



**McMaster University**  
**Department of Anthropology**  
**Graduate Handbook**  
**2018-2019**

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## INTRODUCTION

As an Anthropology graduate student, your program is regulated by the expectations from three main sources: McMaster University School of Graduate Studies; Department of Anthropology and your particular supervisor and supervisory committee.

The Calendar of the School of Graduate Studies at McMaster University outlines the minimum requirements for graduate degrees at McMaster University. Here we outline the requirements and expectations of the Department of Anthropology. Students are responsible for following the guidelines and regulations of the University and the Department. The Anthropology graduate program as a whole is administered by a Graduate Committee of three members, all from the faculty. The Graduate Committee operates with powers delegated to it from the Department and its exact role may vary over the years.

This Graduate Handbook is presented as a working guide to Anthropology graduate students and their supervisors. For general university rules and procedures please refer to the current School of Graduate Studies Calendar. Students should be familiar with the regulations therein and note that they take precedence over all Departmental regulations.

Regulations contained in this handbook are always subject to revision. Students should consult the departmental Graduate Director if there are any questions concerning these regulations and/or changes in them.

The most up-to-date regulations in the program and in this handbook, may be found on the department website (please refer to the web address below). No hard copy of this information is available, as it is updated on a regular basis.

Anthropology Web Site: <http://www.anthropology.mcmaster.ca/>  
The Calendar of the SGS: <http://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/index.php>

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## **1. SUPERVISOR AND SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE**

### **A. Supervisor**

Prior to their arrival at McMaster, new students are assigned an advisor/supervisor for one term. At the end of the term, this person becomes the permanent supervisor unless the student or supervisor initiates a request for a change. The assignment of supervisors is initially made on the basis of compatibility of interests between student and faculty member, taking into account the supervisory load and availability of particular faculty members. Students can change supervisors (refer to section 1C); however they are encouraged to settle on a permanent supervisor and thesis or major research paper (MRP) topic early within the program.

The supervisor will assist the student in planning his/her program of study and ensure that the student is progressing satisfactorily within the program. Supervisors play a very important role in helping to develop a graduate student's program of study. They consult with the student in setting up the program of study and, at the same time, ensure that standards of excellence are met. They also guide students in their completion of M.A. and Ph.D. theses, or M.A. MRP. At the regularly scheduled evaluation periods, the supervisor and supervisory committee are responsible for evaluating the student's performance and making recommendations to the Department and to the School of Graduate Studies regarding the student's status. These evaluations are made relative to the progress milestones laid out in this document.

The student-supervisor relationship rests on mutual respect and trust. The student should be able to talk freely with the supervisor about all aspects of the graduate program. To a large extent, the supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the student moves through the various stages of the graduate program in a timely fashion, obtaining the best possible qualifications and meeting the program's goals. The student has a responsibility to consult with the supervisor on a regular basis about all aspects of the program of study and research.

Specifically:

1. Students consult with the supervisor about the courses to be taken in order to satisfactorily complete the program. Students should be aware that the Graduate Committee could require a student to complete more than the minimum number of courses required if it believes that the student lacks expertise in areas that are particularly important to his/her training as an Anthropologist.
2. Students consult with the supervisor about the topics for the M.A. MRP and thesis and Ph.D. dissertation. Students should develop their thesis/dissertation proposal in consultation with their supervisors and members of their supervisory committee. The proposal must be approved by the supervisory committee before the student pursues the research program. In the case of the M.A. thesis and MRP, the proposal must be formally completed and approved by the end of the first term; in the Ph.D. program, the deadline is the end of the sixth term (typically the end of the summer of the second year).
3. Students should consult with their supervisor about the selection of other members of the supervisory committee. The committee must be set up in the case of those following the M.A. thesis route by October 15 of the first term, and in the Ph.D. program by the end of the second term. In agreeing to be on a supervisory committee, faculty members

commit to making themselves available for committee meetings and to provide guidance informally to students when necessary.

