late August/September.

Students who do not complete their thesis and graduate while they are in the “funded cohort” are eligible for limited support for two years through the Doctoral Completion Award (DCA) program (recently, students received \$2500-3000/year in DCA). Students must apply for DCA awards but all applicants who are making good progress and are in good academic standing within their program will receive some support. The recommended support packages for the DCA program includes a DCA component (from the U. of T.), a substantial TA component (usually 210 hours), and may include a Research Assistantship (RA) component (RA support from the supervisor(s) may be recommended but is not required; before PhD students leave the funded cohort, they should ask their supervisor whether they will contribute any RA to them once they leave the funded cohort).

Coursework

Students entering directly from a Bachelor’s program must take four one-semester graduate courses and are expected to finish their course requirements by the end of their fourth year (see **Graduate Courses** in this document and on the EEB grad course web page). Students entering with an MSc degree must take three one-semester courses and are expected to complete their course requirements by the end of their third year. Students transferring from an EEB MSc to an EEB PhD program should take the same credits as those entering from a bachelor’s program, minus the credit completed during the MSc.

The details of which combinations of courses will meet the degree requirements are currently under discussion. In the meantime, course selection should be made in consultation with the supervisor and advisory committee.

PhD Supervisory Committee

The student’s research supervisor(s) will consult with the student about which faculty members will be useful and appropriate members of his/her Supervisory Committee. This committee comprises the research supervisor (and co-supervisor if any) plus two other professors from EEB. **In the first year, the committee must meet during the Fall term and at least once in the Winter term.** During the 4th term, PhD students must meet with their supervisory committee and determine the timing of their appraisal exam; if a tentative date is not set then, the student must meet every six months with the supervisory committee until the date has been set. Thereafter the committee must meet at least once per academic year. During the first committee meeting, the student’s academic background is reviewed and the thesis research discussed. The student should circulate a resume and a transcript or list of previous coursework to committee members before the meeting. For all committee meetings, the student must prepare a brief, written report of scholarly activities, research

progress, and plans, and send it to committee members **at least four full business days** in advance of the meeting. For all committee meetings after the student has done the appraisal exam, the student should include a timeline in their written report. The student is responsible for printing a committee meeting report form and having it available at the committee meeting (available on the EEB Current Students Forms webpage: <http://www.eeb.utoronto.ca/grad/current/grad-forms.htm>). The supervisor is responsible for completing the committee meeting report and ensuring that each committee member signs it. We recommend that the supervisor or student makes copies of the committee meeting report for both the student and the supervisor(s). The student may then add their own comments to the committee meeting report, must sign it, and submit it along with a copy of his/her progress report to the graduate office **within one week of the meeting**.

A final supervisory committee meeting should be held approximately three-four months before the final oral exam to ensure that the student is adequately prepared, that the thesis is nearing completion and to discuss potential external examiners.

See Appendix A for advice on preparing for supervisory committee meetings.

The EEB Graduate Office should be informed of any changes in the composition of a supervisory committee (no forms are required to do this).

Minimum requirements of the PhD thesis

Normally, it is expected that PhD candidates will produce at least three research chapters (or equivalent, to be determined in consultation with the supervisor and supervisory committee members), based on their research, that are worthy of publication as scientific papers.

For the Introduction chapter of the PhD thesis: Most faculty no longer require an extensive literature survey as the first chapter in the thesis; however, the students must provide the readers with sufficient background to put their work in the context of the field. Students should discuss the length of the Introduction chapter with their supervisor and supervisory committee; in EEB, they are at least 10-15 double-spaced pages long (not including references, figures, tables). If the student wishes and the supervisor(s) agrees, the student may write part of the Introduction chapter as a popular science article, as an opinion piece, or as a review article, with the intention of publishing it.

The Conclusion chapter should include a series of concluding statements that link the findings in the research chapters. This chapter is typically 5-25 pages in length.

Departmental Seminars

The academic culture of the department includes a vibrant set of discussion groups and seminar series. PhD students are expected to attend all seminars in the EEB or Biology departmental seminar series on their campus and to take advantage of discussion groups.

