

**MIKE PETRYK SCHOOL OF
DENTISTRY
GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK
2026-2027**



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1 Welcome to the University of Alberta

The mission of the University of Alberta is to create and sustain a vibrant and supportive learning environment that discovers, disseminates, and applies new knowledge through teaching and learning, research and creative activity, community involvement, and partnerships. The University of Alberta gives a national and international voice to innovation in our province, taking a lead role in placing Canada at the global forefront.

The program you are currently pursuing is a part of the Faculty of Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies (FGPS) administered through the Medical Sciences Graduate Program (MSGP) of the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry and the Mike Petryk School of Dentistry. Although a set of common ground rules are set by the FGPS and the MSGP, each program within the School of Dentistry has their own particular sets of expectations, curriculum requirements, graduation requirements, and administrative set of rules and regulations that guide the program. As a graduate student in one of our programs, you will be expected to understand and know the responsibilities for your own particular program and degree.

This handbook contains information specific to the graduate programs offered in the Department of Dentistry. Graduate students must make themselves aware of the contents of the graduate portions of the University of Alberta Calendar (linked [here](#)) and the Graduate Program Manual from the Faculty of Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies (linked [here](#)). If there is a discrepancy between the information presented here and that contained in the Calendar, **the Calendar takes precedence.**

The key point to remember is that **you** are ultimately responsible for your own education and your own program progress. The graduate program structure is here to provide assistance at all stages of your education. The School of Dentistry will provide an environment that promotes education, innovation, critical thinking, and life-long learning, as well as the infrastructure to help you accomplish your goals.

The pursuit of a graduate degree in the School of Dentistry is a full-time obligation. It is expected that students spend a minimum of 40 hours/week attending classes, practicing in the clinic (if applicable), interacting with fellows and faculty, or working on their research project, depending on the requirements of your program. It is also expected that students spend the full year (12 months) in pursuit of their degree, with the exception of the times during which the University is officially closed, or students are on vacation. Concerns over time management and commitment by students will be dealt with by their Program Director and the Senior Director of Graduate Studies.

We welcome you as a student into our graduate programs and we look forward to a mutually beneficial experience!

2 About Us

Dental education was instituted at the University of Alberta in the School of Dentistry under the Faculty of Medicine. The first full degree program was offered in 1923.

The School of Dentistry's graduate program falls under the guidelines of the Faculty of Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies (FGPS), as well as the Medical Sciences Graduate Program (MSGP) in the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry (FoMD).

Students pursuing a Master of Science (MSc) may specialize in the following areas:

- Dental Hygiene
- Dentistry
- Oral Biology
- Oral Medicine
- Orthodontics
- Periodontics

Students pursuing a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) may specialize in the following areas:

- Dentistry
- Oral Biology
- Orthodontics
- Periodontics

FGPS is responsible for the general administration of the University's graduate programs and is ultimately responsible for the admission and registration of graduate students through to convocation.

FGPS supports every aspect of the University of Alberta graduate student experience:

- Admissions;
- Funding and Scholarships;
- Teaching preparation;
- Professional development;
- Academic records;
- And much more!

The School of Dentistry's Senior Director of Graduate Studies is Dr. Carlos Flores-Mir. The Graduate Programs Administrative Lead is Ms. Deniz Ozgan.

Dr. Carlos Flores-Mir

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Important information for students regarding resources, awards and scholarships may be found on the School of Dentistry's [Dentranet](#) and [website](#).

2.1 Graduate Studies Committee (GSC)

Under the authority of the School of Dentistry and reporting to the Chair, School of Dentistry, the Graduate Studies Committee (GSC) oversees all graduate programs in the School of Dentistry. The Graduate Director is also the Chair of the GSC. This committee meets monthly.

Members include:

- Senior Director, Graduate Studies
- Associate Chair, Research
- Graduate Program Directors from each program
- Two full-time tenure-track academic staff members who have supervised a graduate student within the last two years (basic sciences and clinical sciences)
- Graduate Student representative, elected
- Associate Chair, Students Affairs

3 Responsibilities

The list of responsibilities related to Graduate Programs for Students, Supervisors, Graduate Coordinators, Departments, and FGPS Council can be found in the [University Calendar](#).

3.1 Student Responsibilities

Graduate students are ultimately responsible for their own programs and are expected to be familiar with all program regulations and related deadlines.

The student's fundamental responsibilities include:

- Familiarizing themselves with the requirements and limitations of their programs as specified in each Faculty section of the [University Calendar](#), for ensuring that their programs are properly planned and in accordance with degree specifications;
- Ensuring that their registration is accurate, does not lapse, and to take responsibility for adjustments in registration made necessary by changes to their academic status.
- Registering themselves in their courses each year. If assistance or departmental approval is required, please contact the Graduate Programs Administrative Lead;
- Submitting appropriate forms on time to the department for signature and process;
- Paying all fees required by the deadline dates set out in the University Calendar;
- Maintaining open communication with their supervisor and graduate coordinator concerning any problem either real or perceived;
- In the event of a conflict in the supervisor-student relationship, discussing it with the supervisor and graduate coordinator in a timely fashion;
- Completing the Student-Supervisor Guidelines, with their supervisor, within the first term of study, but no later than **12 months** from the student's program start date;
- Ensuring the completion of the Progress Report at least **once annually**, and no more than once **every four months** as required to appropriately monitor progress in the program;
- Informing the Supervisor regularly about progress, and providing the Supervisor with an annual report for distribution to the supervisory committee;

- Making research results accessible (beyond their appearance in a thesis) to an appropriate audience.
- Being aware of deadlines for possible scholarship applications, and seeking advice and assistance from the department in making applications, etc.
- Preparing a thesis in accordance with the FGPS policy.
- Fulfilling all of their requirements for ethical and professional development training prior to application for graduation.

The School of Dentistry also expects that students will:

- Treat colleagues in the School with respect;
- Attend School activities such as seminars or journal clubs;
- Follow all safety regulations imposed by the University and their Supervisor;
- Be prepared to undertake limited undergraduate teaching assignments (lectures, tutorials, reviews, mentoring, demonstrations or quizzes) as part of their academic apprenticeship. Students may enhance their teaching skills by participating in the workshops organized by University Teaching Services;
- Present a seminar at least once during their graduate career.

3.2 Supervisor Responsibilities

The Supervisor is directly responsible for the supervision of the student's program. If a graduate student has a co-supervisor, then the term "supervisor" refers to both supervisors.

Primary mentorship for PhD students in our graduate programs is restricted to full-time tenure track faculty. Full-time fixed term faculty or part-time faculty can serve as co-supervisors for PhD students, so long as the primary supervisor is a full-time tenure track faculty member in our program, and provided that the full-time fixed term faculty or part-time faculty member has the appropriate credentials and academic standing to meet the requirements of FGPS. Full-time fixed term faculty or part-time faculty can also serve on exam and thesis committees for students.

The supervisor is essential to the successful completion of thesis-based graduate degree programs. If a graduate student has a co-supervisor, then the term "supervisor" refers to both supervisors.

The graduate student supervisor is directly responsible for:

- assisting the student in planning a program of studies;
- assisting in ensuring that the student is aware of all program requirements, degree regulations, and general regulations of the department and the GPS;
- providing counsel on all aspects of the student's program;
- staying informed of the student's research activities and progress;
- ensuring that students conduct their research in a manner that is as effective, safe, and productive as is possible;
- arranging for and attends all supervisory committee meetings and the student's examinations, and ensuring that these are scheduled and held in accordance with GPS regulations;

- when going on leave or an extended period of absence, ensuring that the student is adequately supervised by assigning an acting supervisor. (When the student is in a doctoral program, the acting supervisor should be a member of the supervisory committee); and,
- reviewing the thesis both in its draft and final form, and returning feedback in a timely manner.

The graduate student supervisor will:

- meet with their thesis-based graduate student(s) and complete with them, and the supervisory committee when established, the GPS student progress report form at least once during a 12 month period (progress reports can be filled out once every four months as required);
- hold an introductory meeting with all incoming thesis-based graduate students in the first term of the student's program, and no later than 12 months from the program start date, and complete the Student-Supervisor Guidelines; and,
- be familiar with the [Guidelines for Supervision and Mentorship for Faculty and Administrators](#) resource.

4 Supervision & Supervisory Committees

4.1 Departmental Regulations and Responsibilities

Departments are responsible for preparing a set of regulations and guidelines for supervisors and students. Guidelines should deal with the selection and functioning of supervisors and should outline the joint responsibilities of faculty members and graduate students. Options for students to pursue who believe they are receiving unsatisfactory supervision should also be specified.

4.2 Appointment of the Supervisor(s)

Every student in a thesis-based program is required to have a supervisor. The department that admits a student to a thesis-based graduate program is responsible for providing supervision within a subject area in which it has competent supervisors, and in which the student has expressed an interest.

Normally there is only one supervisor. Departments may consider the appointment of more than one supervisor for a student.

Note: Students in clinical-based programs are not required to complete a thesis in the same area as their clinical specialization.

4.3 Supervisors on Leave

It is the responsibility of supervisors to make adequate provision for supervision of their graduate students during their leave. Therefore, if a supervisor is to be absent from the

University for a period exceeding **two months**, it is the supervisor's responsibility to nominate an adequate interim substitute or indicate the means by which supervision will be maintained. It is the supervisor's responsibility to inform the student and the department in writing at the time the leave is approved.

Supervisors planning to take a sabbatical should follow the requirements found in Appendix A.3 of the Faculty Agreement with respect to adequate advance arrangements for graduate students while a supervisor is on sabbatical.

4.4 Eligibility for Appointment as Supervisor

Each of the following criteria must be met by at least one of the supervisor(s):

1. be an Employee, Academic Colleague or Professor Emeriti, as outlined in 1. b, c and d of the [UAPPOL GPS Adjunct Academic Appointment and Graduate Student Supervision Policy](#);
2. be active in the general subject area of the student's research;
3. demonstrate continuing scholarly or creative activity of an original nature; and
4. either hold a degree equivalent to or higher than that for which the student is a candidate, or have a demonstrated record of successfully supervising students for the degree.

If one of conditions (2)-(4) is not satisfied by any of the proposed supervisors, then a departmental justification (with the proposed supervisors' CV) is put forward to the Dean of the department's Faculty for approval.

For supervisors from outside the University of Alberta, working with a supervisor at the University of Alberta, the means by which meaningful interaction can be maintained should be specified in writing to the student and the department.

4.4.1 Timeline for Appointment of Supervisors

Supervisor(s) must be appointed within the first **12 months** of the student's program following the procedures approved by the Dean of the department's Faculty and submitted to GPS.

4.5 Forming Supervisory Committees

It is the Department of Dentistry's requirement for master's students to have a supervisory committee. A Master's supervisory committee must have at least three members, and must include all the supervisors.

Every doctoral student's program shall be under the direction of a supervisory committee approved by the department. A doctoral supervisory committee must have at least three members, and must include all the supervisors.

5 FoMD Graduate Program Regulations

Graduate program regulations and standards for Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry (FoMD) graduate programs are defined at three levels:

- FGPS sets the minimum requirements that must be met by all graduate students at the University of Alberta.
- FoMD regulations over and above those set by GPS that must be met by graduate students in all FoMD programs.
- Individual graduate programs in FoMD have the same minimum requirements, including four core competencies; however, the mechanisms by which these course competencies are satisfied will differ between individual programs.
 - Note: Clinical programs are exempt from this framework.

5.1 Minimum Length of Time in Program

Thesis-based Master's program: The minimum time required for a student to be registered in a thesis-based Master's program is 1 year. See [GPS Time Limit for Completion of Graduate Programs](#).

Doctoral program: The minimum time required for a student to be registered in a Doctoral program is 3 years. See [GPS Time Limit for Completion of Graduate Programs](#).

5.2 Academic Standing

Students are required to maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 throughout their graduate program. Failure to maintain the required cumulative GPA will result in a recommendation by the Director of Graduate Studies to GPS that the student be placed on academic probation or required to withdraw.

Exceptions: Clinically-related graduate programs in FoMD have their own minimum GPA requirement to maintain academic standing.