4. Students consult with the supervisor and committee over the choice of areas in which Ph.D. comprehensive examinations will be taken (see Section 3C).

5. Students consult with the supervisor concerning any change in status that may be desired. This includes items such as requests for leaves of absence and off-campus status while undertaking field research.

6. Students consult with the supervisor regularly while conducting their M.A. MRP, thesis or Ph.D. dissertation research. The supervisor, in consultation with the student's supervisory committee, approves all data collection instruments (e.g., questionnaires, interview guides, etc.) before these are used by students. Students whose projects require Ethics Committee approval (i.e., if they involve human or animal subjects of research) should ensure that all communications with the Committees/Boards identify the student and the supervisor, and bear the signatures of both. Ethics application, where appropriate, must be submitted by March 1. More detailed information about the criteria for obtaining Ethics Committee approval can be found at: <http://www.mcmaster.ca/ors/ethics/>. The Ethics Committee takes several weeks to process applications.

7. Students consult with their supervisor regularly while writing the M.A. thesis or Ph.D. dissertation. Students will not be allowed to proceed to the oral defence of the thesis or dissertation unless it has been approved by the supervisory committee.

8. Students should contact their faculty advisor/supervisor to work out their courses and program of study as soon as they arrive on campus. Students should consult with the advisor/supervisor about any problem being encountered in completing the program, including any administrative or bureaucratic difficulties that may arise.

**IMPORTANT:** The Administrative Assistant for the Graduate Program must be advised of all decisions that are made pertaining to the student's program.

## **B. Supervisory Committee**

The supervisory committee functions in conjunction with the supervisor as an advisory and examining body for each student's work. Each graduate student is assigned a faculty advisor when admitted to the program, and by January of their first year they select a supervisor to carry them through the rest of their program. Students are urged to consult with their advisor/supervisor before registration. Graduate students select or change courses only after consultation with and approval of their advisor/ supervisor.

The candidate's supervisory committee reviews their program at all stages. Students must organize bi-annual meetings of their committee (usually September/October and February/March -- for exact dates each year see "Important Dates" which can be found at: <https://www.anthropology.mcmaster.ca/graduate-program/important-dates>), to discuss progress and goals. In preparation for these meetings, students submit a student progress report to the supervisory committee (forms available from John Silva- Administrative Assistant). The student report and the meeting inform the bi-annual formal progress reports signed by the supervisory

committee and student. If progress is unsatisfactory, the committee works with the student to deal with problems, and in some circumstances may provide criteria for continued enrolment, or may suggest that the student withdraw from the program. The reports will be reviewed by the Graduate Committee and/or Chair before they are forwarded to the School of Graduate Studies.

At the Ph.D. level the supervisory committee consists of at least three members, at least two of whom must be in the Department of Anthropology. On occasion, a member of the committee may be from another university. When making this request, the student must submit the CV of the member to John Silva. The decision of allowing this member to join the committee will be decided by the School of Graduate Studies.

**IMPORTANT:** The Administrative Assistant for the Graduate Program must be advised of all decisions that are made pertaining to the student's program.

### **C. Procedures for Appointing and Changing Supervisors**

It is possible to change supervisors or the membership of a supervisory committee, although this is not the norm. If the direction of the research changes, membership can be changed by mutual consent of the parties involved. Supervisors and/or supervisory committee members may not resign without the department's/program's approval. A change in supervisor is at the discretion of the department/program, not the student or supervisor. Any student wishing to change supervisors must seek the permission of the chair of the department and/or graduate director.

**IMPORTANT:** The Administrative Assistant for the Graduate Program must be advised of all decisions that are made pertaining to the student's program.

