

**Timelines for Completion of Graduate Degree Programs**  
**Department of Geography**  
**April 2017**

**Note:** These timelines are intended to provide general guidance in degree program planning. They should be taken seriously, but should not be construed as an ideal against which all progress (or lack thereof) is to be measured. Each student will move through their program in ways that are somewhat unique and determined by their specific background, chosen project, coursework requirements, research challenges, financial support, personal issues, and other such factors. Nonetheless, attention to the timing of major events in graduate study, as indicated here, will help students have a better chance to complete their programs within the periods for which they are most likely to receive departmental and other forms of funding.

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**Masters Thesis Timeline**

*Year 1*

**September**

- Student orientation
- Student and supervisor determine coursework
- Student takes full course load

**October**

- Student and supervisor begin discussing thesis topic and research costs
- Student and supervisor begin establishing supervisory committee

**November**

- Student prepares Tri-council application (NSERC, SSHRC, Affiliated), with feedback from supervisor on draft

**December**

- Student submits Tri-council application

**January**

- Student takes full course load

**February**

- Student and supervisor continue work on thesis topic, summer research plan
- Student begins to organize date for committee's spring review meeting

**March**

- Spring review, report submitted to Graduate Program Coordinator
- Students needing Ethics Review Board (ERB) approval for research begin working on application

**May-August**

- Student begins thesis research (start for human geography students may be delayed slightly by process of gaining ERB approval)

*Year 2*

**September-December**

- Student conducts research and begins analysis of data or other materials
- Supervisor reviews and approves thesis outline
- Student finishes remaining course requirements, if necessary

**January-March**

- Student writes thesis

**April**

- Student presents research at the Graduate Student Symposium (graduation requirement for all Masters students)

**April-August**

- Student delivers first thesis draft to supervisor
  - Student makes revisions to thesis as suggested by supervisor
  - Physical geography students defend thesis
  - Student submits final thesis by no later than August deadline, preferably earlier
  - Student prepares for graduation (see graduation requirements at <http://www.grad.ubc.ca/>)
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**Doctoral Thesis Timeline***Year 1***September**

- Student orientation
- Student and supervisor begin working on program plan
- Student takes at least one course
- Student prepares and submits Tri-council application (NSERC, SSHRC, Affiliated), with feedback from supervisor on draft (for fuller list of awards for which students may apply, see <https://www.grad.ubc.ca/scholarships-awards-funding>)

**October-December**

- Student and supervisor finalize program plan; student continues coursework

**January-February**

- Student takes further coursework, possibly finishing requirements
- Student and supervisor begin developing thesis topic
- Student and supervisor begin establishing supervisory committee
- Student organizes committee's spring review session

**March**

- Spring review, report submitted to Graduate Program Coordinator

**April-May**

- Student begins preparing for comprehensive examinations, in consultation with committee members (process may take through the summer)

*Year 2***September**

- Student finishes remaining coursework requirements
- Student develops research funding plan, in consultation with supervisor
- Students who did not receive Tri-council funding the previous round prepare and submit Tri-council applications (NSERC, SSHRC, Affiliated), with feedback from supervisor on draft

**October-December**

- Student reads and prepares for comprehensive examinations

**January-March**

- Student takes comprehensive examinations (written and oral)

- Student begins preparing thesis proposal (after comprehensive exams) and ERB application (if needed)

#### **April-May**

- Student develops dissertation proposal, in consultation with supervisor and committee members

#### **June-August**

- Dissertation proposal accepted

#### *Year 3*

- Student conducts dissertation research
- During spring, student gets feedback from supervisory committee and meets with supervisor for the annual thesis progress review; the report is submitted to Graduate Program Coordinator
- Student develops back-up funding for 5<sup>th</sup> year, if necessary

#### *Year 4*

- Student writes thesis and submits it to supervisor and committee for review
- During spring, student gets feedback from supervisory committee and meets with supervisor for the annual thesis progress review; the report is submitted to Graduate Program Coordinator
- Student prepares for graduation (see graduation requirements at <http://www.grad.ubc.ca/>, and download graduation/examination timeline and submission planning tools at [www.grad.ubc.ca/current-students/final-doctoral-exam/tools-planning-doctoral-exam](http://www.grad.ubc.ca/current-students/final-doctoral-exam/tools-planning-doctoral-exam))
- Student defends thesis
- Student begins submitting job applications (where applicable)

#### *Year 5 (if necessary)*

- Student finishes writing and defending thesis
- Student applies for sessional teaching opportunities (if available)
- Student begins submitting job applications (where applicable)