6 Graduate Degree Programs Offered

6.1 Research-Based Programs

The School of Dentistry offers the following [research-based](#) graduate degrees:

- MSc in Medical Science, Dentistry
- MSc in Medical Science, Dental Hygiene
- MSc in Medical Science, Oral Biology
- PhD in Medical Science, Dentistry
- PhD in Medical Science, Oral Biology

6.1.1 MSc in Medical Sciences

The information applies to the following programs: MSc in Dentistry, Dental Hygiene, and Oral Biology.

6.1.1.1 Residency Requirement

The School of Dentistry has no set residency requirement. This is dependent on discussions with your Supervisor, requirements of proposed research, and course offerings (some students may be asked to take courses outside the School of Dentistry and those courses may not be offered online). Oral examinations may be required to be held in person.

6.1.1.2 Course Requirements

Students are required to complete the following list of graded coursework. Students may be required to complete additional courses to strengthen their background knowledge and/or critical thinking based on their area of research. Courses will be chosen in consultation with the Supervisor. Students can also contact the Graduate Program Administrator for course options.

Required Courses:

- **DENT 542** – Research Methodology
- **DENT 543** – Introduction to Research Methods and Data Management
- **DENT 635** – Seminars in Oral Health Sciences I
- **DENT 636** – Seminars in Oral Health Science II

A student must be registered in **9 credits per term in Fall/Winter** in order to be considered a full-time student. A Thesis course (THES) may be added to a student's course registration to ensure the student has the required 9 credits per term. E.g., if the student's credits for a term add up to 6, they will need to register in THES 903 to bring the credit load up to 9.

A student must also be registered in **6 credits per term in the Spring/Summer** in order to be considered a full-time student. FGPS will automatically enroll students in THES 906 to meet this requirement. Students should confirm that they are enrolled in the Spring and Summer.

6.1.1.3 Length of Program

The minimum time required for a student to be registered in a thesis-based Master's program is 1 year. Students must complete their program within **four years** of the term in which they first register as candidates in the MSc program. In the case of students transferring from a course-based or other program, the beginning of the program is the term of initial registration in the first program.

6.1.1.4 Ethics and Academic Citizenship Requirement

Ethics and academic citizenship training are mandatory for all graduate students at the University of Alberta. Students will be automatically enrolled in the self-paced online course **INT D 710** – Ethics and Academic Citizenship at the start of their program. The course must be completed by the **end of the first term** of registration in your degree program

More information can be found on the [FGPS website](#).

6.1.1.5 Professional Development Requirement

Professional development training is mandatory for all graduate students who have started their graduate program in September 2016 and onwards. Each student is expected to complete an **Individual Development Plan** within **12 months** of commencement for full-time students.

Additionally, each student must complete **8 hours** of professional development activities prior to the final oral examination to meet this requirement. This must be completed by the end of your Master's program.

Further information regarding the above two requirements as well as submission deadlines and instructions will be available on [Dentranet](#).

Additional information can be found on the [EGPS website](#).

6.1.1.6 Seminars

Students are required to attend **twelve** Oral Health seminars and to participate in Graduate Research Day **every year** while they are registered.

6.1.1.7 Progress Report/Meetings

Once a year, all students are required to:

- Meet with their supervisor and research committee;
- Students are required to take minutes about details discussed during this meeting, have agreement by all the attendees that the minutes reflect the discussion and sent a copy to the Graduate Program Administrative Lead;
- Meet with Program Director (below) in the Fall of every academic year;
- Meet with the Graduate Director in the Winter of every academic year.

6.1.1.8 Thesis Examination

MSc students must write and successfully defend their thesis, as determined by the examining committee. More information can be found under [Thesis & Candidacy Examinations](#).

Students must also publish their thesis.

6.1.1.9 Program Directors

Dentistry

Dr. Arnaldo Perez-Garcia
perezgar@ualberta.ca

Dental Hygiene

Dr. Minn Yoon
minnyou@ualberta.ca

Oral Biology

Dr. Maria Febbraio
febbraio@ualberta.ca

6.1.2 PhD in Medical Sciences

The following information applies to the following [research-based](#) programs:

- PhD in Medical Sciences, Dentistry
- PhD in Medical Sciences, Oral Biology

6.1.2.1 Residency Requirement

The School of Dentistry requires students to reside in Edmonton for a **minimum of two years**. Residency for the remainder of the program is dependent on discussions with your Supervisor, requirements of research, and course offerings (some students may be asked to take courses outside the Department and those courses may not be offered online). Oral examinations may be required to be in-person.

6.1.2.2 Course Requirements

Students are required to complete the following list of graded coursework. Students may be required to complete additional courses to strengthen their background knowledge and/or critical thinking based on their area of research. Courses will be chosen in consultation with the Supervisor. Students can also contact the Graduate Program Administrator for course options.

Required Courses:

- **DENT 542** – Research Methodology
- **DENT 543** – Introduction to Research Methods and Data Management
- **DENT 635** – Seminars in Oral Health Sciences I
- **DENT 636** – Seminars in Oral Health Science II

To be considered full-time, students must register for **9 credits per term** in Fall/Winter. A thesis course (THES) may be added to registration to ensure the student has the required credits per term. E.g., if the student's credits per term adds up to 6, they will be required to register in THES 903 to bring the credit load up to 9.

For a student transferring into the PhD program from an MSc program, credit for approved courses taken during the MSc program will be transferred to the PhD program on the recommendation of the Supervisor and Supervisory Committee. The recommended timeframe for transferring from an MSc to a PhD program is 12 months from the start of the graduate program, with a maximum limit of 24 months. See [GPS Change of Program](#) for additional information.

Note: when a student transfers from an MSc to a PhD program, the residency requirement is considered to be cumulative (i.e., the beginning of the MSc program is now applicable to the PhD program).

6.1.2.3 Length of Program

The minimum time required for a student to be registered in a Doctoral program is 3 years. Students must complete their program within **6 years** of the term in which they first register in a doctoral program. In the case of MSc students who are reclassified as PhD students, all degree requirements must be completed within 6 years of the time they first register as MSc students.

6.1.2.4 Ethics and Academic Citizenship Requirement

Ethics and academic citizenship training are mandatory for all graduate students at the University of Alberta. Students will be automatically enrolled in the self-paced online courses **INT D 710** – Ethics and Academic Citizenship and **INT D 720** – Advanced Ethics and Academic Citizenship at the start of their program. The course must be completed by the **end of the first term** of registration in your degree program

More information can be found on the [FGPS website](#).

6.1.2.5 Professional Development Requirement

Professional development training is mandatory for all graduate students who have started their graduate program in September 2016 and onwards. Each student is expected to complete an **Individual Development Plan** within **18 months** of commencement for full-time students.

Additionally, each student must complete **8 hours** of professional development activities within the **first three years** of their program commencement.

Further information regarding the above two requirements as well as submission deadlines and instructions will be available on [Dentranet](#).

Additional information can be found on the [EGPS website](#).

6.1.2.6 Seminars

Students are required to attend **twelve** Oral Health seminars and to participate in Graduate Research Day **every year** while they are registered.

6.1.2.7 Progress Report/Meetings

Once a year, all students are required to:

- Meet with their supervisor and research committee;
 - Students are required to take minutes about the details discussed during this meeting, have agreement by all the attendees that the minutes reflect the discussion, and send a copy to the Graduate Program Administrator.
- Meet with Program Director (below) in the Fall of every academic year
- Meet with the Graduate Director in the Winter of every academic year.

6.1.2.8 PhD Proposal and Thesis Proposal Meeting

The PhD Thesis Proposal Meeting is intended to ensure that doctoral candidates demonstrate adequate depth and breadth of knowledge about their proposed thesis project, as well as being able to defend the feasibility of their proposed research project. The meeting allows the Supervisory Committee to evaluate the novelty, rigor, and overall quality of the proposed work. Its purpose is not to assess readiness to *pass* the Candidacy Examination, but rather to ensure that the student's proposed research is sufficient in scope and originality to merit a PhD. The meeting also allows the committee to provide constructive feedback to strengthen the research plan and/or areas where the candidates need to strengthen their knowledge.

A PhD Thesis Proposal Meeting must be scheduled within the first 18 months of the program. Following the presentation and discussion, the Supervisory Committee will determine whether the student is prepared to proceed to the Candidacy Examination based on the readiness of the thesis proposal. Readiness to pass the Candidacy Examination should be assessed by interactions with the Supervisory Committee between the PhD Thesis Proposal Meeting and the actual Candidacy Examination date. Students can refer to the [Department Guidelines](#) for more information.

Preparation of the PhD Thesis Proposal

The proposal must be submitted to the supervisor, supervisory committee members, and the Senior Director of Graduate Studies at least one week before the scheduled PhD Thesis Proposal Meeting. The proposal is prepared by the student in consultation with the Supervisor.

The PhD Proposal follows a defined format:

- A summary of relevant literature and an introduction to the research topic.
- Statement of research questions, objectives or hypotheses, presentation of preliminary results, and a detailed description of the project, including methods.
- The proposal must be properly justified, feasible within available resources, and supported where possible by preliminary data.
- The proposal should not exceed 5 single-spaced pages, excluding figures, tables, and references.

PhD Thesis Proposal Meeting:

- At the PhD Thesis Proposal Meeting, the student will present their PhD proposal in a brief 20-minute oral presentation that is prepared with the assistance of the Supervisor.
- The presentation will be followed by a 40-minute question period focused on the proposal.
- The Committee shall evaluate whether the proposed work is of sufficient novelty, quality and quantity to satisfy the requirements of a PhD.
- Note that it is common during the question period for Committee members to provide feedback and suggestions to improve the proposal.
- The Committee will also decide on the suitability of the candidate to advance to the PhD program.
- Successful completion of this step requires a unanimous positive decision that will be communicated to the student (and Director of Graduate Studies and Graduate Program Administrator) by the Supervisor at the meeting (or within one week of the meeting).

Possible Outcomes of the PhD Thesis Proposal Meeting:

- If the final decision from the Supervisory Committee is positive, the department Graduate Program Administrator will submit the 'Change of Category' and 'Appointment of Supervisor(s) and Supervisory Committee' forms to GPS. Upon successful transfer, students will be designated as 'Provisional PhD Students' and become eligible to take the Candidacy Examination.
- If the final decision at the PhD Thesis Proposal Meeting is negative, the student and Supervisor will have one opportunity to submit a revised proposal in accordance with the Supervisory Committee recommendations. The timeframe for submission of the revised proposal will be determined by the Director of Graduate Studies in consultation with the Supervisor (the suggested time frame must meet program requirements for time to transfer and for completion of the Candidacy). If the second attempt to transfer to the PhD program is unsuccessful, or if the student decides not to make a second attempt to transfer from the MSc to the PhD program, the student will be given the options to complete an MSc or withdraw from the program.

Students Transferring from an MSc to PhD

- Students enrolled in an MSc program wishing to transition to a PhD program without first completing the MSc should inform their Supervisor as early as possible so that a Supervisory Committee can be formed, or the composition of the existing Supervisory Committee can be adjusted to match GPS requirements.
- To initiate the transfer process, the student must first obtain approval from their Supervisory Committee, typically 1-2 months before the desired transfer date.
- If approval to proceed with the transfer process is granted, the Supervisor schedules a PhD Thesis Proposal Meeting with the Supervisory Committee, at which the student will present and defend their PhD Thesis proposal.

6.1.2.9 Doctoral Candidacy Examination

Students must complete a doctoral candidacy exam. The Candidacy Examination is an important learning opportunity to help students consolidate their understanding and advance their thinking in the subject area related to their research.

The examination is also to establish that the student has:

- Proficient knowledge of their research subject area.
- The ability to develop, pursue and complete original scientific research at an advanced level, which requires (in addition to knowledge of the discipline) an understanding of experimental design, critical thinking abilities and communication skills.

Candidacy Completion Timeline

- Students entering the PhD program directly or transferring from an MSc to a PhD within the first 18 months must complete the Candidacy Examination within 30 months of starting their graduate program.
- Students transferring to the PhD between 18-24 months from the start of their graduate program must complete the Candidacy Examination within 36 months of starting their graduate program.