## **2. THE M.A.PROGRAM**

### **A. M.A. General Information**

1. The department grants an M.A. in anthropology in the following areas of specialization: Archaeology, Anthropology of Health, Biological Anthropology, and Socio-cultural Anthropology.
2. Students admitted to the M.A. program have the option of doing coursework and then 1) writing a MRP, or 2) writing a scholarly thesis which demonstrates ability to conduct original research.
3. In consultation with his or her supervisor, an M.A. student must choose between these two options by January 15 of the year of initial registration as a graduate student. For the Thesis Option, students must have arranged a properly constituted supervisory committee, made up of a supervisor and at least one additional committee member, no later than mid-January of their first year.
4. Most of a graduate student's training must be obtained in courses offered in anthropology. With permission of their advisor/supervisor, students may normally take up to two graduate half-courses outside of the department. The Graduate Committee, in consultation with the advisor/supervisor, assesses exceptions to this requirement.

5. Upon satisfactory performance, it may be possible for students to be given the possibility during their second year of transferring into the Ph.D. program (Anthropology) directly (accelerated transfer) without completing all the requirements of the Master of Arts program. (See Appendix I)
6. The Professional Development (PD) Professional Development Workshop is mandatory in year 1. All second year students without a major scholarship are recommended to attend Professional Development Workshop sessions associated with obtaining funding if they are applying for entry to a Ph.D. program in the next academic year. Students at any stage of the graduate program can attend the PD Professional Development Workshop. All students are expected to attend the department Speakers Series. Where major gaps exist in the student's background, the department may require that the student take additional courses.

### **The Major Research Paper option**

#### **B. Major Research Paper (MRP) Process**

In the late fall term of their first year, students begin work towards their MRP, which is completed during the summer term. The MRP is a project consisting of 10,000 words (40 double-spaced typed pages, not exceeding 50 pages), not including the bibliography and appendices. Students are responsible for selecting a topic for study or research, which must be approved by the advisor/supervisor. The topic should be of a scope that is manageable within the deadlines outlined below. The MRP is not a thesis. Fieldwork is not required. Neither is it a long undergraduate paper. The MRP should demonstrate a student's ability to integrate ideas that reflect the current state of knowledge on their chosen topic. The MRP must demonstrate relational thinking and expertise at specific, general, and abstract levels.

Students taking their M.A. by MRP can expect to fulfill all requirements within 12 months. Students must take six graduate level half courses with at least a B+ average, and write a MRP.

#### **C. MRP Schedule**

Students and supervisors are strongly advised to draw up a detailed plan indicating when/how they will communicate. Meetings should be in person wherever possible, though it may be necessary to communicate electronically.

	<b>Term 1 (Sept-Dec)</b>	<b>Term 2 (Jan-April)</b>	<b>Term 3 (May-Aug)</b>
<b>Year 1</b>	<p>3 courses (Recommended)</p> <p>*6 courses are required during term I and term II. Students are welcome to complete 3 courses in each term or 2 in 1 term and 4 in the next.</p> <p>Classes begin- September 5, 2017</p> <p>October 6, 2017- Final date to add courses</p> <p>Informal discussions with possible MRP supervisor</p> <p>October 31- Supervisory Committee Meeting</p> <p>November 30-December 14 Registration for term 2</p>	<p>3 courses (Recommended)</p> <p>Classes begin January 2, 2018</p> <p>January 15: Students must declare their "option" choice as the " MRP option" and submit a draft proposal, with bibliography, to proposed MRP supervisor</p> <p>January 26- Final date to add courses for term 2</p> <p>First week of February: supervisor provides feedback on proposal</p> <p>Feb 15: submit MRP Formal proposal, signed by supervisor, to Graduate Secretary (1000 words -- plus bibliography)</p> <p>March 1st: Where appropriate, submit ethics application</p> <p>March 13- Final date to submit results of incomplete (INC) grades for previous term</p> <p>March 27- Supervisory Committee Meeting</p> <p>April 5-19 Registration for term 3</p>	<p>June 15: submit first draft of MRP to supervisor</p> <p>June 30: Draft returned to student with comments. Second reader of MRP selected by supervisor, in consultation with student.</p> <p>Aug 1: Submit completed MRP for grading electronically) to Graduate Secretary, supervisor and reader</p> <p>Aug 31: Grades and comments from supervisor and reader due.</p>

*All dates are normal deadlines and work may proceed at a faster pace.*

#### **D. Marking Guidelines**

Final marks and comments should be submitted by the supervisor and reader to the Administrative Assistant for the Graduate Program by August 31st. The MRP is marked on a pass/fail basis for transcript purposes. In addition, supervisors and readers will fill out the MRP comment form. The Administrative Assistant for the Graduate Program will collate remarks from supervisor and reader, pass them on to the students, and also send each of the two markers a copy of the other's comments.

