Toronto Metropolitan University

Faculty of Arts

POLICY STUDIES Ph.D.

Student Information Handbook

November 2026

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1. PEOPLE

Graduate Program Director

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Graduate Program Administrator/Program Office

E-mail: policystudies@torontomu.ca
Website: https://www.torontomu.ca/policystudies/
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Admissions Enquiries Contact Information

Graduate Admissions and Recruitment Office
Yeates School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies
E-mail: grdadmit@torontomu.ca
Website: https://www.torontomu.ca/graduate/admissions
Telephone: (416) 979-5150
Fax: (416) 979-5153
Street Address: 11th Floor, 1 Dundas Street West
(at Dundas and Yonge)

Course Union in Policy Studies (CUPS)

CUPS exists with the expressed purpose to support students in the Policy Studies PhD Program in achieving academic, professional and personal fulfillment in graduate studies. We strive to promote the interests of graduate students to the Policy Studies Program and to Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU) as a whole. We aspire to build a student community that provides opportunities for personal and professional growth, connection and student well-being. We promote these goals through advocating for student needs to the Policy Studies Program and TMU, organizing professional development and social gatherings, and building academic networks. CUPS strives to be non-hierarchical in its operation, and facilitation of CUPS governance is carried out by the Leadership Council (LC).

Leadership Council

- Council members have no hierarchy among themselves and share leadership responsibilities within the organization. Each year, LC is empowered to develop a power-sharing structure that works for their needs.
- Officers are elected annually and are responsible for the membership of the organization. Officers generally serve a 12-month term.
- Current officers are eligible to run for re-election to another 12-month term. There are no term limits.
- CUPS Leadership Council must maintain no fewer than 3 members.

- CUPS Leadership Council members must be current members of the Policy Studies PhD program and active members of the organization.

General Membership

- Membership is automatically extended to all students in the Policy Studies PhD program.
- Membership in CUPS expires upon graduation, withdrawal from the program, suspension, leave of absence or expulsion from the program. Terminated members can participate in CUPS meetings and activities at the discretion of the Leadership Council

Elections

- CUPS is responsible for conducting a general election to elect Leadership Council members, open to all members, once every academic year.
- Regular elections must take place by the last Friday in September. The LC may organize a special election, if necessary, to fill vacancies or for other purposes.

Send your inquiries about CUPS' upcoming programs and events to: eunice.kays@torontomu.ca.

PhD Policy Studies Program Council

The Program Council plays an important role in the governance and ongoing development of our program. Composed of faculty and graduate student representatives, the Council considers academic and program matters, including curriculum changes, program policies and procedures, and periodic program reviews. It also provides a forum for discussing issues affecting the program and its students and for advising on priorities, resources, and opportunities for program improvement.

Graduate student participation helps ensure that the student perspectives and experiences are represented in these discussions. Students interested in contributing to the governance and development of our program are encouraged to watch for departmental emails inviting applications or expressions of interest to serve on the Program Council.

2. THESIS SUPERVISOR

The Policy Studies PhD program requires both the comprehensive examination and the dissertation to be overseen by a dedicated faculty supervisor and a supervisory committee. Students are strongly encouraged to engage and identify a presumptive supervisor when they apply to the program, but it's not uncommon for some students to be admitted without one. Identifying a supervisor can take time, and beginning the process early gives students an opportunity to explore potential research topics, identify faculty members whose expertise and goals align with their developing interests, and discuss their availability and capacity to provide supervision.

Once a thesis supervisor has been identified, the supervisor assumes primary responsibility for guiding the student's thesis research, including the development of the research topic, thesis proposal, and dissertation. For additional guidance on identifying and working with a thesis supervisor, students are encouraged to consult TMU's Working with Your Supervisor resource: https://www.torontomu.ca/graduate/student-guide/research-supervisors/.

3. PROGRESS TRACKING

Progress Reviews (click here):

- Senate Policy 170B (Procedures Section 18.3.1) requires that students submit a progress review at least once per year in order to maintain enrollment in their program. Policy Studies students must submit a progress review by the beginning of each academic year (September) to be enrolled for that semester. Students are to complete the report and submit the progress review to their supervisor for comments. If a student does not have a supervisor, they should submit it directly to the GPD. The supervisor must complete their portion of the form with comments and send it to the GPD (skthompson@torontomu.ca) The GPD will review comments and provide feedback, if any.

Plan of Study: (click here)

- The Plan of Study is reviewed at a minimum of once each term, prior to course enrolment for the following term. Any additions or changes should be discussed with and approved by the faculty advisor or supervisor and then the GPD.

4. PROGRAM INFORMATION

Listed below is some of the important information related to the program:

4.1 Graduate Program Fees

The School of Graduate Studies fees webpage, including information on Methods of Payment and detailed fees, by program, can be found at https://www.torontomu.ca/current-students/tuition-fees/graduate/.

4.2 Graduate Studies Important Dates

A list of significant academic dates for the Fall 2026, Winter 2027 and Spring/Summer 2027 terms are available at the Yeates School of Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies (YSGPS) website : https://www.torontomu.ca/graduate/calendar/significant-dates/. You are responsible for knowing these dates, so please take a moment to look through them and carefully make a note of it.

4.3 New Student Contact Information Before September

The program will communicate with incoming students using their personal e-mail addresses until the first term of study starts. If you change your e-mail address between now and the middle of September, please send an updated e-mail address to the program at: policystudies@torontomu.ca. If your current mailing address is different from the one

provided in your application, and you have not informed the admissions office about the change, please forward the new mailing address, and if applicable, the updated phone number to the program. Starting September, students can update address and telephone information on-line.