The format for the Candidacy Research Proposal is as follows:

- A cover page with the title of the proposal, the student's name, and the date, time, and location of the examination.
- A 1-page research summary (updated from the original 1-page Proposal Summary submitted for pre-approval). See [Procedures, Requirements and Timeline](#) for additional information.
- The research proposal can be no longer than 10 pages. Up to 5 additional pages can be included for Tables and Figures.
- A complete list of citations with titles (this is not included within the 10-page limit).

Formatting Guidelines:

- Use 8.5" x 11" page format.
- All margins should be set at 2 cm (top, bottom, left, and right).
- Text should be in single-spaced 12-point Times New Roman font, allowing for 48 lines per page.
- Condensed fonts or line spacing are not permitted.
- Page numbers must be clearly displayed at the bottom of each page.
- Any text exceeding the specified limits will be ignored, except for references.
- Tables and Figures should be legible when viewed at 100%.

6.1.2.10 *Thesis Examination*

Students must write and successfully defend a thesis, as determined by the examining committee. More information can be found under [Thesis & Candidacy Examinations](#).

Students must also publish their dissertation.

6.1.2.11 *Program Directors*

Dentistry

Dr. Arnaldo Perez-Garcia
perezgar@ualberta.ca

Oral Biology

Dr. Maria Febbraio
febbraio@ualberta.ca

6.2 Clinical-Based Graduate Programs

The School of Dentistry offers the following [clinical-based](#) graduate degrees:

- MSc in Medical Sciences, Oral Medicine
- MSc in Medical Sciences, Orthodontics
- MSc in Medical Sciences, Periodontology
- PhD in Medical Sciences, Orthodontics
- PhD in Medical Sciences, Periodontology

Students in these clinical programs should refer to the information below. However, these programs also have a supplementary Program Specific Clinical Manual as well as the Oral Health Clinic Manual. All manuals can be found on Dentranet.

6.2.1 MSc in Medical Sciences

The information below applies to the following programs: MSc in Oral Medicine, Orthodontics, and Periodontology.

6.2.1.1 *Residency Requirement*

The School of Dentistry requires students to reside in Edmonton for the full duration of their degree and clinical training. Oral examinations may be required to be in-person.

6.2.1.2 Course Requirements

Students are required to complete all course requirements as outlined in the University Calendar for each clinical program. A full table of required courses can be found on dentranet.

To be considered full-time, students must register for 9 **credits per term** in Fall/Winter. A thesis course (THES) may be added to registration to ensure the student has the required credits per term. E.g., if the student's credits per term adds up to 6, they will be required to register in THES 903 to bring the credit load up to 9.

6.2.1.3 Length of Program

The minimum time required for a student to be registered in a clinical thesis-based Master's program is 3 years. Students must complete their program within **four years** of the term in which they first register as candidates in the MSc program. In the case of students transferring from a course-based or other program, the beginning of the program is the term of initial registration in the first program.

6.2.1.4 Ethics and Academic Citizenship Requirement

Ethics and academic citizenship training are mandatory for all graduate students at the University of Alberta. Students will be automatically enrolled in the self-paced online course **INT D 710 – Ethics and Academic Citizenship** at the start of their program. The course must be completed by the **end of the first term** of registration in your degree program

More information can be found on the [FGPS website](#).

6.2.1.5 Professional Development Requirement

Professional development training is mandatory for all graduate students who have started their graduate program in September 2016 and onwards. Each student is expected to complete an **Individual Development Plan** within **12 months** of commencement for full-time students.

Additionally, each student must complete **8 hours** of professional development activities prior to the final oral examination to meet this requirement. This must be completed by the end of your Master's program.

Further information regarding the above two requirements as well as submission deadlines and instructions will be available on [Dentranet](#).

Additional information can be found on the [FGPS website](#).

6.2.1.6 Seminars

Students are required to attend **twelve** Oral Health seminars and to participate in Graduate Research Day **every year** while they are registered.

6.2.1.7 Progress Report/Meeting

Once a year, all students are required to:

- Meet with their supervisor and research committee;
- Students are required to take minutes about details discussed during this meeting, have agreement by all the attendees that the minutes reflect the discussion and sent a copy to the Graduate Program Administrative Lead;

- Meet with the Graduate Director in the Winter of every academic year.

6.2.1.8 Thesis Examination

MSc students must write and successfully defend their thesis, as determined by the examining committee. More information can be found under [Thesis & Candidacy Examinations](#).

Students must also publish their thesis.

6.2.1.9 Program Directors

Oral Medicine

Dr. Reid Friesen
rtfries@ualberta.ca

Dr. Pallavi Parashar
pparasha@ualberta.ca

Periodontology

Dr. Khaled Altabtbaei
(didactic)
altabtba@ualberta.ca

Dr. Teresa Debevc (clinical)
debevc@ualberta.ca

Orthodontics

Dr. Manuel Lagravere
lagravere@ualberta.ca

6.2.2 PhD in Medical Sciences

The information below applies to the following programs: PhD in Orthodontics and Periodontology.

6.2.2.1 Residency Requirement

The School of Dentistry requires students to reside in Edmonton for the full duration of their degree and clinical training. Oral examinations may be required to be in-person.

6.2.2.2 Course Requirements

Students are required to complete all course requirements as outlined in the University Calendar for each clinical program. A full table of required courses can be found on dentranet.

To be considered full-time, students must register for 9 **credits per term** in Fall/Winter. A thesis course (THES) may be added to registration to ensure the student has the required credits per term. E.g., if the student's credits per term adds up to 6, they will be required to register in THES 903 to bring the credit load up to 9.

For a student transferring into the PhD program from an MSc program, credit for approved courses taken during the MSc program will be transferred to the PhD program on the recommendation of the Supervisor and Supervisory Committee. The recommended timeframe for transferring from an MSc to a PhD program is 12 months from the start of the graduate program, with a maximum limit of 24 months.

6.2.2.3 Length of Program

The minimum time required for a student to be registered in a clinical thesis-based Master's program is 3 years. Students must complete their program within **six years** of the term in which they first register as candidates in the MSc program. In the case of students transferring from a

course-based or other program, the beginning of the program is the term of initial registration in the first program.

6.2.2.4 Ethics and Academic Citizenship Requirement

Ethics and academic citizenship training are mandatory for all graduate students at the University of Alberta. Students will be automatically enrolled in the self-paced online courses **INT D 710** – Ethics and Academic Citizenship and **INT D 720** – Advanced Ethics and Academic Citizenship at the start of their program. The course must be completed by the **end of the first term** of registration in your degree program

More information can be found on the [FGPS website](#).

6.2.2.5 Professional Development Requirement

Professional development training is mandatory for all graduate students who have started their graduate program in September 2016 and onwards. Each student is expected to complete an **Individual Development Plan** within **12 months** of commencement for full-time students.

Additionally, each student must complete **8 hours** of professional development activities prior to the final oral examination to meet this requirement. This must be completed by the end of your Master's program.

Further information regarding the above two requirements as well as submission deadlines and instructions will be available on [Dentranet](#).

Additional information can be found on the [FGPS website](#).

6.2.2.6 Seminars

Students are required to attend **twelve** Oral Health seminars and to participate in Graduate Research Day **every year** while they are registered.

6.2.2.7 Progress Report/Meeting

Once a year, all students are required to:

- Meet with their supervisor and research committee;
- Students are required to take minutes about details discussed during this meeting, have agreement by all the attendees that the minutes reflect the discussion and sent a copy to the Graduate Program Administrative Lead;
- Meet with the Graduate Director in the Winter of every academic year.

6.2.2.8 PhD Proposal Meeting

For more information, please see entry on [PhD Proposal Meeting](#).

6.2.2.9 Thesis Examination

PhD students must write and successfully defend their thesis, as determined by the examining committee. More information can be found under [Thesis & Candidacy Examinations](#).

Students must also publish their thesis.

Note: Research-based program students are not permitted to transfer to a clinical MSc or PhD program, nor can students from one clinical speciality program transfer to another clinical

speciality program. Students will need to formally apply in accordance with the requirements and deadlines of each program.

6.2.2.10 *Program Directors*

Periodontology

Dr. Khaled Altabtbaei
(didactic)
altabtba@ualberta.ca

Orthodontics

Dr. Manuel Lagraverre
lagraverre@ualberta.ca

Dr. Teresa Debevc (clinical)
debevc@ualberta.ca

7 Registration

7.1 Dates & Deadlines

The academic schedule, dates, and deadlines for 2026-27 can be found in the [University Calendar](#).

7.2 Registration Status

In order to keep their program active, students registered in Master and Doctoral programs must register each year in course work and/or thesis research. All full-time students must be registered in a **minimum of 9 credits per term** in the Fall and Winter and **6 credits per term** in the Spring and Summer.

A student's registration status is determined automatically by the total units of course weight in which the student is registered for credit in a given term. Audited courses are not included in the calculation of registration status.

Benefits of Full-Time Registration:

- Full-time students have increased access to scholarships, bursaries, student loans, and travel funds.
- Full-time status provides tax advantages.
- Full-time students are covered by the Graduate Students' Association's (GSA) Health and Dental Plans.
- Students who are not Canadian citizens or Permanent Residents who fail to maintain full-time status may jeopardize their standing with Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

Students who fail to register appropriately each year will be considered to have withdrawn from their program. If they wish to resume work on the program, they must reapply by completing the Application for Graduate Admission and have their program reassessed in terms of the regulations in force at the time of reapplication. There is no guarantee of readmission. If a student is recommended for readmission, a readmission fee will be assessed in addition to the fees assessed according to the student's registration.

Students whose research involves ethics approval are reminded that their REB (Research Ethics Board) approval to conduct research ceases at the time of failure to register. Students who are readmitted will have to seek approval from their REB to resume their research.

Thesis-based programs are not recorded as complete until the thesis and accompanying documentation have been received by FGPS.

7.2.1 Full-Time Registration Status in Fall/Winter

Students are registered in **at least 9 credits per term** and are working on their academic program in that term. Credits may be fulfilled with a combination of coursework and thesis (THES). If not completing any coursework, students must be enrolled in THES 909.

7.2.2 Full-Time Registration Status in Spring/Summer

Students are registered in **at least 6 credits per term** and are working on their academic program in that term. FGPS will register students automatically in THES 906 over the Spring and Summer unless registration in a Spring term course is requested.

7.3 Time Limits and Program Extensions

7.3.1 Master Programs

MSc students must complete their program within **four years** of the start of the first term in which the student registers in the Master's program. In the case of students transferring from another program, the beginning of the program is the term of initial registration in the first program.

7.3.2 Doctoral Programs

PhD students must complete their program within **six years** of the start of the first term in which the student registers in the doctoral degree.

In the case of master's students who are reclassified as doctoral students, all degree requirements must be completed within six years of the start of the first term in which the student registers in the master's program.

Additionally, all program requirements, other than the thesis, must be completed within **three years** of the commencement of the doctoral degree program. This does **not** apply to the PhD in Medical Sciences, Orthodontics. For further guidance, and for exemptions to the three-year program requirements rule, see the [University Calendar](#).

7.3.3 Program Extension

A student that has failed to complete all the requirements for the degree within the time limits listed above may be considered for a program extension. Requests for extension will only be considered if there are:

- Well documents reasons specific to a particular type of research that precludes competition within the time limit, or;

- Sufficient and substantial unforeseen circumstances beyond the control of the student and/or supervisor which prevent completion of the program within the time limits.

Program extensions may be considered for **up to one year** at a time.

The School of Dentistry has the authority to approve the first program extension. Approval of second and subsequent program extensions must go through FGPS.

FGPS may approve extensions if recommended by the department. If sufficient progress has been made on the thesis, candidates should apply for extensions by submitting in writing to the Department of Dentistry Graduate Studies Committee an explanation for the delay.

To request a second and subsequent requests, the department must submit a [Program Extension form](#) and the following information:

- A summary of the student's progress to date
- The timetable for completion preferably approved by the supervisor and/or supervisory committee
- An explanatory letter from the supervisor
- An explanatory letter from the student with the expected date of completion
- Written departmental recommendation

7.4 Approved Leave of Absence

Leaves of absences are approved periods of time away from a student's program of study. There are four types of leaves: Regular, Expectational, Maternity/Parental, and Professional.