PhD Appraisal Examination

EEB PhD students with a MSc will take an Appraisal Examination **14 to 20 months** after registration; PhD students who enter the PhD program directly from an undergraduate degree will take the Appraisal exam 14 to 26 months after their first registration. The appraisal is designed to:

- 1) Determine whether the student can think, conduct research, and communicate at a level sufficient to produce a quality thesis;
- 2) Ensure that the proposed research is sound, and can be completed within the remaining years of the PhD program. If completion of all of the proposed components of the thesis in a reasonable amount of time may not be possible, the components should be prioritized so that it is clear which of them could be dropped without compromising the ability of the student to satisfactorily complete the degree;
- 3) Ensure that the student has sufficiently broad knowledge in ecology and evolutionary biology to recognize and effectively pursue opportunities for research and collaboration in these fields;
- 4) Provide feedback on the proposed research (e.g., provide suggestions on approach, methodology, statistics, etc.)

****Note: for full details on the Appraisal Exam, see advice and guidelines on the appraisal proposal and exam, and the additional documents about the appraisal exam that are posted on the EEB Graduate Student 'Documents, Forms and Links' webpage:**

<http://www.eeb.utoronto.ca/grad/current/grad-forms.htm>

Also see the EGSA unofficial handbook for advice.

The Graduate Office will circulate a formal announcement to the examining committee and the seminar coordinator will circulate the announcement about the seminar—please send her/him a title for your appraisal exam seminar. Students should check with the person who booked the seminar and/or exam room for them to be sure that it has a data projector.

PhD Exit Seminar

All PhD students are required to give a formal 'exit' seminar on their thesis research at the end of their program. Students have two options for the exit seminar. First, the student can give a 40-50 min. departmental seminar on their PhD research no more than two months before their defense and a brief (max. of 20 minutes) seminar to their examination committee at the start of their defense. Or, as a second option, the student will give just one 40-50 min. departmental seminar on the day of the final exam or the day before that; to take this option, the entire examination committee, including the external examiner, must attend the exit seminar. The Final Oral Exam (FOE) booking form allows students to indicate that they will be taking this option, and requests the date and time of the exit seminar, so that SGS can notify the chair of the final exam about the arrangement and give them the option of attending the seminar (The chair's attendance at the oral presentation is not a requirement). Students should ask former graduate students and supervisor(s) for their thoughts on the pros and cons of the two options (one advantage of doing the exit seminar more than a day before the final oral exam is the extra time to consider answers to the questions posed asked during the exit seminar. Also some people find it too tiring to have both the exit seminar and the defense on the same day). For the departmental exit seminar, the student should contact the seminar coordinator on their campus well in advance so that a date, time and place for the seminar can be arranged and announcements distributed; the EEB Graduate Office and Helen Rodd should also be notified of the time and place of the exit seminar.

Thesis and Final Oral Examination

The Final Oral Exam (FOE) is conducted by the School of Graduate Studies (SGS). A checklist of the steps in setting and completing a final oral exam are listed on the EEB graduate program webpage with Documents and Forms: <http://www.eeb.utoronto.ca/grad/current/grad-forms.htm> Please also read all the information provided below. A written thesis, following SGS guidelines, must be approved for examination by any two of: the supervisor (and co-supervisor if any) and one member of the advisory committee. Note: we recommend that you ask the/a member of your committee who will sit on your exam (see below) to approve your thesis. Both of these individuals must sign the "PhD Assessment of Thesis" form (available on the EEB graduate program Documents and Forms webpage).

As of August 1, 2017, please note the recommended changes and new option for membership on the PhD Final Oral Exam committee. Note: the Final Oral Exam (FOE) committee must have at least 5 members and no more than 6 members. The supervisor(s) and student should discuss potential external examiners and other exam committee members between/amongst themselves and with the student's supervisory committee.