4.4 **TMU Student Email Account Activation**

Every student must activate a TMU email account. This account will be your official means of receiving university and program communications. Students who have cleared all their conditions of their offer of admission can activate their TMU email account as of mid-August and should do so no later than the first week of classes in the Fall term. You can activate your account by going to http://www.torontomu.ca/accounts/ and filling in the online Activation Form. It is critical that you check your university email account on a regular basis, as important communications are sent by the university to this account and are often time sensitive. For our official policy on the establishment of student e-mail accounts for official university communication, see http://www.torontomu.ca/senate/policies/pol157.pdf.

4.5 **Student Photo-ID Card (One Card)**

The OneCard is the official identification card for the TMU community. In addition to being the single most important piece of ID you possess during your time here at TMU, it also serves as a convenience card for many of the services available on campus, including the library, printing and photocopying, food purchases, discounts, savings and more. If you were a master's level student at TMU, you are not required to get a new OneCard.

4.6 **Important Websites to Review and Remember:**

4.6.1 **On-line Student Information System (MyServiceHub): *my.torontomu.ca***

MyServiceHub, our administrative management self-service interface, offers web-based self-service access to your student records. Although you cannot register yourself in classes in the Fall term, you can view your enrolled courses, the schedule, location, and instructor by logging on to MyServiceHub. MyServiceHub also allows you to view a detailed breakdown of your financial information.

You can access MyServiceHub using your TMU ID and password. Once you have logged in, you access MyServiceHub via the last tab at the top right of the screen.

NOTE: You must have an active account in order to use *MyServiceHub.*

4.6.2 **The Office of the Vice President Research and Innovation (OVPRI) site**: https://www.torontomu.ca/research/about/ovpri/

Students should take time to review the Office of the Vice President Research and Innovation information on the ethics approval process for research proposals. All research conducted by TMU faculty and students must have prior authorization of the Research Ethics Board (REB). Although some of you may already have ideas about the topic of your thesis, it is important to wait for REB approval before beginning any data collection.

4.6.3 **The Policy Studies website**: http://www.torontomu.ca/policystudies/

4.6.4 **TMU Faculty/Staff Directory and Contact Information:** https://www.torontomu.ca/contact/

4.6.5 **TMU YSGS Policies & Guidelines:** https://www.torontomu.ca/graduate/student-guide/academic-matters/policies-guidelines/

Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU) students are officially responsible for familiarizing themselves with and abiding by all published university policies, senate regulations, and codes of conduct.

5. COURSE REGISTRATION

Fall and Winter course schedule and selection information will be provided by the Program Administrator in the fall term, once the information has been finalized. Spring/Summer details will be released in the Winter term.

Please note the following:

1. At the doctoral level, course selection must be approved and completed by the program. Therefore, you are unable to use the self-service functions on MyServiceHub to add courses to your schedule. Drop and swap functions will be activated closer to the start of term.
2. As outlined in the curricular overview above, students are expected to take all six program courses in the first year. However, you will have an opportunity to set up a detailed plan of study, based on your individualized needs, in early September.

6. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS	**CREDITS**
Comprehensive Examination (Milestone)	**Pass/Fail**
Dissertation (Milestone)	**Pass/Fail**
CORE COURSES (Required)	
PD9001: Policy Theories and Approaches	**1**
PD9002: Research Foundations for Policy Studies	**1**
PD9004: Foundations of Quantitative Research	**1**
ADVANCED METHOD COURSE (Required)	
SS8000: Statistical Analysis in Social Science Research	**1**
SS8001: Advanced Qualitative Methods	**1**
FIELD FOUNDATION COURSES (Choose any 1)	
PD9101: Public Policy and Administration	**1**
PD9102: Immigration, Settlement, and Diaspora Policies	**1**

PD9103: Social Policy	**1**
ELECTIVE COURSES (Choose any 1)	
PhD candidates may take one elective from the following: 1. other PhD foundation courses 2. one of the electives offered by Policy Studies (PD courses) if offered 3. a course selected from policy-related graduate courses outside of the program 4. a specialized readings course in a theoretical or methodological area related to dissertation research 5. For more information on available electives, contact the Policy Studies PhD office - policystudies@torontomu.ca.	

This program schedule assumes that students will take the equivalent of 3 courses per term which is also ideal for program completion. Please note that not all courses are offered every semester or academic year. Students should plan their coursework accordingly, as they may need to wait until a future term for a particular course to be offered. Students are encouraged to review course offerings regularly and consider the timing of required and elective courses when planning their program of study. For your elective course, we encourage you to select your elective from existing Policy Studies-related graduate course offerings.

Students are strongly encouraged to select their elective courses from the PhD program's course offerings. With the permission of the Graduate Program Director (GPD), students may pursue a Directed Studies course to explore highly specialized topics not covered by the standard curriculum or to provide a deeper dive into an existing subject area. Students may also take elective courses offered by other graduate programs at TMU. Students who wish to take a Directed Studies course or an elective course outside the university should consult with the GPD to discuss available options and obtain approval.

COURSES

PD9001 Policy Theories and Approaches

This course provides students with a critical examination of the intellectual and theoretical foundations of public policy studies. It reviews the analytical approaches and techniques used to understand, develop and analyse public policies. A broad spectrum of frameworks, models and theories are examined throughout the course. This course also examines the nature of interdisciplinary policy analysis.