More information can be found in the [University Calendar](#) and on the FGPS [website](#).

Students must have completed at least one full term of registration in their program before they are eligible to apply for a leave of absence. Exceptional and Maternity/Parental leaves are reviewed and approved by the School of Dentistry. Regular and Professional leaves must be approved by FGPS.

During the approved leave, the student is not to work on their program of study or engage in thesis research/activities. In instances where a student is found to be working on their program while on approved leave, FGPS may rescind the leave, add appropriate registration and fees, and update time in program to include this period. This would result in the student having to pay full fees and would cost time in the program.

Students should request a leave of absence promptly when the need arises. When possible, leaves of absence should begin and end at the same time as academic terms. Circumstances including but not limited to childbirth may require a leave of absence to begin or end while a term is in progress. The impact of a mid-term leave of absence on course grades and fees will be determined by the student's last date of participation in the program, the add/drop deadlines, and the [refund schedule](#). A student must return from an approved leave of absence by the specified date indicated on the application form in order to continue in the program of studies. The student's place in the program of studies is maintained during an approved leave of absence. Readmission to the program will not be required. The time limit for completion of the degree will be extended by the duration of any approved leave of absence.

A few important notes to be aware of and to check into:

- Be sure that the student is following the regulations of their visa/permits/etc.
- Payments and scholarships may be impacted if placed on a leave of absence.
- You will have the option of paying non-instructional fees for health, dental, and student academic services, or of opting out of all services.

The FGPS will only consider an application for a leave of absence that is supported by documented compelling reasons, such as serious illness or extenuating circumstances requiring a leave on compassionate grounds. Leaves of absence may also be granted for parental and maternity leaves, with supporting documentation.

Students must complete an [Application for Leave of Absence form](#), with the supporting documentation, to the School of Dentistry Graduate Coordinator, who upon approval, will then forward the completed and signed form to FGPS.

7.4.1 Regular Leave

A regular leave of absence permits a student to voluntarily take time away from their program of study to meet responsibilities/plans related to personal situations, travel, employment opportunities, or circumstances not covered by the other leave categories.

A student is permitted to take one regular leave for no more than **one-year** total in their program of study. The leave period must coincide with full terms.

The regular leave period **will be included** in the time period allowed for the completion of the student's program of study.

7.4.2 Exceptional Leave

An exceptional leave is for medical or compassionate reasons. Supplemental documentation must accompany the leave request and cover the dates specified

Exceptional leaves will be granted for up to **12 months** at a time. An exceptional leave of absence is not intended to cover circumstances related to employment or financial concerns.

The exceptional leave period will **not** be included in the time period allowed for the completion of the student's program of study.

7.4.3 Maternity and/or Parental Leave

A graduate student who is expecting a child, or who is the primary caregiver of an infant or young child immediately following birth or adoption is eligible to take a maternity and/or parental leave of absence. Supplemental documentation must accompany the leave request and cover the dates specified.

A maternity and/or parental leave of absence will be granted for up to **20 months**. The leave period must coincide with full terms.

The maternity and/or parental leave period will **not** be included in the time period allowed for the completion of the student's program of study.

7.4.4 Professional Leave

Students who have an opportunity for an internship or employment that is of high value to their career development but which would disrupt progress in their degree program may be eligible for a professional leave. Supplemental documentation from the employer must accompany the leave request and cover the dates specified. Professional experience integrated into thesis work does not qualify for a professional leave.

A student is permitted to take one professional leave for no more than **one-year** total in their program of study.

The professional leave period will **not** be included in the time period allowed for the completion of the student's program of study.

7.5 Change of Category: Master's Bypass to Doctoral Program

Students may wish to change from an MSc to a PhD program during their studies. The School of Dentistry has a formal process to be completed for a program change.

Credit for approved courses taken during the MSc program will be transferred to the PhD program on the recommendation of the Supervisor and Supervisory Committee. The recommended timeframe for transferring from an MSc to a PhD program is after 12 months from the start of the graduate program, with a maximum limit of 24 months. Note that when a student transfers from an MSc to a PhD program, the residency requirement is considered to be cumulative (i.e., the beginning of the MSc program is now applicable to the PhD program).

Students who change from a master's program to a doctoral program, without the need to complete the master's program as part of an acceleration or fast-track, have **four years** to complete the doctoral program progress requirements from the term of initial registration in the master's program.

Please be aware of [FoMD](#) policies and timelines.

7.5.1 Formal process for changing from an MSc program to a PhD program

1. Students enrolled in an MSc program wishing to transition to a PhD program without first completing the MSc should inform their Supervisor as early as possible so that a Supervisory Committee can be formed or the composition of the existing Supervisory Committee can be adjusted to match GPS requirements.
2. To initiate the transfer process, the student must first obtain approval from their Supervisory Committee typically 1-2 months prior to the desired transfer date.
3. If approval to proceed with the transfer process is granted, the Supervisor schedules a PhD Thesis Proposal Meeting with the Supervisory Committee, at which the student will present and defend their PhD Thesis proposal.
4. By way of the completion of the [Recommendation for Change of Category form](#), the Student Supervisory Committee will:

- a. Confirm that the student is on track to complete all MSc degree requirements other than the thesis, ethics and professional development training hours prior to transfer to the PhD program and is in good standing (student is not on a probation of any kind, annual report and committee meeting minutes are submitted on time each year) in their current program.
 - b. Approve the PhD Proposal submitted by the student as having sufficient quality and quantity to qualify for a PhD level project.
 - c. Be aware of the Candidacy examination deadlines and be confident that the student will be able to meet this deadline.
5. The completed [Recommendation for Change of Category form](#) must be submitted to dentgrad@ualberta.ca.
 6. Upon receipt of the above-mentioned form, the Graduate Program Administrative Lead will submit the form to FGPS. The student will officially be a PhD student at the beginning of the following term (September or January only) if accepted by FGPS.

Important: As part of the change of category request, the supervisor must confirm that funding for the student is secured for at least one year and demonstrate a credible plan to support the student's funding for the subsequent years of the PhD program, in accordance with the [minimum guaranteed funding policy](#).

Note: Once the PhD proposal is approved, the candidacy exam must take place not later than **36 months** of the initial registration into the MSc program.

7.6 Program Withdrawal

Students wishing to terminate their program of study are strongly advised to discuss the issue with following Faculty members before terminating their program:

- their Supervisor,
- the Graduate Program Administrator,
- the Graduate Studies Director,
- the Associate Chair, Student Affairs, and,
- if desired, with the Associate Dean, FGPS

There may be alternative actions available.

More information can be found on the [FGPS website](#).

8 Grades and Academic Standing

The University of Alberta uses a letter grading system for graduate courses. For students registered in the FGPS, a **passing grade is C+**.

The grade distribution according to the four-point system is as follows:

Descriptor	Letter Grade	Grade Point Value	Notes
Excellent	A+	4.0	

	A	4.0	
	A-	3.7	
Good	B+	3.3	Minimum academic standing GPA (FoMD)
	B	3.0	
Satisfactory	B-	2.7	Minimum academic standing GPA (FGPS)
	C+	2.3	Minimum course pass mark
Failure	C	2.0	
	C-	1.7	
	D+	1.3	
	D	1.0	
	F	0.0	

Students are required to maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 throughout their graduate program. Failure to maintain the required cumulative GPA will result in a recommendation by the Director of Graduate Studies to FGPS that the student be placed on academic probation or required to withdraw. Please note that the minimum GPA is set by FoMD and is above and beyond the minimum GPA set by FGPS.

9 Tuition & Fees

FGPS instructional fees for both Canadian and international students can be found [here](#). There are fees for all terms.

Note: The graduate clinical programs are considered non-standard programs and will have a fee structure that differs from the research-based thesis programs.

MSc/PhD Orthodontics:

A cost recovery Clinical Operation Fee per registered academic year and an Equipment Rental Fee per clinical education year will be charged in addition to regular tuition, instructional and non-instructional fees.

MSc/PhD Periodontology:

A cost recovery Clinical Operation Fee per registered academic year and an Equipment Rental Fee per clinical education year will be charged in addition to regular tuition, instructional and non-instructional fees.

MSc Oral Medicine:

Regular tuition, instructional and non-instructional fees. Equipment Rental Fee per clinical education year.

9.1 Minimum Guaranteed Funding for PhD Students

On April 17, 2024, the Faculty of Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies Council endorsed minimum guaranteed funding of \$100K CAD over four years for PhD students with the goal to uplift and improve the U of A doctoral program and doctoral student experience and provide support for PhD students across disciplines. Minimum guaranteed funding for PhD students at the

University of Alberta provides financial support for current and incoming doctoral students through years one to four of their program with minimum guaranteed funding of \$100K CAD over four years and not less than \$25K CAD in their first year.

The Department will meet funding commitments through any combination of external and internal scholarships, graduate teaching or research assistantships, graduate research assistant fellowships, University-organized internships, and other available funding, including GRA or GTA opportunities elsewhere in the University. The value of external scholarships (local, regional, provincial, or federal) may be counted toward minimum funding, and must be disclosed by the student.

Doctoral students will need to meet a set of expectations to remain eligible for guaranteed funding:

- Students must maintain full-time registration status.
- Students must maintain satisfactory academic standing and be making adequate progress in their program.
- Students must be actively applying for external and internal scholarships.
- Working professionals (students working in professional jobs related to their degree) who will continue to be employed in Canada while they are PhD students must declare their employment status. These students are not eligible for minimum guaranteed funding.
- Clinical PhD students are eligible for minimum guaranteed funding while engaged in the research portion of their program. Once a clinical PhD student has completed their candidacy and has begun their clinical training, they are no longer eligible for minimum guaranteed funding (pending approval from FGPS).
- Students transitioning from an MSc to a PhD (without the completion of the Master's) will be eligible for three years of minimum guaranteed funding, rather than four years, from the start of the term that the change in category takes place.

Please see the [Operating Standard](#) for more information.

10 CDSA Education and Research Register

All graduate students who are supervising patient care and are functioning as clinical instructors are required to have a teaching/research license with the [College of Dental Surgeons of Alberta](#) (CDSA). The practitioner physically present supervising patient care carries the legal responsibility. This is a risk management issue and is required by our malpractice insurance.

It is important to note that while any graduate student is acting under a teaching assistantship, the supervising dentist must be physically present in the clinic and the student cannot sign-off on any treatment.

The [application](#) requires a letter of appointment from the University of Alberta School of Dentistry Chair and certified copies of degrees and diplomas earned (see Graduate Administrator for program specific forms). It is advisable to have a **three to four-month** head-start on any necessary preparation to obtain CDSA registration, or to apply for off campus work permits etc. Please note there is a fee of \$1,000 per year for the teaching/research license.

Graduate students who are not Canadian citizens or permanent residents need to be cognizant of their ability to work in this capacity based on their study or work permit restrictions.

11 Research Responsibilities

Graduate programming designed to deliver on core competencies, including communication. The primary learning objective of this core competence is to ensure students learn how to effectively communicate science in a variety of formats (eg. seminars/ research talks, poster presentations, etc).

11.1 Oral Health Sciences Seminars

The School of Dentistry hosts a weekly Oral Health Seminar series. These seminars feature both in-house and outside speakers presenting topics of interest to students, faculty and staff in areas of oral health sciences.

Students are required to attend **twelve** Oral Health Seminars per year; these can also include the Education Unit Seminars and BOMRU Seminars. Students are encouraged to record the titles of their sessions to include in their annual progress report. Seminars are held in-person every Wednesday from 12:00pm - 1:00pm (unless otherwise specified) and invitations are sent to students directly through the student mailing list.

The School of Dentistry requires MSc students in their final year to present an oral public defense as a requirement for graduation. This requirement can be fulfilled by presenting their thesis work at the Oral Health Seminar series. PhD students are required to present at the Oral Health Seminar each year of their program starting in their third year.