Model 1 (updated version of the 'Traditional' Model):

- The examining committee is comprised of an external examiner; the supervisor/co-supervisor(s); one or two members of the supervisory committee; and one other professor from EEB or a related department
- Note: if either the external or the 'internal external' (i.e. the member of the exam committee who was not on the supervisory committee) is unable to attend the defense, SGS will cancel defense. Therefore, we recommend that you find a second EEB faculty member, who is not on the supervisory committee, who will fill in if either the external or the 'internal external' is unable to participate in the defense (phoning in counts as participating). Please ask the backup person to reserve the evening before your defense and, on the day of your defense, the time before and during your exit seminar (if you are having it the same day as your defense) and your defense to read your thesis and attend your exit seminar and defense. Do not list this 'backup' person on your exam Booking form. *If you need to use this backup person on your defense, contact the EEB Associate Graduate Chair and Angelique Plata (sgs.vdeanea@utoronto.ca) immediately and ask for permission to make this replacement.*

Model 2:

- The examining committee is comprised of an external examiner; the supervisor/co-supervisor(s); one member of the supervisory committee; and two other professors from EEB or a related department
- Note: this means that, normally, the student and supervisor will select only one of the two supervisory committee members to sit on the final exam. If two members of the supervisory committee (not including the supervisor/co-supervisor(s)) wish to sit on the exam and vote, that is fine as long as the number of members of the exam committee does not exceed six. Supervisory committee members who are not formally on the exam committee may be invited to attend the exam but they may not vote and they may well decline the invitation to attend.

The exam chair is a faculty member, chosen from outside the A&S faculty by SGS; this person is not an examiner.

The supervisor nominates a potential external examiner using the "Choosing an External Examiner for a Final PhD Exam" form on the EEB Graduate Forms and Documents web page: <http://www.eeb.utoronto.ca/grad/current/grad-forms.htm>

The Graduate Office and SGS must approve the external examiner and the other exam committee members. Note: **it is possible to get pre-approval of an external examiner up to several months before the defense is scheduled.** Normally, external examiners will have supervised at least one PhD student who has completed their degree and be an Associate or Full Professor.

The name of the external nominee, the Approval of Thesis form, suggestions for exam committee members, the date of the exam, a current CV for the student including publications and presentations, and a one-page, double-spaced abstract with thesis title should be submitted to gradadmin.eeb@utoronto.ca **at least seven weeks** prior to the intended exam date. Please use the "PhD Final Oral Exam Booking Sheet" on the EEB Forms and Documents webpage listed above to provide the date, etc. of the exam. The EEB Graduate Office (Kitty Lam) will book a room for the examination and must be informed of any special requirements for equipment or venue.

The student must provide the EEB Graduate Office (Kitty) with one paper copy of the thesis for the external examiner **at least six weeks before** the exam date and, at this time, the remaining committee members should be informed of the exam date and given a copy of the thesis (the student should ask if they would prefer a hardcopy and/or a PDF and/or a file in another format). Although the FOE can be held at any campus, the St. George campus is recommended to allow the candidate and exam committee chair to complete paperwork at SGS immediately following the examination.

At the final oral exam, if a student did not give an exit seminar on the day of their defense (before their final exam), he/she will begin the exam with an oral presentation about their thesis; in this talk they will summarize the research and conclusions of the thesis orally, in no more than twenty minutes. Then students answer questions about their research and related general knowledge for approximately two hours. The student will have seen the external examiner's written assessment of the thesis two weeks before the examination so that they can prepare responses to it.

Students are required to submit their final thesis, after their defense and any revisions in their thesis, in digital format. See the details on the steps in completing your degree: <http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/currentstudents/Pages/Program-Completion.aspx>

TRANSFER FROM MSc to PhD PROGRAM

With their supervisor'(s) permission, exceptional students may transfer from the MSc to the PhD program by demonstrating research excellence. Transfers can be discussed and recommended during the second MSc supervisory committee meeting held eight months after registration, or at another