PD9002 Research Foundations for Policy Studies

This course will provide students with an understanding of the historical perspectives and contemporary debates related to knowledge and evidence in social science and policy research. Various perspectives on knowledge paradigms, roles of disciplinary knowledge and the scientific method will be examined. Strengths and weaknesses of various research paradigms and approaches will be examined to help students articulate their research assumptions and define their research agendas. The roles of context, foci, purpose, ethics and audiences will be considered in what counts as 'evidence' in policy research and analysis. Central questions examined in the course will include: What is knowledge in policy research? What is the scientific method and how central is it to 'good' policy research? Is policy research

science or art? Policy sciences vs. policy studies? What is 'evidence-based' policy research?

PD9004 Foundations of Quantitative Research

This course focuses on the various forms of quantitative research that may be used in the development and analysis of public policy, such as surveys, observational studies, experiments, and the statistical analysis of secondary data. Foundational issues such as research design, the relationship between theory and research, ethical practices, sampling, and measurement will also be addressed. Students will learn the basic techniques needed to implement different quantitative research methods, but the focus will be on developing research literacy and the skills needed to evaluate published research results.

PD9101 Public Policy and Administration

This course focuses on the interface of public policy and public administration. The primary focus is on the theories related to the administrative state and its role in the policy process. The course examines the theoretical origins and evolution of public administration as a distinct and interdisciplinary field of intellectual inquiry and research in the broader context of the evolution of the administrative state and its relations with the private and non-profit sectors. An emphasis is placed on theoretical debates and research approaches to understanding the role of the administrative state in policy making, design and implementation for application in any policy area or jurisdiction. The focus will be less on the changing practices, issues and functional areas in public administration and more on the changing concepts and theories that attempt to explain the role and significance of the bureaucracy in public policy.

PD9102 Immigration, Settlement and Diaspora Policies

This course provides advanced examination of policy challenges arising from global migration. This course introduces students to various theoretical and disciplinary approaches to migration. A particular objective is situating Canada's policy responses in a comparative context with other traditional countries of migration, as well as more recent countries of immigrant settlement. Attention will be devoted to analysing the role of the state, markets and civil society in shaping migration-related policies. The role of research in policy development and analysis is a recurring course theme. Topics of interest include the policy ramifications of immigration, settlement and diaspora related to such issues as: optimal population size, economic imperatives, multiculturalism, newcomer integration, dual citizenship, transnationalism and refugee admission.

PD9103 Social Policy

This course takes a historical, comparative and critical approach to the study of social policy. The focus is on key theories and perspectives in social policy and the fluid boundaries between social policy, economic policy, health policy, environmental policy and justice underpinning interdisciplinary approaches to social policy research. Through an emphasis on the political economy of social welfare policy development at the local, national and international levels, the course provides students with an understanding of the evolution of social conditions and examines the influence of different policy ideas, institutions and interests on social policy development and change. This course also examines social capital, social cohesion, diversity and social justice movements. The emphasis is on defining and understanding the broad and interrelated field of social policy as a foundation for further research in a broad range of social policy areas.

PD9200 Directed Studies

This course is designed for individual students who may need a course related to their area of concentration that is not satisfied through course offerings. It will normally be a reading course under the direct supervision of an assigned faculty member with expertise in the chosen subject field. The course requirements will be negotiated on an individual basis with the supervising faculty member, in consultation with the Program Director.

SS8000 Stat Analysis in Social Science Research

This course introduces students to advanced quantitative methods for generating and analysing large social science data sets such as those produced by Statistics Canada and other national and international statistics bureaus. Following a review of basic statistics and probability, the course will cover topics such as the linear probability model, logistic regression, models for categorical and count data and factor analysis. The substantive questions and particular data sets to which these tools will be applied will be driven by student interests. While students will gain knowledge of statistical theory, special attention will be paid to the practice of carrying out analysis of complex data. For example, issues related to coding, missing data and the reporting and presentation of quantitative results will be covered.

SS8001 Advanced Qualitative Methods

This course is specifically targeted at students who want to learn advanced qualitative research methods related to their MRPs, theses or dissertation projects. It will provide advanced understanding and analysis of qualitative research and methods. This course offers an opportunity to customize learning on various qualitative research methods directly related to graduate research projects.

7. COMPREHENSIVE EXAM REQUIREMENTS

Doctoral Candidates must complete the comprehensive requirement to demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the state of knowledge in their field in the broader context of policy studies. This includes central themes and major debates, the key theoretical and methodological foundations and challenges in their field and policy studies. The comprehensive requirement is based on the core theory and research foundations courses, and the candidate's required field foundation course. Successful completion of the requirement indicates that the student has the level of knowledge needed to begin work on the dissertation. Normally this must be completed by the end of the first year of registration. Pass/Fail. This is a Milestone.

7.1 Timing

- Students must complete the core theory, core research foundations and their required field foundation course prior to completing the comprehensive requirement.
- Normally the comprehensive requirement will be completed in the third semester of the program (spring/summer semester of Year 1) and submitted by the end of September in the fourth semester of the program. In some cases the comprehensive requirement can be completed in the fourth semester (Fall term of Year 2) and in the fifth semester in the program (Winter term of Year 2).

- The comprehensive requirement must be completed no later than the end of the sixth semester (spring/summer semester of Year 2).
- The comprehensive requirement must be successfully completed before submission and oral presentation of the dissertation proposal to demonstrate breadth and depth of knowledge and state of theory and research in their field and readiness to proceed on to dissertation research.