11.2 Graduate Research Day

We are currently in the process of reworking Research Day, and additional information will be available in advance of the event.

Research Day is scheduled for **February 25, 2027**, and is a mandatory event for all graduate students. Graduate students will be expected to submit an abstract and participate in the event through one of the following presentation formats:

- Oral presentation
- Poster presentation
- Three Minute Thesis (3MT) presentation

Further details regarding abstract submission, presentation formats, and timelines will be provided in advance of Research Day.

11.3 Annual Progress Report/Supervisory Committee Meetings

FGPS requires graduate students, in conjunction with their supervisors, to complete an Annual Progress Report and submit the minutes from their thesis committee meeting(s) by the end of September each year. This report is used to summarize and gauge the students' progress and outlines specific recommendations for the evaluation period. Completing the Annual Report can protect the supervisor and student from potential conflicts. This report will remain a part of the student's departmental record. The School of Dentistry also requires that students meet with their thesis committee at least once a year. The meeting is documented and the minutes are sent to dentgrad@ualberta.ca as part of the student's record. The meeting template can be found on dentranet.

It is ultimately a joint responsibility of the student and the supervisor to ensure that the student/supervisor completes the Annual Report and meets with the student at least once per year for a supervisory committee meeting. The student should be made aware at each supervisory committee meeting whether they are making satisfactory or unsatisfactory progress.

12 Awards, Scholarships, and Funding

The University of Alberta has various awards, scholarships and prizes to assist you in funding your graduate studies. Graduate students in the School of Dentistry may be considered for a range of funding opportunities administered at three levels:

12.1 FGPS

These awards are managed centrally by the Faculty of Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies and include, but are not limited to:

- University of Alberta Graduate Entrance Scholarship
- University of Alberta Graduate Recruitment Scholarship and Graduate Student Award
- Open Competition Award
- Izaak Walton Killam Memorial Scholarship
- Andrew Stewart Memorial Graduate Prize
- Alberta Graduate Excellence Scholarship (AGES)
- Alberta Innovates Graduate Scholarships
- FGPS Graduate Travel Awards

More information on FGPS Scholarship, Awards, and Funding can be found on the [FGPS website](#).

12.2 FoMD

These awards are managed by the Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry. Awards include, but are not limited to:

- Medical Science Graduate Program Scholarship

- 75th Anniversary Graduate Student Award
- Dean's Doctoral Student Award
- Graduate Student Recruitment Studentships
- Endowed Studentships

More information on these awards can be found [here](#).

12.3 Departmental

These awards are managed by the School of Dentistry. Awards include, but are not limited to:

- IH Award in Dentistry
- Dr. HR Berry MacLean Graduate Scholarship in Dentistry
- Margaret Berry MacLean Graduate Scholarship in Dental Hygiene
- Endowed Graduate Studentships (varied)

Note: The Graduate Studies Committee (GSC) is responsible for the adjudication of all awards that require Department nomination. The GSC reviews applications based on the published criteria for each award and ensures fair, transparent, and equitable decision-making. Preference *may* be given to students with demonstrated financial need. Academic merit is evaluated based on the student's performance and achievements within their **current** program of studies.

All funding opportunities will be distributed to students via the graduate student mailing list. Announcements will include:

- Award description and terms of reference (if available)
- Eligibility criteria
- Required documentation
- Internal Departmental deadlines
- Submission instructions

The majority of awards have a tenure of September 1 – August 31 whereby students must be registered and working full-time on their graduate program during this period (unless otherwise stated in the award Terms of Reference). The eligibility criteria must be met effective the September 1 start date that immediately follows submission of the nomination.

GPA's for specific awards are calculated using a minimum of 15 credits in the current program. If there are less than 15 credits, the Admission Grade Point Average (AGPA) is used in combination with the current program. If there is no graded coursework, the AGPA of the current program (or newly admitted program) will be used.

Note: The Terms of Reference will always supersede this calculation.

13 Policies

13.1 Teaching & Research Assistantships

The School of Dentistry may offer a select number Graduate Student Assistantship opportunities to support graduate student stipend requirements and provide students with

practical teaching experience in undergraduate course components such as lab or clinic environments. A student registered full-time in a graduate program may be appointed by the Department as a TA or RA for up to an average of 12 hours per week (as per the [Graduate Student Assistantship Collective Agreement](#)).

The types of employment that may be available for Graduate students in the School of Dentistry include:

- **Teaching Assistants** (TAs) are primarily responsible for preparing and conducting lectures, supervising laboratories, leading seminars, grading assignments, reports, examinations and performing other related duties.
- **Research Assistants** (RAs) primarily support a research program or other research-related work. The duties may or may not be related to the student's degree program. Research Assistants are normally funded by a research grant that the graduate supervisor holds.
- **Clinical Preceptors** provide instructional support and assessment evaluation in the undergraduate simulation lab and/or undergraduate clinics. Graduate students appointed clinical preceptors will be contracted as part-time sessional instructors. The GTA falls outside of the Graduate Student Assistantship Collective Agreement.

13.2 Vacation Time

Graduate students do not receive formal vacation entitlement. Instead, students follow the University's established academic breaks, which include Fall Reading Week, Winter Reading Week, and the University holiday closure period. These designated breaks apply to all graduate students.

Students in clinical graduate programs are engaged in didactic and clinical coursework throughout the Spring term until July. During the remaining summer months, all students remain registered full time and are expected to continue making progress on their thesis, research, or program requirements. There is no additional break period during the summer.

Beginning in the summer of 2027, all graduate students enrolled in clinical graduate programs (Oral Medicine, Periodontology, and Orthodontics) will also participate in a summer emergency on-call rotation. Each student will be assigned approximately one week of on-call coverage during the period between the completion of summer clinical activities and the start of the Fall term. Students assigned to on-call must remain in the local area and be available to respond to applicable periodontal emergency calls. Students will be supported by a full-time faculty member who will provide backup as required.

Any planned absences outside of the scheduled University breaks must be approved in advance by the student's supervisor. Requests must be arranged to ensure that students do not miss classes, clinical duties, research activities, or any responsibilities related to their program. For thesis-based or research-intensive students, extended absences must not impede research progress or academic commitments.

Additional procedures apply for students in **clinical graduate programs**. These students must consult the **Absence Policy** outlined in appendix A for specific requirements related to clinical absences throughout the academic year.

14 Conflict Resolution

The [Code of Student Behaviour](#) provides specific rules about inappropriate academic behavior which is meant to prevent students from gaining unearned academic advantage over others and to ensure that all students are evaluated fairly.

14.1 Informal Resolution of Conflict

Grievances of an academic nature sometimes arise. Students should first informally approach the supervisor of concern. One party to a conflict is often unaware that there is a problem.

In the event that the supervisor and student do not reach agreement, the student can turn to another member of the Supervisory Committee familiar with the situation. Conversely, supervisors should communicate their concerns as they arise. Written documentation that the student has acknowledged the concerns of a Supervisor should be maintained.

Alternatively, the student can approach the Graduate Program Director who can arrange an informal mediation on behalf of the student. The next level of management would be the Graduate Director.

Involvement of the Associate Chair, Student Affairs (Dr. Suzy Depledge - depledge@ualberta.ca) and/or Graduate Student Advisor (Dr. Arnaldo Perez Garcia - perezgar@ualberta.ca) is strongly encouraged. Both can be approached at any time, in confidence or officially, even before a conflict escalates, independent of supervisor/supervisory committee.

14.2 Formal Resolution of Conflict

The Graduate Studies Director is responsible for promoting an adequate learning environment during graduate studies. They should be consulted as soon as a conflict becomes apparent and informal resolution fails. Involvement of the Associate Chair, Student Affairs is strongly encouraged. The Graduate Studies Director will be involved for mediation when requested by the student or supervisor. They will listen in confidence, and counsel will be provided to achieve conflict resolution, including mediation on behalf of the student. Again, involvement of the Associate Chair, Student Affairs (Dr. Suzy Depledge - depledge@ualberta.ca) and/or Graduate Student Advisor (Dr. Arnaldo Perez Garcia - perezgar@ualberta.ca) is strongly encouraged. Alternatively, the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry Office of Advocacy & Wellbeing (Paul LaPointe, pglapoin@ualberta.ca) or the Student Ombudsman, can be approached in confidence. There is no specific order in which to approach these alternatives.

15 Thesis & Candidacy Examinations

All students in a thesis degree program shall present and defend a thesis embodying the results of their research. The topic of the thesis must have been approved by the student's supervisor. The School of Dentistry uses either the traditional format or the paper-based format.

A master's thesis, at a minimum, should reveal that the student is able to work in a scholarly manner and is acquainted with the principal works published on the subject of the thesis. It should be an original contribution.

A doctoral thesis, at a minimum, must embody the results of original investigations and analyses and be of such quality as to merit publication, meeting the standards of reputable scholarly publications. It must constitute a substantial contribution to the knowledge in the student's field of study.

It is the responsibility of both the student and the supervisor to be aware of any specific requirements of the student's department with respect to the student's thesis.

To ensure eligibility for the earliest convocation following completion of the thesis, each student must have the thesis approved by the FGPS before the [end-of-program deadlines](#).

15.1 Preparing Your Thesis

The FGPS has minimum thesis formatting requirements that must be met by all master's and doctoral students. These guidelines and other requirements and deadlines can be found on the [FGPS website](#).

15.2 Role and Structure of Examining Committees

Formal examining committees are required for thesis-based master's final examination, doctoral candidacy examinations, and doctoral final examinations. Members of the examining committee perform two functions:

1. they bring knowledge and expertise to the assessment of the thesis, and;
2. They ensure that the University's expectations are met regarding the conduct of the examination, adherence to all relevant policies, and the suitability of the thesis for the degree.

15.2.1 The Chair

Every examining committee must have a chair who is not the supervisor and is a faculty member with experience supervising graduate students. The chair should have sufficient experience of graduate examinations to be able to allow the examination to be conducted in a fair manner. The chair is responsible for moderating the discussion and directing questions. It is the chair's responsibility to ensure that departmental and GPS regulations relating to the final examination are followed. If the chair is not an examiner, then the chair does not vote.

The committee chair is not an examiner for doctoral examinations. See Size and Composition of Examining Committees for the requirements for each examination.

The chair should not have real or apparent conflict of interest with the student or any of the examiners.

15.2.2 Examiners

Examiners are full voting members of the examining committee. All examiners must be either active in the general subject area of the student's research or bring relevant expertise to the assessment of the thesis.

There are four types of examiners: ex-officio examiner, university examiner, specialized knowledge examiner, and external examiner.

Ex-officio Examiners

The supervisor(s) and supervisory committee members are ex-officio members of the examining committee.

By definition, no individual can be both an ex-officio and any other kind of examiner on the same examining committee.

University Examiner

A university examiner is a member of the University of Alberta community who is knowledgeable in the field and comes fresh to the examination. They must not be (or have been) a member of the supervisory committee, or have been connected with the thesis research in a significant way. The examiner should not have been associated with the student, outside of usual contact in courses or other non-thesis activities within the University, nor be related to the student or supervisor(s). Eligible University of Alberta community members include current or retired Academic Staff members, Academic Colleagues, Postdoctoral Fellows, or Executive Members/Academic Administrators who will be appointed or re-appointed as Academic Faculty members on the conclusion of their term (current or retired categories A, B, C, D, and E, as defined in the [University of Alberta's Recruitment Policy \(Appendix A\)](#) Definition and Categories of Academic Staff and Colleagues).

A university examiner should not be a former supervisor or student of the supervisor(s).

Except in special circumstances (fully justified in writing to the Dean of the department's Faculty), a university examiner should not be an active collaborator of the supervisor(s) (see [Conflict of Interest Guidelines](#) below).

University examiners who have served on a student's candidacy examination committee are eligible to serve as arm's length examiners on the student's doctoral final examination if the other conditions of being a university examiner remain unchanged.

Specialized Knowledge Examiner

A specialized knowledge examiner is a person who has knowledge or professional expertise that is relevant to the thesis research (such as a health practitioner or an Indigenous community member) and does not have a full-time academic appointment at a university that confers graduate degrees. A specialized knowledge examiner comes fresh to the examination. They must not be (or have been) a member of the supervisory committee, or have been connected

with the thesis research in any way. The examiner should not have a close personal association with the student or the supervisor.