If there is a serious discrepancy between the markers or one marker fails a paper, a meeting of the markers will be convened to resolve and confirm the mark. If no agreement is reached, a third marker, assigned at the discretion of the Chair, will evaluate it.



The Department will, with students' signed consent, keep an archive of past students' completed projects for future students' and supervisors' reference.

### **E. M.A. Thesis Option**

Those electing to write a thesis normally extend their period of residence to 24 months. Students selecting the thesis option must take four graduate level half courses with at least a B- average.

1. All theses must represent new contributions to knowledge and meet the highest academic standards.
2. Each M.A. thesis candidate is required to have one thesis supervisor and one committee member to guide them through all stages of thesis preparation. The supervisor and committee member also participate in the thesis defence, together with a third reader (who can be a committee member if the committee has three members) who must be present at the defence.
3. Students prepare a thesis proposal in consultation with their supervisory committee. The proposal must contain the following elements: (1) a statement of the problem; (2) theoretical orientation; (3) methodology; (4) plan and schedule of research; (5) contribution to existing literature; (6) bibliography. The thesis proposal must be submitted to the supervisory committee and the Administrative Assistant for the Graduate Program by May 1st of the student's first year.
4. Students are responsible for following School of Graduate Studies guidelines for the format of the thesis and required number of copies. Students do not receive course credit for preparing the thesis.
5. The oral defence of the thesis will be scheduled only when the supervisory committee approves the thesis as defensible. Once the supervisory committee approves the thesis for defence, the candidate submits it to the Administrative Assistant for the Graduate Program.
6. The thesis must be defended at a public oral examination in which the examining committee separately judges the quality of the thesis and the performance in the oral. Both must be rated satisfactory for the student to be recommended for graduation. A minimum of 10 days must elapse between the time the supervisor confirms the thesis is ready for defence to the Administrative Assistant for the Graduate Program and the thesis defence.
7. The oral defence is chaired by the thesis supervisor, and the defence is made before an examining committee consisting of the supervisor and committee member as well as a third reader and any other examiners appointed by the Chair of the Department. The supervisor usually begins the oral defence by asking the student to give a resume of the thesis, of not more than 15 minutes, highlighting its purpose, methodology, theory, and conclusions. The examining committee then proceeds with their questions. In fairness to the candidate, the supervisor curtails unnecessary or extraneous discussion, and may

allow or disallow questions from the audience. At the end of the defence, the examining committee will formally assess the oral defence and the thesis as “Pass” or “Fail.” If the student fails the oral defence, they may request a second oral defence. If the student fails a second defence, the case will be evaluated by the Graduate Committee.

8. Previous approval of the written thesis for defence does not guarantee that the student will pass the oral defence.

## F. M.A. Thesis Schedule

Those students completing the thesis option are required to complete four courses (courses are one term, or four months, in length) and prepare and defend a thesis.