meeting held **no later than 11.5 months** after registration. In either case, a candidate recommended for transfer would register as a PhD student on the one-year anniversary date of their first registration. No special procedures are required at the transfer-consideration committee meeting other than a thorough, rigorous assessment of the student based on the written research report (which should include some possible directions for research projects), past performance, and the potential to complete an excellent PhD project. Typically the thesis supervisor and the student will discuss the pros and cons of transferring before the committee meeting. The supervisor will indicate to the student in advance of the committee meeting that the committee members will consider the merits of transfer to the PhD, and discussion at the meeting should consider both the student's wishes and academic potential. If the student is in favor and transfer is approved by the committee, the thesis supervisor should ensure that an explicit recommendation for transfer, along with a brief rationale, is contained in the committee meeting report that should be submitted to the graduate office **no later than one week** after the committee meeting. The deadline for submitting the committee meeting report is August 15. The EEB Graduate Office (Kitty Lam) will assist the student in transferring registration from MSc to PhD. Students are required to fill out the SGS Program Transfer form: <http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/Documents/Program+Transfer.pdf>.

CONFERENCE SUPPORT

Students should apply to as many of these sources of funding as possible. Supervisors are expected to provide some funds to cover registration, travel and/or accommodation, although students may not expect to attend a conference every year.

SGS: students can apply to SGS for funding to cover some of the expenses to travel to one conference during a student's time in their graduate program. Emails about applying for this travel award are sent out twice annually (timing of the application submission is determined by the timing of the conference)

Departmental support:

- **St. George** students (including **ROM** students) presenting their results at a conference can request funding, once a year, as a Harold Harvey Travel Award. It covers up to \$400. The application should be submitted along with the reimbursement form, receipts, confirmation that they gave a talk or poster to the EEB Graduate Office in ESC. See the form on this webpage: <http://www.eeb.utoronto.ca/grad/current/grad-forms.htm>
- **UTM:** <https://www.utm.utoronto.ca/dean/travel-grants> and, in addition, every year in March, Mihai Baetu, the Biology Dept. Manager, will send out an email to all graduate students and supervisors about the fund application. There are two funds: one for conferences (\$1,000), and another one for workshops (\$500). The conference and the workshop have to be between May 1 of current year to April 30 of next year.
- **UTSC** (\$400): <https://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/research/u-t-scarborough-graduate-student-travel-grant>

Societies—many of the societies hosting conferences provide some funding towards travel. Check the conference information and/or the society's webpage.

Appendix A: Advice preparing for supervisory committee meetings

1) Ask your supervisor(s) and committee members for their thoughts on the purpose of the document, and what they want to gain from reading it

2) Here is some general advice:

For supervisory committee meeting talks and reports, your supervisor and committee members are the best source of advice; if additional advice is required, here is a description of the typical EEB supervisory committee meeting report and talk.

The goals of the report and meeting are to help your committee assess your goals and, for later meetings, your progress so that they can provide feedback to you. In the first 1-2 paragraphs of your report, describe the big picture, your question(s) and/or hypotheses. Then describe methods (proposed or utilized) and, when available, results. Include a concluding paragraph on possible conclusions/implications/contributions to the field.

A regular committee report should be 5-10 double-spaced pages (max. 10 pages of text, but a few additional pages for figures and tables can be included if needed). Extra material can be included as a supplement but students should assume that committee members may not read the supplement. The report provided for the first committee meeting will typically be shorter (e.g., 2-5 pages and not more than 10) than subsequent reports.

Include a timeline with every committee meeting report, even if very tentative/rough (e.g., a Gantt chart, youtube instructions: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u_jm1211D4). Also send a copy of your CV and your previous committee meeting report form to your supervisory committee. Include the time and location of your committee meeting at the top of your report and in the subject line of your email to your committee.

You should assume that your committee members will have little memory of previous committee meetings and reports; your report should help them to recall your project and previous discussions. The report should be well written and students can expect to do several rounds of revisions with their supervisor before sending it to committee members. You should give your supervisor sufficient time to provide feedback: at least 10 days, before it has to be distributed to the committee. You must give your supervisory committee members at least 3 (MSc) / 4 (PhD) full business days to read your report.

Prepare a 15 minute talk (20-30 if desired, for later meetings), but expect to be interrupted for discussions throughout your presentation. The talk should reflect the material in your report. We recommend that students get feedback on their talk from their supervisor(s) and/or in a lab meeting and/or with graduate students and/or postdocs in the department before they meet with their committee.