7.2 Preparation

- The comprehensive paper is based on readings from required courses (core theory, research foundations and field foundation course) and additional literature deemed appropriate by the student to write the paper.
- Members of each field working group and instructors of required courses will submit questions. The roster of questions will be used by the comprehensive committee to select questions for Parts I and II.
- Students will select one question from Part I (from 5 options) and one question from Part II (from 5 options).
- The comprehensive paper will be prepared over the term (typically May-September) and submitted to the comprehensive committee by September 30.
- Any questions about the comprehensive requirement should be directed to the Program Director or Program Administrator who, if necessary, will consult with the comprehensive committee.

7.3 Format

- All students must complete a comprehensive paper of 8,000 - 10,000 words reviewing the literature from the core course content, their required field foundation course and any additional literature and resources they judge to be relevant.
- The paper is intended to ensure that the candidate has conducted an independent comprehensive investigation of relevant literature in sufficient depth to ascertain a candidates' understanding of the basic theories, and recent developments in the candidates' field or area of study. This understanding must exhibit both comprehension and critical exposition.
- The paper will be based on integrating a response to two questions. Students will be asked to select one question for each of the two sections. Part I includes broad questions related to demonstrating an understanding of the state of theory, knowledge and research in policy studies. Part II includes questions related to the student's field and their area of policy research.
- While the paper will include a review of relevant literature it is not meant to be a summary or general literature review. By selecting two questions, the focus is on synthesizing to demonstrate knowledge of policy studies and the field in the form of an integrated response to the questions. The goal is not to just summarize the work of others but demonstrate comprehension of policy studies and the field by writing a paper in response to the two selected questions.
- The expectation is that students will structure their paper like a review article with an argumentative focus and critical reflections on the two questions related to their own research. Some questions ask for application to their own research explicitly, but it is expected that all students will integrate critical reflection.

- Upon successful completion of this requirement, parts of the comprehensive paper may become part of the dissertation proposal and presented orally as part of the dissertation proposal.
- Given that the paper is meant to demonstrate your knowledge of the key theoretical and methodological foundations in policy studies generally, and your field specifically, it is understood that you will be building on the knowledge you have gained in your core policy and field foundation courses. If you require advice on how to appropriately incorporate any course work you previously completed into your paper, you may address this with your committee at this meeting. In order to use any specific portion of your coursework in the paper, you must obtain written permission from the committee in advance. After this meeting, as direct contact with your committee is not permitted, any further questions about incorporating course materials into your paper that arise should be directed to the Program Office, who will obtain clarification from your committee on your behalf.

For full details on TMU's Academic Integrity policy, please see: https://www.torontomu.ca/content/dam/graduate/student-guide/academic-matters/procedures/aio-resources/8_Policy60_AcademicIntegrityandGraduateStudents.pdf

Please see TMU Library Citations and Style Guides for citation formats: https://library.torontomu.ca/guides/style/

Please use a format consistently and accurately. You can consult relevant journals to see what citation formats are used.

Please use standard font and margins.

Please double-space unless your committee chair advises otherwise.

Please submit three copies and a PDF copy of your comprehensive paper by the date specified to the Program Administrator.

7.4 Comprehensive Committee

- All the faculty members of the Comprehensive Committee must all be affiliated with the Policy Studies program.
- The Comprehensive Committee will typically be composed of a Chair (can be the student's supervisor but not necessarily), plus two other faculty members (affiliated with the program and within the student's field); up to two other persons may be included at the discretion of the Supervisor in consultation with the candidate and the Program Director.
- This committee may or may not be the same as the student's dissertation committee.
- It may or may not include instructors from the required courses.
- The committee must be established by April 30th if writing in the May-September period or by August 30 if writing in the September-December period.
- The committee is responsible for selecting the questions for Parts I and II (from those submitted by program and field faculty)
- They are also responsible for reviewing the course outlines and collective readings from the core courses and field foundation course. As noted above it is expected

that the student will be responsible for determining any additional literature that may be related to the comprehensive paper.

7.5 Responsibilities of the Chair of the Comprehensive Committee

The Chair is responsible for the following:

- Providing the Program Assistant with the questions selected by the committee members.
- Organizing a meeting of the committee (in-person or via email) to discuss the comprehensive requirement and select the questions for Parts I and II.
- Organizing a meeting of the committee members and student to discuss the comprehensive requirement, expectations and answer any questions the student may have regarding his/her planned approach, scope of readings to be used, etc. Typically, this should take place within the week following the date the student has received the questions
- Evaluating the comprehensive paper and independently determining a grade one month after the paper has been submitted.
- Collecting the written comments from each committee member summarizing the independent feedback from committee members and completing and submitting the required comprehensive assessment form and final assessment to the Program Administrator.
- Setting a meeting of the Comprehensive Committee and the student to provide feedback about the comprehensive. At this meeting, each committee member is expected to provide comments and ask the student questions. This is not a formal oral exam. It is a more informal meeting to discuss strengths, weaknesses and how the comprehensive paper might relate to next steps in the student's research.

7.6 Evaluation

Each comprehensive committee member independently grades the comprehensive paper and submits their assessment to the Chair and Program Administrator.

The committee decides (by majority vote if necessary) whether the comprehensive paper is a "pass", "fail" or "resubmit".