	<b>Term 1 (Sept-Dec)</b>	<b>Term 2 (Jan-April)</b>	<b>Term 3 (May-Aug)</b>
<b>Year 1</b>	<p>Classes begin- September 4, 2018</p> <p>Final date to add courses- September 29, 2017</p> <p>*4 courses are required during term I and term II. Students are welcome to complete 2 courses in each term or 1 in 1 term and 3 in the next.</p> <p>2 courses (recommended)</p> <p>November 30-December 14 Registration for term 2</p>	<p>2 courses (recommended)</p> <p>Classes begin January 2, 2018</p> <p>Mid-January - Choose Supervisory Committee (2 members)</p> <p>January 15: Students must declare their "option" choice as the "Thesis option"</p> <p>January 26- Final date to add courses for term 2</p> <p>March 11- Final date to submit results of incomplete (INC) grades for previous term</p> <p>March 27- Supervisory Committee Meeting</p> <p>April 5-19 Registration for term 3</p>	<p>May 1- Final version of formal Thesis Proposal due</p>
<b>Year 2</b>	<p>October 31- Supervisory Committee Meeting</p> <p>Friday November 17, 2018- Fall convocation</p> <p>December 1-15 Registration for term 2</p>	<p>January 23- Final date to add courses for term 2</p> <p>March 13- Final date to submit M.A. Thesis to Department prior to Defence (Spring 2019)</p> <p>March 13- Final date to submit results of incomplete (INC) grades for previous term</p> <p>March 27- Supervisory Committee Meeting</p> <p>April 23- Final date to file Thesis with SGS to complete degree requirements</p> <p>April 7-21 Registration for term 3</p>	<p>June 8-12- Convocation</p> <p>August 14- Final date to submit M.A. Thesis to Department prior to Defence (Fall 2019)</p>

*All dates are normal deadlines and work may proceed at a faster pace.*

### **3. Ph.D. PROGRAM**

#### **A. Ph.D. General Information**

The Calendar of the [School of Graduate Studies](#) at McMaster University outlines the minimum requirements for graduate degrees at McMaster University. Here we outline the requirements and expectations of the Department of Anthropology. Students are responsible for following the guidelines and regulations of the University and the Department.

1. The anthropology graduate program as a whole is administered by a Graduate Committee of three members, all from the faculty. The Graduate Committee operates with powers delegated to it from the department and its exact role may vary over the years.
2. Most of a graduate student's training must be obtained in courses offered in anthropology. With permission of their advisor/supervisor, students may normally take up to two graduate half-courses outside of the department. The Graduate Committee, in consultation with the supervisor, assesses exceptions to this requirement.

#### **B. The Ph.D. Curriculum and Schedule**

1. Ph.D. students who enter from an M.A. program are required to take a minimum of four half-courses. Most of a student's training must be obtained in courses offered in anthropology. With permission of their advisor, students may take up to two graduate half-courses outside of the department. All students must maintain a minimum average of B+ standing in graduate courses.
2. The Professional Development Workshop is mandatory in year 1. All second year students without a major scholarship are encouraged to attend Professional Development Workshop sessions associated with Tri-council and other grant proposal writing.. Students at any stage of the graduate program can attend the Professional Development Workshop. All students are expected to attend the department Speakers Series. Where major gaps exist in the students' background, the department may require that the student take additional courses.
3. Courses should be selected only after consultation with the advisor and any subsequent change in courses must be discussed with and approved by the advisor/supervisor.

NOTE: the above are minimum requirements and the supervisory committee and/or the Graduate Committee may require additional courses.

## Ph.D. Thesis Schedule

All Doctoral students must apply each year for all major external scholarships for which they are eligible. These include OGS and SSHRC or CIHR.

<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Term 1 (Sept-Dec)</b> Classes begin- September 5, 2017  Final date to add courses- September 29, 2017bv  *4 courses are required during term I and term II. Students are welcome to complete 2 courses in each term or 1 in 1 term and 3 in the next.  2 courses (recommended)  November 30 <sup>th</sup> December 14 <sup>th</sup> Registration for term 2	<b>Term 2 (Jan-April)</b> 2 courses (recommended)  Classes begin January 2, 2018  January 26- Final date to add courses for term 2  January 31- Choose Supervisory Committee (3 members)  March 11- Final date to submit results of incomplete (INC) grades for previous term  March 27- Supervisory Committee Meeting (agree comps topic)  April 7-21 Registration for term 3	<b>Term 3 (May-Aug)</b> May 1 <sup>st</sup> Draft research proposal.  First comps paper can be submitted from first week in June.  Visits can be made to sites/ collections or organizations that are under consideration for use in the thesis.  Training required can be obtained
<b>Year 2</b>	September 2- Deadline date for first comprehensive paper  October 14- Deadline date for second comprehensive paper  October 31- Supervisory Committee Meeting  November 25- Deadline date for third comprehensive paper  Oral defence of comps  December 4-18 Registration for term 2	January 23- Final date to add courses for term 2  March 13- Final date to submit results of incomplete (INC) grades for previous term  March 31- Supervisory Committee Meeting  Formal thesis proposal submitted  Present research proposal in a departmental seminar  Start fieldwork  April 9-23 Registration	May 1- Final version of formal Thesis Proposal due  Present research in the last professional development workshop of the year (early April)  Start fieldwork