You should book a 2-hour slot for the meeting, but some meetings will take less time than this. When you are scheduling your meeting, it can be useful to ask committee members their general availability in specific weeks and then to ask them to fill in a doodle poll for specific times; if a committee member has not answered within 3-4 days, ask your supervisor if you may send them a reminder email with the link.

Discussions during the committee meetings can include recommendations for courses to take or audit, suggestions about where to get statistical advice, etc. Take advantage of the expertise of the members of your committee!

CAMPUS LIFE

St. George Campus Services (most serving all graduate students based on all campuses)

Academic Success Centre: <http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/asc>

Accessibility Services: <https://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as>

Athletics and Recreation: <https://kpe.utoronto.ca/sports-and-rec>

Career Centre: <http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/cc>

Centre for Community Partnerships: <http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/ccp/>

Centre for International Experience: <http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/cie>

Health and Wellness (includes the former Counselling & Psychological Services):

<https://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/hwc>

Graduate Wellness Portal: <http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/currentstudents/Pages/wellness-portal.aspx>

Mental health resources in EEB and at the U of T:

<http://www.eeb.utoronto.ca/Assets/EEB+2013+Digital+Assets/EEB+Grad+Resources+1.pdf>

U of T Payroll information, how to do expense reimbursements, etc.:

<http://www.eeb.utoronto.ca/resources/forstudents.htm>

Graduate Student Initiative: <https://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/cld/grad-workshops>

Hart House: <http://harthouse.ca>

Office of Convocation: www.convocation.utoronto.ca

Diversity and Equity: <http://equity.hrandequity.utoronto.ca>

Family Care Office: www.familycare.utoronto.ca (including childcare and lots of advice about maternity leave, etc.)

First Nations House: <http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/fnh>

Student Accounts: www.fees.utoronto.ca

Student Housing: <http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/hs>

Student Resources – Graduate Student Programs: www.studentlife.utoronto.ca

Ulife: a one-stop website listing a large and diverse directory of student clubs, organizations, activities and opportunities: <https://www.ulife.utoronto.ca>

University of Toronto Students' Union: www.utsu.ca

Scarborough Campus Services

Research and Graduate Studies: <https://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/research/>

Graduate Student Administrative Support: Lucy Pickering (lucy@utsc.utoronto.ca)

Graduate Students' Association at Scarborough: www.utsc.utoronto.ca/gsas/

Housing: www.utsc.utoronto.ca/residences/

Child Care: childcare.utsc.utoronto.ca/

Centre for Teaching and Learning: ctl.utsc.utoronto.ca/home/

UTSC International Student Centre: <https://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/utscinternational/your-student-experience-starts-here-build-your-co-curricular-record-us>

Athletics and Recreation: www.utsc.utoronto.ca/athletics/

Parking Services: www.utsc.utoronto.ca/parking/index.html

Academic Advising and Career Centre: webapps.utsc.utoronto.ca/aaccweb/

Mississauga Campus Services

Graduate Student Administrative Support: Mihai Baetu (mihai.baetu@utoronto.ca).

UTM Association of Graduate Students: <http://utmags.sa.utoronto.ca/>

Physical Education, Athletics, and Recreation: <https://www.utm.utoronto.ca/athletics/about-us>

Academic Skills Centre: <http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/asc/>

Graduate Housing On-Campus: <https://www.utm.utoronto.ca/housing/welcome-student-housing-residence-life>

Off-Campus Housing: <https://www.utm.utoronto.ca/housing/residence-services/campus-housing>
<https://www.utm.utoronto.ca/housing/residence-services/campus-housing/housing-search>

International Centre: <http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/international/>

Transit passes: <http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/sas/upass>

Shuttle bus to St. George campus: <http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/shuttle/>

Child Care: <http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/faculty-staff/links/child-care-resources>

Parking: <https://www.utm.utoronto.ca/parking/>

UTM Career Centre: <http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/careers/>

Please see the the Ecology and Evolutionary Biology Graduate Student Association (EGSA) handbook for lots of other contacts, advice, etc.:

<http://www.eeb.utoronto.ca/grad/egsa.htm>

and <http://utegsa.wordpress.com/resources/grad-handbook/>