- Pass – A student will be granted a "pass" if and when a clear, coherent, critical, and analytical discussion and evaluation of the questions and associated literature is presented. The comprehensive will illustrate that the student has gone well beyond summarizing relevant literature to present critical observations and insights about a body of knowledge or theory relevant to policy studies. A "pass" signifies a very high level of competency and a capacity to clearly identify trends, gaps and opportunities for research and theory-building in policy studies.
- Fail – A student will be granted a "fail" when the paper does not present a clear, coherent, critical, and analytical discussion and evaluation of the questions and associated literature. A "fail" will signify that the paper lacks coherence and analytical rigour, that the student has presented major misinterpretations of theory and debates; and/or, that the student has not presented his/her knowledge of policy

studies in a manner that produces a convincing case that they are prepared to move on to the next stage of the PhD.

- Re-submit – a 'resubmit' may be required if a comprehensive paper only partially fulfils some or all the expectations highlighted in a 'pass' as per above. When a student receives a 'resubmit' it is expected that identified weaknesses be addressed in a 4-week period to achieve a pass. In such cases, a plan of resubmission is to be written and submitted by the Chair and provided to the student within a week of receiving the assessment. The student must resubmit the paper 4 weeks after receiving the resubmission requirements. Assessment of the re-submission is completed by the Chair and/or comprehensive committee members. Evaluation documentation is resubmitted to the Program Administrator. Satisfactory completion of the resubmission is to be approved by the Program Director.

If the examination committee evaluates a *"fail",* a "UNS" (Unsatisfactory) grade designation will be assigned for the comprehensive requirement for that term. The candidate will be granted a second opportunity to attempt the comprehensive requirement based on a new set of questions. The student then has another 4-month period to complete the comprehensive requirement. A second "UNS" (Unsatisfactory) grade will result in a grade performance designation of "F" and the student will be withdrawn from the program.

7.7 Comprehensive Requirement FAQs

Q1. Can the comprehensive requirement be completed in less than 4 months?

- Yes, the student has the option of submitting the comprehensive requirement before the 4-month deadline. The comprehensive committee will still have a month to assess the paper.

Q2. How integrated should the response to the questions be?

- The expectation is that the paper will not be read as an exam response to two separate questions but that there will be some integration through a central argument and/or analysis.

Q3. What is involved in a re-submit?

- If the comprehensive committee decides that fundamentally the paper is sound but that it suffers from the weaknesses identified above, the committee may request a re-submit. The Chair of the committee then documents the weaknesses, and the student is given 4 weeks to address the weaknesses and re-submit.
- The Comp Committee is required to provide input into the requirements of the resubmission. The Chair will meet with the student to discuss the requirements of the resubmission. It is at the discretion of the Chair if a meeting of the comprehensive committee is required to discuss the weaknesses and the plan to address those weaknesses.

Q4. How much additional reading beyond the course readings does a student need to do in order to complete the comprehensive requirement?

- Students must have completed at least 3 of the required program courses in order to write the comprehensive. These courses include required and supplementary readings which should form an important foundation of the comprehensive paper. Additional readings may be required but an additional reading list is not provided.

- A successful comprehensive will typically go beyond the course readings. Students must use their judgment about how much additional reading they require. As a general guideline, it is recommended that not more than 2 of the 4-month period be used collecting and reviewing additional materials for the comprehensive paper.

8. SUPERVISOR, PH.D. DISSERTATION PROPOSAL & DISSERTATION GUIDELINES

8.1 Supervision and Supervisory Committee

- The dissertation is overseen by a supervisor and a supervisory committee.
- The supervisory committee will oversee the dissertation at all stages of the research process (proposal, research ethics if applicable, data collection and analysis, and drafting). The supervisor must be a member of the Policy Studies program faculty. The supervisory committee may include up to one faculty member outside the program, subject to the approval of the GPD and YSGPS.

8.2 Dissertation Proposal

- The doctoral dissertation requires the candidate to produce a substantial piece of supervised work that is worthy of publication and that makes an original contribution to the field of policy studies.
- Upon successful completion of the comprehensive exam, all Policy Studies students must prepare and defend a dissertation proposal alongside regular consultation with the supervisor and the supervisory committee. This is a Pass/Fail Milestone.
- The dissertation can be completed in the form of a **monograph or a three-paper manuscript**. The intention to complete the dissertation in the format of a manuscript or a monograph must be declared at the proposal stage.
- Whether pursuing a **monograph dissertation** or a **manuscript dissertation**, the student must prepare a single dissertation proposal. For a manuscript dissertation, the proposal must outline the conceptual development and proposed research methodology for each of the three papers.
- For a **manuscript dissertation**, students are encouraged to consider and discuss the proposed focus of each paper and offer an outline of each paper that includes the anticipated research question, theoretical/conceptual development, and methodology. They should also indicate a summary of any additional chapters that will be included.
- Students, supervisors and committee members are expected to have open discussion about any co-authorship expectations in the proposal stage. Any changes in these initial expectations should be communicated clearly amongst the committee members and the student.
- The proposal must be defended and accepted by the supervisory committee prior to the student undertaking the research.
- All program students must submit an application for ethics review via the Online Ethics Protocol Submission and Review System prior to the commencement of your

research, which can be accessed through your my.torontomu account. **See section 8.6 below for more information**.