		for term 3	
<b>Year 3</b>	October 31- Supervisory Committee Meeting for students not in the field  December 4-18 Registration for term 2	January 23- Final date to add courses for term 2  March 13- Final date to submit results of incomplete (INC) grades for previous term  March 27- Supervisory Committee Meeting for students not in the field  April 9-23 Registration for term 3	Fieldwork normally completed
<b>Year 4</b>	October 31- Supervisory Committee Meeting  December 4-18 Registration for term 2	January 23- Final date to add courses for term 2  February 24- Final date to submit Ph.D. Thesis to SGS prior to Defence (Spring 2018)  March 13- Final date to submit results of incomplete (INC) grades for previous term  March 27- Supervisory Committee Meeting  April 23- Final date to file Thesis with SGS to complete degree requirements  April 9-23 Registration for term 3	June 8-12- Convocation  July 17- Final date to submit Ph.D. Thesis to SGS prior to Defence (Fall 2021)

*All dates are normal deadlines and work may proceed at a faster pace, the student must check on the requirements that need to be met before starting each task.*

### **C. Ph.D. Comprehensive Examination**

1. The Ph.D. Comprehensive Examinations are a vital element in determining whether students are adequately prepared to undertake Ph.D. research. Students write Comprehensive Examinations in order to assess the breadth of their knowledge of their research areas within their sub-discipline. The exam should demonstrate a student's ability to integrate ideas that reflect the state of current knowledge. Answers must demonstrate relational thinking and expertise at specific general and abstract levels.

2. The Comprehensive Examination has both a written and an oral component. First, students are required to write three critical review papers of between 15 and 25 double-spaced pages (not including references). Students discuss with their supervisory committee the topics and critical foci of the three papers, as well as specifics about the writing format and style. There are no set requirements for content and scope of the three papers and the supervisory committee, in consultation with the student, should agree on topics on a case-by-case basis. The first paper can be submitted from the first week in June, but must be submitted no later than the first week of September of the student's second year. The second and third papers should normally be submitted at six week intervals (see "Important Dates" each year).
3. The writing and evaluation process for all comprehensive papers must be completed by the beginning of Winter Term of a student's second year, but candidates are urged to finish well before this date.
4. Students may submit a two-page plan/bibliography to their committee to ensure that the direction of each paper is clearly understood and agreed by everyone. There are no set requirements on what should be included in the plan, but the length is fixed. Students who opt to submit a plan should expect to receive feedback from all committee members within one week. Students may not submit drafts of their critical review papers for comments to members of their supervisory committees.
5. Members of the supervisory committee should evaluate a comprehensive paper within three weeks of its submission to the Administrative Assistant for the Graduate Program (unless there are extraordinary circumstances). Papers will be graded as "Accepted for Oral Defence" or "Fail."
6. If a student receives a failing grade from two or more committee members, they must re-write the paper. Only one re-write per paper is allowed. A maximum of two papers may be re-written.
7. An oral examination will be held soon after all three papers are assessed as "Accepted for Oral Defence," normally in December or early January of the student's second year. The supervisor will normally chair the oral examination. All discussions with the student at the oral examination are recorded, and a copy will be made available to the student in case of an appeal. The student and/or committee members can request that an external Chair is present.
8. At the beginning of the defence, the supervisor asks the student to leave so that the committee may establish ground rules for procedure. When the student returns, a maximum of one hour is devoted to discussing each paper, usually with a short break between papers. Any participant can question the appropriateness of a question posed and if it is agreed that it is not appropriate it may be disallowed.
9. When the questioning ends, the student is asked to leave again, and the examining committee decides whether the candidate has passed or failed. The committee votes separately on each written paper and each paper's oral defence. It decides whether each response, in both the written and oral portions of the examination, should be given the grade of Pass with Distinction, Pass, Low Pass, or (on oral portion) Fail.