Except in special circumstances (fully justified in writing to the Dean of the department's Faculty), a specialized knowledge examiner should not be an active collaborator of the supervisor(s) (see Conflict of Interest Guidelines below).

External Examiner

An external examiner from outside the University of Alberta is required for doctoral thesis examinations. An external examiner must not be (or have been) a member of the supervisory committee, or have been connected with the thesis research in any way. The examiner should not have any personal association with the student or the supervisor, including family and social relationships. This examiner must fulfill additional criteria as described under Final Doctoral Examination below.

15.2.3 Size and Composition of Examining Committees

For all examination committees, at least half of the examiners must have a degree equivalent to or higher than the degree being examined.

For all examination committees, at least half of the examiners must be current or retired Academic Staff members, Academic Colleagues, Postdoctoral Fellows, or Executive Members/Academic Administrators who will be appointed or re-appointed as Academic Faculty members on the conclusion of their term (current or retired categories A, B, C, D, and E, as defined in the University of Alberta's Recruitment Policy (Appendix A) Definition and Categories of Academic Staff and Colleagues).

15.2.3.1 Master's Thesis Examination

Where there is a supervisor only, the examining committee is the supervisor and two university examiners or one university examiner and one specialized knowledge examiner.

Where there is a supervisory committee, the examining committee is the ex-officio examiners and one university examiner or one specialized knowledge examiner.

- At least half of the examiners must hold a master's degree or higher.
- The chair is not the supervisor. The chair is a faculty member in the student's home department or with experience chairing master's examinations. FGPS recommends that committee chairs not be examiners except in extenuating circumstances where any conflict of interest in this role be managed transparently for the student.

The authority for the appointment of final examining committees rests with the Dean of the department's Faculty [unless delegated to the department].

15.2.3.2 Doctoral Candidacy Examination

The examining committee consists of the ex officio examiners and either one university examiner or one specialized knowledge examiner.

When deemed necessary by the supervisor, one additional university examiner or specialized knowledge examiner may be appointed to the examining committee. In such cases, the examining committee consists of the ex-officio examiners and either two university examiners or one university examiner and one specialized knowledge examiner.

The examining committee does not normally include an external examiner. However, when deemed necessary by the supervisor, an external examiner may be appointed to the committee. In this case, the external examiner replaces a university examiner or a specialized knowledge examiner.

- At least half of the examiners must hold a doctoral degree (see above).
- The chair is not an examiner. The chair is a faculty member in the student's home department or with experience chairing doctoral examinations

The authority for the appointment of doctoral candidacy examining committees rests with the department.

15.2.3.3 *Doctoral Final Examination*

The examining committee consists of the ex-officio examiners, one external examiner, and either one university examiner or one specialized knowledge examiner.

- At least half of the examiners must hold a doctoral degree or higher (see above).
- The chair is not an examiner. The chair is a faculty member in the student's home department or with experience chairing doctoral examinations.

The authority for the appointment of final examining committees rests with the Dean of the department's Faculty [unless delegated to the department].

15.2.3.4 *Inviting the External Examiner or Reader*

Every final doctoral examining committee must have an External (i.e., an arm's length examiner) from outside the University of Alberta. The term External Examiner refers to an External that attends the examination; whereas the term External Reader refers to an External that does not attend the examination but instead provides a written evaluation of the thesis.

It is the responsibility of the Graduate Studies Director to nominate an external examiner or reader and to submit the name to the Medical Sciences Graduate Program for approval. The "Request to Invite External Reader or Examiner for the Final Doctoral Oral Examination" form should be prepared **at least two months** in advance of the examination date. The submission must include a brief CV of the external examiner and a short statement regarding the external's qualifications. The MSGP is particularly interested in the external examiner's current scholarly publications and research activities and experience with graduate student education.

The external shall be:

- a recognized authority in the special field of research of the student's thesis
- an experienced supervisor of doctoral students
- in a position to review the thesis objectively and to provide a critical analysis of the work and the presentation

It is essential that the external examiner **not** have a current or previous association with the student, the supervisor, or the department that would hinder this type of objective analysis.

Once the External has been approved an official letter of invitation is issued to the External by the department.

15.3 Scheduling of Examinations

It is the responsibility of the department to nominate the members of the examining committee following the procedures established by FGPS. The notice of final approval of the examination committee and date and time of the thesis defense must be received by FGPS at least **six weeks** in advance of the examination to be coded into the system. To initiate scheduling of the examination, students must complete the thesis approval form and examiner nomination form. Both can be found in the Forms Cabinet in Dentranet.

It is the responsibility of the supervisor(s) to ensure that:

- Proper arrangements are made for the student's examination,
- The exam is scheduled and held in accordance with FGPS and departmental regulations,
- Committee members are informed of meetings and details of examinations,
- The student does not make these arrangements, and
- The student provides copies of the thesis (master's and doctoral final examination) to the individual delegated by the program to distribute the thesis to the examiners **at least three weeks** before the examination. All examiners for a doctoral final examination must receive a copy of the thesis **at least four weeks** before the examination.

In the absence of the supervisor, the department's Graduate Director or designate shall be responsible for these arrangements.

To ensure that there is sufficient time to schedule and approve your defense, please adhere to the following examination form deadlines as set by the Department. Students must submit their examiner nominations forms to dentgrad@ualberta.ca. Students who do not meet the deadlines as outlined below, may not have their documentation processed in time and could be liable to additional program fees.

- **Winter End of Program Deadline:**
 - Examination information must be submitted no later than December 1.
- **Spring End of Program Deadline:**
 - Examination information must be submitted no later than April 1.
- **Summer End of Program Deadline:**
 - Examination information must be submitted no later than June 1.
- **September End of Program Deadline:**
 - Examination information must be submitted no later than August 1.

15.4 Time Limit for Thesis Submission

After completing the final examination at which the thesis is passed or passed subject to revisions, the student shall make any necessary revisions and submit the approved thesis to the FGPS within **six months** of the date of the final examination.

If the thesis is not submitted to the FGPS within the six-month time limit, the student will be considered to have withdrawn from the program. After this time, the student must apply and be readmitted to the FGPS and register again before the thesis can be accepted. If the final examination is adjourned, the six-month time limit will take effect from the date of completion of the examination where the thesis was passed with or without revisions.

To be convocated, all thesis-based students must submit their thesis to the FGPS and have it approved before they can be cleared for convocation.

15.5 MSc Examinations

Master's students are required to complete a thesis examination.

15.5.1 Conduct of Thesis Examination

The student is required to give a 20-25 min presentation before the oral examination. The presentation is only for the examining committee (and others approved to attend the examination).

At the start of the examination, the chair should review the procedures as detailed by the program's guidelines for the examination, including the order of examiners, number of rounds of questions, the length of time allotted to each examiner and whether interjections by other examiners are permitted. Some flexibility is expected to adjust when there is a large supervisory committee not to extend the questioning portion of the examination beyond a reasonable duration (**2 hours** for master's examinations).

The student will be asked to leave the room while the examiners' order is determined, and the supervisor reviews the student's academic record for the committee. Typically, examiners' order is the arm's length examiner, the supervisory committee members, and then the supervisor. The Examiners may seek clarification from the Chair at this time regarding exam procedures.

If academic misconduct is suspected, an Associate Dean, FGPS, should be consulted before the exam.

The questioning should focus on establishing the quality of the thesis (or thesis substitute) and the student's breadth and depth of understanding at a level appropriate to the degree qualification.

When the questions have concluded, the chair should ask the student if they have any final comments they would like to add.

15.5.2 Deliberation

The student is required to leave the room and will be asked to take their personal belongings, including electronic devices, with them. The deliberations are confidential proceedings. The committee will agree on the report to be provided to the student with the examination outcome.

The examiners are asked to give their opinions on the quality of the thesis and the defense in the same order as questioning. All examiners must provide their opinion before a final decision is made. The options of the outcomes from the vote are detailed below.

The Chair of the Examination Committee may sign the thesis examination form on behalf of an examiner participating from a remote location.

15.5.3 Decision

The examining committee's decision will be based both on the content of the thesis and on the student's ability to defend it. The final examination may result in one of the following outcomes:

- Adjourned
- Pass
- Pass subject to revisions
- Fail

There is no provision for a final examination to be "passed subject to major revisions". If the outcome of the first vote does not result in a decision (e.g., two of five examiners vote to fail), the Chair will allow for further discussion and attempt to reach a decision. Only in cases where a decision cannot be achieved reasonably will the student be informed and the matter referred to the Dean FGPS, who will determine the appropriate course of action.

Please consult the [University Calendar](#) for more information on examination outcomes.

15.6 PhD Examinations

Doctoral students must complete a candidacy examination and a final thesis examination.

15.6.1 Conduct of Candidacy Examination

The candidacy examination is an oral examination; some departments may also require that students take comprehensive written examinations prior to the candidacy examination, but such examinations do not form part of the candidacy examination itself.

For candidacy examinations, students must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the examining committee that they possess:

1. an adequate knowledge of the discipline and of the subject matter relevant to the thesis;
2. the ability to pursue and complete original research at an advanced level;
and
3. the ability to meet any other requirements found in the department's published policy on candidacy examinations.

The candidacy examination must be held within three years of the commencement of the program in accordance with the Degree of PhD of the University Calendar. The candidacy examination must be passed no less than six months prior to taking the final examination.

Decision of the Candidacy Committee: The candidacy examination may result in one of the following outcomes:

- Adjourned
- Pass
- Conditional pass
- Fail and repeat the candidacy
- Fail with a recommendation to terminate the doctoral program or for a change of category to a master's program.

If the Examining Committee fails to reach a decision, the department will refer the matter to the Dean, GPS, who will determine an appropriate course of action.

When the decision is Conditional Pass or Fail, chairs may refer to the decision process flowchart found on the GPS website.

Adjourned: A majority of examiners must agree to an outcome of Adjourned. The candidacy examination should be adjourned in the event of compelling, extraordinary circumstances such as a sudden medical emergency taking place during the examination or possible offences under the Student Academic Integrity Policy after the examination has started.

Pass: All or all but one of the examiners must agree to an outcome of Pass. If the student passes the candidacy examination, the department should complete the Report of Completion of Candidacy Examination form and submit it to GPS.

Conditional Pass: A Conditional Pass is appropriate when the student has satisfied the committee in all but a very discrete area of deficiency that can be addressed through a reasonable requirement (e.g., coursework, literature review, upgrading of writing skills). Reworking of the entire candidacy proposal is not an acceptable condition and the examiners should consider the options available for a student that has failed the examination.

A majority of examiners must agree to an outcome of Conditional Pass. If the candidacy examining committee agrees to a conditional pass for the student, the chair of the examining committee will provide in writing within five working days to the Dean, GPS, the graduate coordinator and the student:

- the reasons for this recommendation,
- the details of the conditions,
- the timeframe for the student to meet the conditions, but which should be no less than six weeks and no more than six months.

- the approval mechanism for meeting the conditions (e.g., approval of the committee chair or supervisor, or approval of the entire committee, or select members of the committee), and
- the supervision and assistance the student can expect to receive from committee members

Conditions are subject to final approval by the Dean, GPS. At the deadline specified for meeting the conditions, two outcomes are possible:

- All the conditions have been met. In this case, the department will complete the Report of Completion of Candidacy Examination form and submit it to GPS; or
- If the conditions are not met by the deadline, the outcome of the examination is a fail and the committee must be reconvened to make the recommendation as described in the following section.

Fail: All or all but one of the examiners must agree to an outcome of Fail.