Suggested Proposal Format:

Length: **15-to-20 double-spaced pages (**3,750 to 5,000 words**), exclusive of bibliography.**

1. Title: state briefly and directly the subject of the research
2. Introduction: brief description of the project and its rationale
3. Objectives:
    1. research problem, question or hypothesis
    2. theoretical perspective(s) to be invoked
    3. expected contribution to the field (the originality of the work must be demonstrated).
4. Methods and Sources
    1. brief description of research methods to be employed
    2. clear statement that a short form will be submitted to the Research Ethics Board (REB) for review and, where required, the full review process will be adhered to prior to initiating any related data collection activities
    3. description of data sources and data collection process
    4. discussion of any anticipated problems of access (to research subjects, archives, media content, etc.) and how they will be dealt with.
5. Relationship to existing literature or professional practice
    1. identify and briefly discuss the state of knowledge related to your topic in the broader literature
    2. provide a brief overview of the dominant theoretical perspectives / professional practices
    3. indicate where your work fits in (i.e. what your expected original contributions will be) and / or where it challenges these perspectives and / or practices.
6. Proposed format (monograph or three-paper manuscript) and structure of the dissertation.
7. Proposed timeline for completion of the work
   EXAMPLE:
    1. literature survey: January-February
    2. interviews / archival work March-April
    3. analysis May-June
    4. writing July-August
    5. anticipated date for submission of a full draft manuscript.
8. Select Bibliography
    1. theoretical works relevant to chosen methodology
    2. works bearing on the substance of the topic.

9. Footnotes should be kept to a minimum. Any accepted citation form may be used.

Submitting the Proposal:

- The student shall submit a written draft of the proposal to their Supervisor and then committee members for feedback. Each time a document is submitted for feedback and approval to members of the Supervisory Committee, the student should allow a minimum of 2 weeks for feedback.
- Once the committee reviews the proposal and has a) agreed that it is ready to proceed to the defense; or (b) recommended revisions which have been incorporated to their satisfaction, a copy is submitted to the Program Office and Program Director for record keeping and an oral presentation (i.e. the proposal defense) can be scheduled.

Scheduling the Oral Presentation (the Proposal Defense):

- The student is required to orally present the proposal to their supervisory committee and any other interested faculty and students from the program.
- This will normally be done by the end of the Winter term in Year 2 (i.e., by the end of May of Year 2).
- In the Policy Studies program, the proposal defense is arranged by the supervisor. Once scheduled, the date, time and location of the defense (including the Zoom invitation, for defenses that are hybrid or fully remote) is shared with the Program Office who disseminates this information to all program faculty and students.

8.2.1 Oral Presentation of the Proposal

- The student is required to orally present the proposal to the supervisory committee, members of the field and any other interested faculty and students from the program.
- Since the proposal defense doesn't require an external examiner and the committee has previously read the proposal, the purpose of the defense is to allow the student to clarify anything that wasn't clear in the proposal itself. It also enables other program faculty/students in attendance to ask questions.
- The Supervisor is responsible for ensuring that any required revisions to the proposal are incorporated after the oral presentation.
- The program office provides the supervisor with paperwork to record the outcome of the defense, a copy of which must be returned and retained.

8.2.2 Final Approval and Submission of the Final Proposal

- Final approval of the proposal is the responsibility of the Supervisor and the Supervisory Committee.
- A cover sheet (Dissertation Proposal for the PhD Degree) bearing the approval signatures of the Supervisor and each committee member shall be attached to the final proposal and submitted to the Program Director/Administrator.

THE DISSERTATION

8.3 Dissertation Format (Monograph option)

- The monograph option is a dissertation presented as a single, integrated scholarly work that addresses an overarching research question or set of related research questions. It typically includes an introduction, a review of the relevant literature, a discussion of the theoretical or conceptual framework and research methodology, the presentation and analysis of findings, and a conclusion. Unlike the manuscript option, the chapters are designed as components of one cohesive dissertation rather than as stand-alone papers intended for separate publication.
- Additional guidelines and resources related to dissertation preparation and completion - including dissertation structure and development, formatting requirements, and procedures for conducting thesis defenses via Zoom - are available on TMU's Dissertation, Thesis and MRP webpage: https://www.torontomu.ca/graduate/student-guide/thesis-exams-graduation/dissertation-thesis/.

8.4 Dissertation Format (Manuscript option)

- The manuscript option is a dissertation composed of three stand-alone papers, which are logically linked in terms of an overarching research question or theme. The papers are written in a cohesive manner and with a coherent theme. These papers are intended for publication in academic journals but may include papers that are intended for other forms of scholarly publication. This type of dissertation also includes an introduction and conclusion, which serves to tie the three papers together and may include other chapters. This format maintains the same standard of academic rigor and excellence, demonstrating the student's ability to undertake a significant research project and make a meaningful contribution to a field of study.
- Normally, the papers in the dissertation should be of peer-reviewed journal submission quality and identify the target journals or publication plans for each of the articles. Considerations related to authorship should be discussed and formalized with the supervisor and supervisory committee as per the Authorship and Originality section below.
- Additional guidance from TMU Graduate Studies specific to the manuscript option is available in the university's Manuscript-Style Thesis Guidelines: https://www.torontomu.ca/content/dam/graduate/student-guide/academic-matters/policies-guidelines/Manuscript_style_thesis.pdf.
- Additional guidelines and resources related to dissertation preparation and completion - including dissertation structure and development, formatting requirements, and procedures for conducting thesis defenses via Zoom - are available on TMU's Dissertation, Thesis and MRP webpage: https://www.torontomu.ca/graduate/student-guide/thesis-exams-graduation/dissertation-thesis/.