10. If a student fails any part of the oral examination, a second oral will be scheduled within four weeks. If the student has failed only one section of the examination, then the second oral will re-examine only that section. The second oral examination is normally chaired (without vote) by a delegate of the Department Chair. If the student failed two or more of the papers in the first oral defence, the second oral will examine all three parts. Should a student fail any part of this second oral examination, he or she is withdrawn from the program.

#### **D. Ph.D. Thesis**

Doctoral candidates will be required to submit a scholarly thesis on a topic approved by the candidate's supervisory committee. The procedure for approval of a thesis topic and proposal is as follows:

#### **E. Ph.D. Thesis: Research Statement and Proposals**

1. The development of the student's research proposal is a two-stage process to benefit the student's formulation of the research problem, to facilitate communication with their committee, and to develop professional skills. The stages of the proposal (Draft Research Proposal and Formal Research Proposal) should be viewed as part of the ongoing development of the student's research program.

##### **Stage 1: Draft Research Proposal (Deadline: May 1st, Year One)**

- i. The student submits a Draft Research Proposal of 5-8 pages (plus bibliography). The Draft Research Proposal is a more detailed version of information contained in applications for funding, revised to reflect and communicate changes in and development of the research agenda. Specific requirements will be worked out with supervisory committee.
- ii. The rationale for the Draft Research Proposal is that it 1) provides a record of the student's developing ideas and changes since entering the program, and communicates those changes to their committee; 2) provides a basis for planning comprehensive exams; and 3) helps the student prepare early for grant applications for field funding, since many deadlines occur in the Fall of the second year, when the student is writing the comprehensive exams.

##### **Stage 2: Formal Research Proposal (Deadline: May 1<sup>st</sup>, Year Two)**

- i. The student prepares a Formal Research Proposal of 10-20 pages after they complete their comprehensive exams. It should be a formal research proposal in the style of a major funding agency, including abstract, theoretical concerns,



background, research contributions, key research questions, methodology, budget and schedule. An excellent model is the Wenner-Gren Foundation Dissertation Fieldwork Grants application, available at [http://www.wennergren.org/programs/programs\\_list.htm?attrib\\_id=13232](http://www.wennergren.org/programs/programs_list.htm?attrib_id=13232)

- ii. The rationale for the Formal Research Proposal is that it should 1) propel the student into their research with a specific and detailed plan; 2) demonstrate clear intellectual and methodological rationales for research, and show clear ability to locate research within an intellectual trajectory/debate; and 3) enable the student to gain experience preparing a full and detailed formal proposal (an essential professional skill).
2. A candidate's formal thesis proposal must be approved by their supervisory committee before the student engages in fieldwork.
  3. A version of the proposal must be presented at the Professional Development Workshop or a departmental symposium for open discussion before the student undertakes research.
  4. Students are expected to seek outside funding for field research.

#### F. Ph.D. Dissertation

Within two months of completion of their research or fieldwork, students must submit to their Supervisory Committee and the Graduate Committee (1) a report on their fieldwork and (2) a plan for thesis writing. Students will meet with their committee to discuss the reports and to set goals for thesis writing. The student and supervisory committee will agree on a deadline for submission of a first thesis chapter, normally within three months of the meeting. Close collaboration between students who have completed fieldwork and their supervisory committees is intended to help structure the difficult transition from fieldwork to dissertation writing.