The options available to the examining committee when the outcome of a student's candidacy exam is "Fail" are

- **Repeat the Candidacy:** Repeating the Candidacy is not an option after a second failed examination. A majority of examiners must agree to an outcome of Fail and Repeat the Candidacy. If the student's first candidacy exam performance was inadequate but the student's performance and work completed to date indicate that the student has the potential to perform at the doctoral level, the examining committee should consider the possibility of recommending that the student be given an opportunity to repeat the candidacy exam. Normally, the composition of the examining committee does not change for the repeat candidacy exam.
If the recommendation of a repeat candidacy is formulated by the examining committee and approved by GPS, the student and graduate coordinator are to be notified in writing of the student's exam deficiencies by the chair of the examining committee. The second candidacy exam is to be scheduled no later than six months from the date of the first candidacy. In the event that the student fails the second candidacy, the examining committee shall recommend one of the following two options to the department:
- **Change of Category to a Master's Program:** All or all but one of the examiners must agree to an outcome of Fail and Change of Category to a Master's Program. This outcome should be considered if the student's candidacy examination performance was inadequate and the student's performance and work completed to date indicates that the student has the potential to complete a master's, but not a doctoral, program; or
- **Termination of the Doctoral Program:** All or all but one of the examiners must agree to an outcome of Fail and Terminate the Doctoral Program. If the student's performance was inadequate, and the work completed during the program is considered inadequate, then the examining committee should recommend termination of the student's program.

If the candidacy examining committee agrees that the student has failed, the committee chair will provide the reasons and the recommendation for the student's program to the department. The graduate coordinator will then provide this report, together with the department's recommendation for the student's program, to the Dean, GPS, and to the student.

For failed candidacy examinations, an Associate Dean, GPS, normally arranges to meet with the student (and others as required) before acting upon any department recommendation.

15.6.2 Conduct of Final Doctoral Examination

The student will be asked to leave the room while the order of examiners is determined, and the supervisor reviews the student's academic record for the committee. Typically, the order of examiners is as follows: the external examiner, the arm's length examiner, the supervisory committee members, and the supervisor.

The Examiners may seek clarification from the Chair at this time regarding exam procedures.

At the start of the examination, the chair should review the procedures as detailed by the program's guidelines for the examination, including the order of examiners, number of rounds of questions, the length of time allotted to each examiner (usually 15 minutes per examiner/round) and whether interjections by other examiners are permitted. Some flexibility is expected, to ensure that the questioning portion of the examination does not extend beyond a reasonable duration (3 hours for doctoral examinations minus the presentation time).

The student is required to give a 20-25 min presentation before the oral examination.

The questioning should focus on establishing the quality of the thesis and the student's breadth and depth of understanding at a level appropriate to the degree qualification.

When the questions have concluded, the chair should ask the student if they have any final comments they would like to add.

15.6.3 Deliberation

The student must leave the room and be asked to take their personal belongings with them. The deliberations are confidential proceedings. The committee will agree on the report to be provided to the student with the examination outcome.

The examiners are asked to give their opinions on the quality of the thesis and the defense, in the same order as questioning. All examiners must provide their opinion before a final decision is made. The options for the outcome are detailed below.

15.6.4 Decision

The examining committee's decision will be based both on the content of the thesis and on the student's ability to defend it. The final examination may result in one of the following outcomes:

- Adjourned
- Pass
- Pass subject to revisions
- Fail

There is no provision for a final examination to be "pass subject to major revisions". If the outcome of the first vote does not result in a decision (e.g., two examiners vote to fail), the Chair will allow for further discussion and attempt to reach a decision. Only in cases where a decision cannot be achieved reasonably will the student be informed and the matter referred to the Dean FGPS, who will determine the appropriate course of action. The Chair of the Examination Committee may sign the thesis examination form on behalf of an examiner participating from a remote location.

Please consult the [University Calendar](#) for more information on examination outcomes.

15.7 Public Defense of the Thesis/Dissertation

Before the formal oral examination, the student must deliver a presentation on their thesis. This requirement may be completed using one of the following two formats.

Option 1: Separate Seminar and Oral Examination

The student will deliver a public Oral Health Seminar, approximately 30–40 minutes in length, followed by a 15-minute public Q&A period. This seminar is scheduled on a date separate from the oral examination and is open for anyone to attend.

The oral examination will take place on a different day. It will begin with a brief thesis presentation of 20–25 minutes, after which the examining committee will conduct the formal questioning. Only the examining committee participates in the oral examination.

The student is responsible for making arrangements to schedule the Discovery Dental Sciences Seminar.

Option 2: Combined Seminar and Thesis Defense

In this format, the Oral Health Seminar serves as the public presentation portion of the thesis defense. The seminar (30–40 minutes) is followed by a 15-minute period for public questions. The examining committee is present during this portion but does not ask questions.

Immediately after the public Q&A period, the formal examination begins. From that point forward, only the examining committee participates.

There are several considerations when selecting Option 2. The overall duration of the examination event may be longer than in Option 1, and public questions may overlap with questions planned by the examining committee. Challenging public questions could also affect the student's confidence before entering the formal questioning. Attendees will be advised to be mindful of this when posing questions.

Selection of Presentation Format

The student, supervisor, and examining committee must discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each option. Once a decision has been made, the student must provide a

written statement to dentgrad@ualberta.ca confirming that they have reviewed the pros and cons and indicating which option has been selected.

Chair's Statement for Option 2

If Option 2 is selected, the Chair will read the following statement at the beginning of the public presentation. This statement will also be included in the email sent to Chairs and Supervisors prior to the examination:

"The student will be giving this public presentation as part of their PhD oral examination. The Examining Committee is present and will not be asking questions during the public seminar. The public is welcome to ask questions following the presentation; however, we ask that you keep in mind that the student will be formally examined immediately following this presentation."

16 Program Completion & Convocation

The University of Alberta holds three convocations each year:

- March Convocation in March
- Spring Convocation in June
- Fall convocation in November

To convocate, students must complete the following steps before the graduate student convocation deadlines:

1. Apply for Convocation
 - a. To apply for graduation, open Bear Tracks and find the Academics menu.
 - b. Click on the "Graduation" link in the "My Academics" folder, then "Apply for Graduation."
 - c. Select your program and follow the instructions to complete your application
2. Compile Your Supporting Documents
 - a. For thesis-based master's and doctoral students, the department must fill out and sign the [Thesis Approval/Program Completion form](#) after your final oral exam to confirm you've met all requirements.
 - b. You must also sign and submit a [Thesis Non-Exclusive License form](#) before submitting your thesis to the Thesis Deposit.
3. Submit Your Thesis
4. Fee Payment
 - a. Remember to pay all outstanding fees. The University cannot release parchment or official documents if there are unpaid balances on your account.

More information on convocation information can be found on the [FGPS website](#).

16.1 Completion Deadlines

Fall Convocation (November): September 29, 2026 4:00pm MST

Thesis must be submitted and approved by the date above to be eligible for Fall 2026 convocation. In order for the thesis to be approved, the Thesis Approval/Program Completion

form and the University of Alberta Thesis/Dissertation Non-Exclusive License form must have already been received by GPS.

Fall End-of-Program Registration Deadline: September 29, 2026 4:00pm MST

If the Thesis Approval/Program Completion form is received by the date above, registration is not required in Fall Term 2026 or beyond. GPS will delete all future registration in the program.

Winter End-of-Program Registration Deadline: January 29, 2027 4:00pm MST

If the Thesis Approval/Program Completion form is received by the date above, registration is not required in Winter 2026 Term or beyond. GPS will delete all future registration in the program.

March Convocation (March): January 8, 2027 4:00pm MST

Thesis must be submitted and approved by the date above to be eligible for March 2026 convocation. In order for the thesis to be approved, the Thesis Approval/Program Completion form and the University of Alberta Thesis/Dissertation Non-Exclusive License form must have already been received by GPS.

Spring Convocation (June): April 1, 2027 4:00pm MST

Thesis must be submitted and approved by the date above to be eligible for Spring 2026 convocation. In order for the thesis to be approved, the Thesis Approval/Program Completion form and the University of Alberta Thesis/Dissertation Non-Exclusive License form must have already been received by GPS.

Spring End-of-Program Registration Deadline: May 6, 2027 4:00pm MST

If the Thesis Approval/Program Completion form is received by the date above, registration is not required in Spring 2026 Term or beyond. GPS will delete all future registration in the program.

Summer End-of-Program Registration Deadline: July 9, 2027 4:00pm MST

If the Thesis Approval/Program Completion form is received by the date above, registration is not required in Summer 2026 Term or beyond. GPS will delete all future registration in the program.

17 General Information for Graduate Students

A Campus Computing ID (CCID) and password are issued to every student applicant upon receipt of their application for admission to the University. An email account is provided for communication between the applicant and the University. Note that your CCID is your email username.

Students can access their university email account at ualberta.ca@gmail. If you need help with your CCID or password, contact [Information Services and Technology \(IST\)](#)

The Department regularly sends information through email that may help you succeed in your program (e.g., information regarding registration, courses, scholarships and awards, seminars etc.). It is essential that you monitor your UAlberta email regularly for such information. It is your responsibility to ensure that you respond to deadlines in a timely manner.

Important information for students regarding resources, awards and scholarships may be found on the School of Dentistry's [Dentranet](#) and [website](#).

17.1 Obtain Your University of Alberta ONEcard

The University of Alberta issues a ONEcard to all students. This card serves as your university identification and library card. The ONEcard also allows you to access certain gym facilities, the University Health Centre, print facilities, and campus photocopiers in the libraries and around campus. It is also a debit card that can be loaded and used to purchase a variety of products and services on campus. Once you have registered in courses, obtain the card from one of the ONEcard Offices in SUB or HUB. You will need to show photo ID (driver's license or passport) and provide your Student ID number to obtain it.

You can upload your photo to ONEcard [here](#).

17.2 Alberta Health Services (AHS) ID Cards

In order to obtain access to the Kaye Edmonton Clinic (KEC), you will require an Alberta Health Services (AHS) ID card. Students in the clinical programs will receive their AHS cards during orientation. All other students who require access to KEC will need to work with their supervisor to submit a formal request to the School of Dentistry.

17.3 Universal Transit Pass (U-Pass) for Transit

The ARC card replaces the U-Pass and provides students with unlimited access to regular Edmonton, St. Albert, and Strathcona County transit services for Spring/Summer (May -August), Fall (September - December), and Winter (January - April) academic terms. All students are eligible to participate in the student transit program as long as they are registered in one 3-credit course. Students **cannot opt out** of the transit pass.

More details on Arc card distribution can be found [here](#).

17.4 Building Access

As a graduate student at the University of Alberta, you need your ONECard to be enabled as a "Prox ONEcard". This Prox ONEcard is a proximity card that enables you access to the ECHA building after regular office hours. Please send an email to dentgrad@ualberta.ca with pictures of the front and back of your ONEcard to request access.

Note: Students who have replaced their ONEcard must send a request to update access.

Students in the Dental Hygiene and Dentistry program will be issued a dedicated desk space (subject to availability) in the administrative area in the School of Dentistry (ECHA). Students in the Oral Biology program will be issued a dedicated desk space (subject to availability) in KATZ. Students enrolled in the MSc Orthodontics, Periodontology and Oral Medicine programs may

use the space in ECHA designated as “touch down” space based on the nature of their research projects. No dedicated space will be allotted. Students studying for board examinations are encouraged to use the Sperber Library or may request ahead of time, temporary space in ECHA. Students enrolled in the PhD Orthodontics and Periodontology programs will be provided with dedicated desk space in ECHA up to the completion of their candidacy examination.

Contact dentgrad@ualberta.ca for information.

17.5 Katz Laboratories and Study Space

Graduate Students who are working in “wet lab” research will need access to lab/desk space in the Katz Building. Please contact dentgrad@ualberta.ca regarding this area.

17.6 Photocopiers/Printers

Photocopiers/printers are available in rooms ECHA 5-475 and 5-554. The code is dgrad2. Please keep in mind the cost per page for black and white copies is 5 cents/page, whereas any amount of color that is printed on a page the cost goes up to 18 cents/page. For instance, even if one word on your page is in color, the charge is 18 cents/page.

17.7 Student Research Group (SRG)

The Student Research Group is a student-run, student-lead organization designed to empower student research in the School of Dentistry by providing information, support, faculty access, and activities to enhance the student research experience and to provide a forum for student input into decisions by the School of Dentistry that affect student research opportunities. Graduate student participation is strongly encouraged. For more information, see the [SRG webpage](#).