8.4.1 Authorship and Originality (Manuscript option)

- The program does not prohibit papers authored with others; however, the student must be the first or primary author (that is, the author who has made the most substantial contribution) of the papers included in the dissertation.

- The program believes that students are capable of, and benefit from, publishing sole-authored publications. As such, supervisors are strongly encouraged to facilitate sole-authored papers by students whenever possible.
- As a preface or part of a general introduction, the student should include a statement of authorship and co-authorship. For papers with co-authors, the student must outline their contribution with respect to the conception of the research methodology, data collection, data analysis, and writing of the text. Data that were collected by someone else or as part of a project led by someone else must be clearly indicated.
- The authorship and originality of the 3 papers should be of publishable quality and normally, at least two of the papers should be intended for submission to a peer-reviewed journal in a suitable field of study. As a result, some of the papers included in the dissertation may be already under review, published, in-press, or accepted for publication at the time of the defense.
- The submission, acceptance/rejection of papers does not pre-determine a pass/fail at the defense.
- A maximum of one of the papers may be written for a non-scholarly audience; however, this paper must meet the same standard of publication that would be expected in a peer reviewed journal.
- The research for all papers must have been undertaken while the student was enrolled in the PhD Policy Studies program and may not be papers that were prepared prior to their admission to the program.

8.5 Final Defense

- The full document (including the introduction, papers, and conclusion) shall be submitted as one dissertation and be presented in a single defense, in accordance with TMU policies and procedures.
- For papers that are published, students must ensure they are conforming to any copyright requirements made by the journal publisher. Students and supervisors may wish to take this into consideration in selecting journals.
- Guidelines and resources related to dissertation preparation and completion, including dissertation structure and development, formatting requirements, and procedures for conducting thesis defenses via Zoom are available on TMU's Dissertation , Thesis and MRP webpage: https://www.torontomu.ca/graduate/student-guide/thesis-exams-graduation/dissertation-thesis/.

8.5.1 Defending the Dissertation

Some students are surprised at the length of time it takes to move from a completed draft of their dissertation to a final defense. This document aims to provide some clarity around the process of moving to a defense, and the requirements of the student post-defense. This guide walks Policy Studies PhD students and their supervisors through every step, from a finished draft to a dissertation accepted by the university. Plan for at least 9 weeks between

submitting committee nominations and your defense, and more time after it for revisions and final submission.
Each step is labelled with who is responsible:

- **Student:** the PhD candidate
- **Supervisor:** the candidate's supervisor or co-supervisors
- **GPA:** Graduate Program Administrator, who receives all forms and documents
- **GPD:** Graduate Program Director, who reviews and signs forms
- **YSGPS:** Yeates School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, which approves the committee and accepts the final dissertation (YSGPS may also review and sign some forms).
- **Chair:** the person who runs the defense

Questions go to the **GPA at policystudies@torontomu.ca**.

General Information about the Process:
As you are finalizing your dissertation, you and your supervisor should begin discussing the dissertation examination committee. Your examining committee has six people and five votes. The Dean and Vice-Provost of YSGPS must approve every member before a defense date can be set. The rules come from Senate Policy 170(b), Section 23. Your dissertation examination committee consists of the following people:

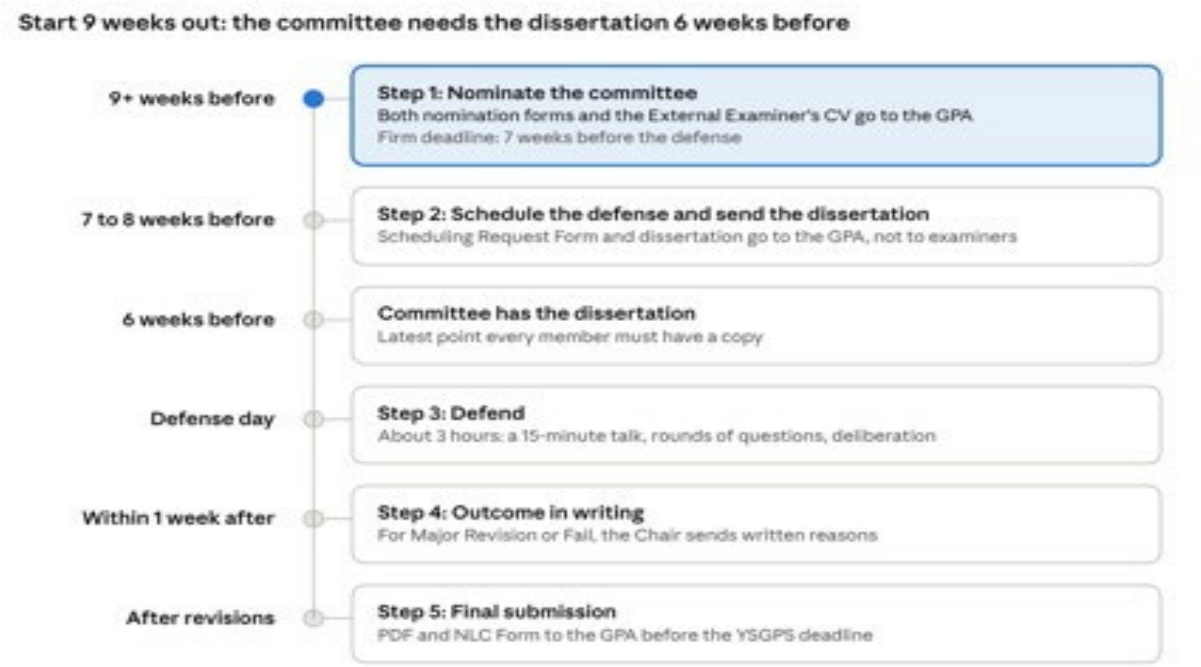
Role	Who They Are	Members	Votes
Chair	A neutral faculty member from outside Policy Studies who runs the defense on behalf of the Dean of YSGPS. The supervisor finds the Chair.	1	0 (votes only to break a tie)
Supervisor	Your supervisor. Co-supervisors share one vote.	1 or more	1
In-program Members	Two Policy Studies faculty who belong to YSGPS, usually your supervisory committee.	2	2
Out-of-program Examiner	A TMU faculty member who belongs to YSGPS but teaches outside Policy Studies.	1	1
External Examiner	A faculty member from another university.	1	1