General instructions regarding dissertation format, length and acceptable methods of reproduction can be obtained from the School of Graduate Studies website: <http://graduate.mcmaster.ca/current-students/completing-your-degree>

When the dissertation is in its final stages (10-12 weeks prior to defence), the student begins the electronic thesis defence request program: [https://gs.mcmaster.ca/sites/default/files/resources/the\\_student\\_guide\\_to\\_the\\_phd\\_defence\\_process\\_0.pdf](https://gs.mcmaster.ca/sites/default/files/resources/the_student_guide_to_the_phd_defence_process_0.pdf)

This program replaces two forms:

- 1) the "Nomination of External Examiner" form and 2) the "Submission of a Doctoral Thesis for Examination and Identification of Date for Oral Defence." The final dissertation must be approved by the student's supervisory committee, an external examiner from outside the university and in some cases an internal reviewer from inside the university but outside the department. The dissertation must be orally defended.

## **G. Oral Dissertation Defence**

In this examination, the candidate will defend the dissertation and answer questions the committee finds appropriate. SGS will appoint a Chair of the Examination Committee. The committee normally will consist of three members of the supervisory committee, and an external examiner. If the external examiner is within easy travelling distance of the university, he or she will be invited by SGS to attend. If the external examiner cannot attend, he or she will send a report which the candidate will receive after the defence. If external examiners are not able to attend, either in person or by skype, any questions they have raised will be asked by another member of the defence committee. Dissertations are public documents and cannot be classified as secret or not accessible.

A guide for the preparation of theses may be obtained from the School of Graduate Studies, and further procedural information is provided by the graduate calendar.

[https://gs.mcmaster.ca/sites/default/files/resources/guide\\_for\\_the\\_preparation\\_of\\_masters\\_and\\_doctoral\\_theses- december 2016.pdf](https://gs.mcmaster.ca/sites/default/files/resources/guide_for_the_preparation_of_masters_and_doctoral_theses- december 2016.pdf)

## **H. Ph.D. Language Requirement**

There is no formal language requirement, but in cases where the student needs facility in a foreign language, either to read literature or for use in field research, the Supervisory Committee has the authority to require the student to demonstrate acceptable facility in that language. Students may demonstrate acceptable facility by obtaining a grade of B+ or better in a university course or an accredited language course in the language chosen. The Graduate Committee makes final decisions on what the department recognizes as an accredited non-university course.

## Appendix

### Appendix I

It should be noted at the outset that admission to the Master of Arts program does not guarantee that a request to transfer (accelerated transfer) into the Ph.D. program (Anthropology) will be granted. Such request and its acceptance must be considered as an exceptional process.

To initiate the accelerated transfer process to the Ph.D. program a supervisor who consents to the change must be identified and the student should normally obtain a minimum GPA of 11/12 in courses taken during the first year of graduate study in the department of Anthropology. Furthermore, a request in writing must be made with mutual consent from both the student and their proposed supervisor no later than May 1st after the student has completed one year of graduate study.

In reviewing application for transfer into the Ph.D. program, the Graduate Committee will consider factors such as the overall performance of the student and the likely ability to form a properly constituted supervisory committee (see Section 3). A student who selects the thesis option will have to complete a thesis in the event that they are not accepted for direct transfer into the Ph.D. program. The student must be aware that decisions made regarding the MRP or thesis option on the deadline cannot be changed.

Please note that direct transfer to the Ph.D. program during the second year of study (accelerated transfer) is contingent upon financial resources available to the department or the supervisor at the time an application is made. Decisions on funding for the coming year are normally made in March.

A student who is successful in transferring directly (accelerated transfer) from the MA to the Ph.D. program through such procedure will not receive a MA in Anthropology from McMaster University.

A student who has successfully accelerated to the Ph.D. program through such a procedure will have already completed four graduate courses with the minimum GPA of 11/12 and a Pass in the graduate professional workshop in the first year of graduate study. A student who has successfully accelerated through such a procedure will start as a second year student of the Ph.D. program (see Section 3B for regulations relating to the Ph.D. program)

<https://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicAccommodation-StudentsWithDisabilities.pdf>