18 Mental Health and Wellness Resources

The University of Alberta has a number of resources to support the mental health and well-being of its students. This includes:

- [Counselling and Clinical Services](#) - provide accessible and compassionate psychological and psychiatric services
- [First Peoples' House](#) - a student service centre for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students
- [Peer Support Centre](#) - a Students' Union service that offers non-judgemental support in a safe, and confidential space to students
- [International Student Services](#)

Here is a [link](#) to the many resources available to our students.

Do you or someone you know need help **NOW**? Here is a quick [list of immediate supports](#).

Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry Resources:

Office of Advocacy and Wellbeing

Dr. Paul LaPointe

paul.lapointe@ualberta.ca

[Website](#)

Student Affairs

Mental health, LOA

Dr. Suzy Depledge

depledge@ualberta.ca

Graduate Student Advisor

Supervisor conflict

Dr. Arnaldo Perez Garcia

Phone: 780-492-3066

perezgar@ualberta.ca

Please feel free to contact these people directly at any time.

19 Additional Graduate Student Resources

The University offers a variety of support services for graduate students including funding, international services, professional development, timelines, and wellness. Below are a few resources to access information, support, and services you will need to navigate your university journey:

- GPS supports every aspect of your graduate student experience and offers essential support services throughout your grad career: admissions, funding, scholarships, teaching preparation, professional development, academic record keeping, thesis support, and convocation.
 - If you want to talk to an advisor at FGPS: [Virtual Counter](#)
- [International Student and Visitor Services](#) has many resources for international students to prepare for study abroad, including immigration FAQs and a new student arrival checklist, along with information on study permits, working in Canada, and banking.
- Your acceptance letter contains any admission conditions, and GPS collects and verifies any admission condition documents. If you have any questions or concerns on admission condition documents submission, you should contact GPS directly at grad.admissions@ualberta.ca.
- Visit the Student Service Centre for student related inquiries (transcripts, course registration, updating your application, financial support, forms, etc.)
- Visit the Staff Service Centre for employment related inquiries (direct deposit, paycheques, tuition remission, travel/expense claims, etc.)
- [SAGE](#) offers the opportunity for Indigenous graduate students to engage with their peers, faculty and researchers, and facilitate their development both on- and off-campus. This initiative is dedicated to supporting Indigenous scholarship and academic excellence through community-oriented approaches, research, and Indigenous knowledge, with the goal of inciting social and educational change. SAGE operates on the principles of respect, reciprocity, relationships, and responsibility.
- If you run out of food for this month: [Campus Food Bank](#)

- The Graduate Students' Association (GSA) [Emergency Bursary program](#) is a non-repayable bursary program for graduate students at the University of Alberta who need assistance due to an unanticipated emergency.

Appendix A - Clinical Graduate Student Absence Policy

School of Dentistry Clinical Dental Education Attendance Policy 2026-2027

Office of Accountability:	Senior Director, Graduate Studies, School of Dentistry
Office of Administrative Responsibility:	Senior Director, Graduate Studies, School of Dentistry
Approvers:	Program Director(s), Periodontology Program Director(s), Orthodontics Program Director(s), Oral Medicine
Scope:	Compliance with this policy extends to all students of the Clinical Graduate Programs

Overview:

The Post-Secondary Learning Act of Alberta (PSLA) gives the General Faculties Council (GFC) responsibility, subject to the authority of the Board of Governors (BoG), over “academic affairs” (Section 26(1)). Further, the PSLA gives the BoG authority over certain admission requirements and rules respecting enrolment (Sections 60(1) (c) and (d)). The BoG has delegated its authority over admissions requirements and rules respecting enrolment to GFC. GFC has thus established an Academic Standards Committee (GFC ASC).

Purpose & Rationale:

Dental education requires in-person, active engagement between students, patients and faculty. Graduates are eligible for licensure as independent, unsupervised dental specialists. As such, there is a societal, professional, and educational expectation that these graduates have already had a certain amount of clinical experience, have fulfilled specific learning activities, and have performed certain procedures necessary to practice as a dental specialist. There is therefore an expectation that having completed a graduate clinical speciality degree of a determined length, they will have also obtained a necessary amount of clinical experience to practice competently in an independent practice. It is on these premises, as well as for providing sufficient clinical time and experience to develop competency as a beginning dental specialist, that attendance is expected and required throughout the program.

A student pursuing graduate clinical dental speciality is responsible to meet the Faculty’s expectations regarding attending and participating directly in all components of the educational program. The Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry operates under a unique contract with society in which students are required to attend and participate directly in all components of the educational program.

Students are expected to be punctual and attend all mandatory sessions barring illness or extenuating circumstances. Attendance and participation will be assessed throughout all three years of clinical training and will contribute to students’ overall performance record. Non compliance will have consequences that are reflected in a student’s academic record. These consequences may include: an unsatisfactory grade in a course on the basis of attendance, required make-up work/clinical time or repeating of a course, documentation in the summative comments section in a given course, or comments in the student file attesting to any unprofessional behavior.

Clinical Attendance Expectations:

The School of Dentistry follows the University Schedule in the University Calendar in terms of days of instruction provided and holidays available. Any accommodation for missed learning experiences will be subject to faculty/staff and resource availability. Although absences can be excused for accepted reasons, the Mike Petryk School of Dentistry will not accommodate by lowering the standards expected of students for performance on assessments or in terms of amount of clinical experience and quality of patient care delivery. Any combination of excused or unexcused absences that amounts to a significant loss of clinical experience will result in the need for accommodation (if allowed) to add time to a student's program to ensure they can adequately demonstrate the needed experience, competency, professionalism, and patient-centered care to enter practice as an unsupervised dental specialist.

University of Alberta Calendar, Academic Regulations, Attendance:

"Since presence at lectures, participation in classroom discussions and projects, and the completion of assignments are important components of most courses, students will serve their interests best by regular attendance. Those who choose not to attend must assume whatever risks are involved. In connection to this students should review the following sections.

The University recognizes that occasionally life events occur that require a student to miss term work, term examinations, or final examinations. However, excused absences are not granted automatically and will be considered only for acceptable reasons such as incapacitating mental and/or physical illness, severe domestic affliction, or for circumstances as described in the University's Discrimination, Harassment and Duty to Accommodate Policy (including religious belief). This policy is available on the University of Alberta Policies and Procedures Online (UAPPOL) website <https://policiesonline.ualberta.ca/Pages/default.aspx>.

When a student is absent without an acceptable excuse, a final grade will be computed using a raw score of zero for the work missed. Any student who applies for or obtains an excused absence by making false statements will be liable under the Code of Student Behaviour. Students should consult their Faculty for detailed information and requirements.

Failure to follow the policies outlined below may result in denial of a student's request. Students with concerns should see Procedures for Registering Complaints about Marking, Grading, and Related Issues in the University Calendar. Students should also review individual Faculty appeal policies posted on Faculty websites."

ATTENDANCE POLICY BREAKDOWN

Graduate students in clinical training are entitled to 5% of half clinic days of conditional absence time in an academic term. The allocation is outlined below based on the total number of clinic days per term. This breakdown is subject to change based on the finalized dates for the semester.

IMPORTANT: Unused conditional absence days **do not** carry over from one term to the next.

Program/Clinic	Fall Term (5%)	Winter Term (5%)	Spring Term (5%)
Orthodontics	5 half days	4 half days	3 half days
Periodontology	5 half days	4 half days	3 half days
Oral Medicine Oral Lesions Clinic	3 half days	3 half days	2 half days
Oral Medicine TMD Clinic	2 half days	2 half days	1 half day

Students who are absent for more than 5% of their program in the given academic term, whether excused or unexcused absence (including illness), will have their clinical attendance and progress reviewed by the Program Director(s). In cases of significant deficits in experience or achievement of course expectations during the academic year, students will be expected to make-up the number of missed clinics at the discretion of the Program Director(s). For any absence exceeding 50% of a scheduled half-day clinic, the time will be recorded as an absence. In such instances, a formal request explaining the absence must be submitted for review.

ABSENCE FORM SUBMISSION

Absence forms are to be submitted using the following "[Absence Request Form](#)," and must be completed by the student with details of all components that will be missed as soon as the student is aware that they will need to be absent. With the exception of unforeseen illness, students are required to submit an absence request at least three months in advance of an anticipated absence. Completion of an absence form does not imply approval for an absence (apart from incapacitating illness.) Approval of absence requests will be made by the Clinical Program Director(s). Previous requests and the nature of the request will be reviewed. Treatment Coordinators cannot modify or approve student schedules until Director approval confirmation is received. The outcome of the application process will be communicated to the student via their Ualberta email address.

Students who are submitting illness related absences are encouraged to advise of all days they anticipate being ill and absent.

Making a false statement on the absence form will constitute grounds for a charge to be laid under the Code of Student Behaviour, Section 30.3.6(4) Misrepresentation of Facts: "No Student shall misrepresent pertinent facts to any member of the University community for the purpose of obtaining academic advantage."

Under no circumstances are students permitted to cancel their own patient appointments or request that the treatment coordinator cancel appointments on their behalf to facilitate an absence from the clinic. Such behaviour will be considered a serious breach of professional conduct and is grounds for immediate dismissal from the program. Students are reminded that attendance at all scheduled clinics is mandatory, regardless of whether they have a patient appointment scheduled.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

According to the 2026-27 Absence Policy, the following are excusable¹ absences:

- Illness, injury, surgery (self or family members)
 - Students must submit an absence request for illness as soon as possible to ensure continuity of patient care.
- Medical appointments

¹ Excused absences are not automatically approved.

- Wellness - including mental health
- Bereavement/attending funeral
- Conferences (only if presenting research or receiving an award)
 - Scheduled events when the clinic is already blocked do not require submission of an absence request.
 - Travel days to and from conferences are
- Child-care in emergency situations
- Untoward/unforeseen exceptional circumstances
- Life events ²

The program generally follows the faculty/staff schedule of the Mike Petryk School of Dentistry to observe holidays and time off. All graduate students will receive the last two weeks of December off, which follows the UofA winter closure schedule. Additionally, there is a week off in November and February every year. Unused conditional absence days **DO NOT** carry forward from one academic term to the next. Additional absence requests that exceed the allotted days will be reviewed by the Program Director(s) and treated on a case-by-case basis.

EXTENDED LEAVES

The Mike Petryk School of Dentistry Clinical Graduate Programs will recognize the following extended leave categories:

- **Board Examination:** Students scheduled to write the NDSE Board Examinations in Year 3 of their program are entitled to a 2 week leave immediately prior to the examination date. The leave period is inclusive of all calendar days - clinical and non clinical - and may not be divided or extended by selecting only days with scheduled clinical activities. Students wishing to block time off for the RCDC must use their personal conditional absence allotment.
- **Parental Leave:** Students are required to submit an absence request a minimum of 3 months in advance of an expected parental leave. Students will be granted **up to two weeks** of consecutive leave.
- **Medical Leave:** In exceptional circumstances for medical and/or compassionate reasons, a student may request an extended leave of absence from their program. Such requests must be accompanied by supplemental documentation covering the dates specified.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

Unexcused absences on dates of mandatory sessions where grades are assigned (i.e. examinations, labs, presentations and clinics) will result in an **automatic grade of zero**. Unexcused absences are considered a major lapse in professionalism. For an unexcused absence, it is the obligation of the student to make up the missed work, the program is under no obligation to provide make-up materials for missed work.

REMEDIATION

Students who exceed their allotted conditional absences will need to remediate. The Program Director(s) will decide what action to take for remediation. The remediation plan can include extending the length of the program or in exceptional circumstances, re-taking the course.

² Program Directors will review life event requests on a case-by-case basis

Leaves exceeding **two weeks** will require remediation, and may include making up missed clinic sessions which could potentially extend the student's time in the program. For leaves extending beyond **four weeks** (including approved board and parental leaves), students will be required to retake the course to ensure they meet the necessary clinical competencies and patient care. A meeting with the Program Director(s) and supporting staff will be held prior to approval of the leave to discuss and establish a return to learning plan.

Effective Date: August 1, 2026