What the External Examiner Must Be

The External Examiner gives an independent judgement of whether your dissertation is good enough, accurate enough, and rigorous enough for a doctoral degree. They must:

- Work at a university other than TMU
- Be a recognized expert on your dissertation's subject
- Normally hold the rank of Full Professor
- Be at arm's length from you and your supervisor, meaning no close personal or working relationship with either of you
- The Dean and Vice-Provost (YSGPS) must approve the External Examiner and the Examination Committee. This approval can take several weeks.

Timeline At A Glance



- Count backward from your target defense date. Remember the defense itself is normally held no later than one month before the last date to clear graduation requirements.

Step 1: Build and Nominate the Committee

Recommended deadline: 9 weeks before the defense. Firm deadline: 7 weeks before. Submit early. YSGPS approval can take several weeks, and the extra time leaves room to replace a nominee who is not approved.

1. **Plan the committee (Student and Supervisor).** Start talking about committee members while the dissertation is still being finalized.

2. **Find the Chair (Supervisor).** Supervisors are responsible for finding a neutral Chair from outside Policy Studies.

3. **Choose the External Examiner (Supervisor).** Confirm the person meets the requirements above and collect their CV.

4. **Complete the nomination forms (Supervisor).** Fill out the External Examiner Nomination Form and the PhD Examination Committee Nomination Form.

5. **Submit to the GPA (Supervisor).** The External Examiner form may go in early, but no later than the committee form.

6. **Review and approval (GPA, GPD, YSGPS).** The GPA receives the forms, the GPD reviews and signs them, and they go to YSGPS. The Dean and Vice-Provost of YSGPS approve the External Examiner and the committee.

What to Submit to the GPA

- ☐ External Examiner Nomination Form
- ☐ External Examiner's CV
- ☐ PhD Examination Committee Nomination form

Step 2: Confirm the Date and Send the Dissertation

Deadline: 7 to 8 weeks before the defense. Every committee member must have the dissertation at least 6 weeks before the defense.

1. **Confirm the dissertation is ready (Supervisory Committee).** The supervisory committee must agree the dissertation is ready to defend before it goes out.

2. **Check your graduation deadline (Student).** A defense is normally held no later than one month before the last date to clear graduation requirements. Check the YSGPS Significant Dates for your target term.

3. **Submit the scheduling form (Student and Supervisor).** Send the Dissertation Defense Scheduling Request Form to the GPA.

4. **Send the dissertation to the GPA (Student).** The program distributes it. Do not send it directly to committee members.

5. **Hard copies (Student).** If the External Examiner wants a printed copy, it must be sent 7 to 8 weeks before the defense so it arrives at least 6 weeks ahead.

6. **Confirm the date (GPD).** Once YSGPS approves the committee, the date is confirmed. The GPD sends the committee the confirmation and a copy of the final manuscript.

Scheduling means coordinating six people's calendars, so your defense may land later than you expect. Build that into your plans.

Step 3: Defense Day

The Defense proceeds according to the guidelines established in Senate Policy 170(b), Section 23. A defense usually runs about 3 hours and can be in person, virtual, or hybrid, depending on your preference and the committee's availability.

What Happens

1. **Your presentation (Student).** A short talk of about 15 minutes on your dissertation.

2. **Questions (Committee).** Every committee member asks questions, over several rounds.

3. **Deliberation (Committee).** The committee discusses and decides the outcome.

The Chair's Form

The Chair brings the Dissertation Defense Oral Examination Report Form, completes it during the defense, and submits it to the GPA right after.

Step 4: Outcomes and Revisions

The committee reaches one of three outcomes, and revisions are common even with a Pass. Leave yourself time to make them.

Outcome	What It Means	What Happens Next
Pass	The dissertation is accepted, possibly with minor revisions that do not change its main argument.	You receive the expected changes in writing. The supervisor ensures that the student integrates the revisions. Once the supervisor confirms, the exam requirement is met.
Major Revision	Bigger changes are needed, ranging from rewriting large parts of a chapter to adding new work.	Within 1 week, the Chair sends written reasons and expectations to the Dean of YSGPS, the GPD, the supervisor, and the student. The committee then approves the revisions, either by meeting again or by consultation. If consultation does not settle it, the committee meets again and must decide Pass or Fail.
Fail	The dissertation does not meet the program's expectations.	Within 1 week, the Chair sends written reasons to the Dean of YSGPS, the GPD, the supervisor, and the student.

All required revisions must be finished before you submit the final dissertation to YSGPS

- Revisions are common in defenses, and students are advised to leave sufficient time to complete these revisions. The final submission must conform to the guidelines set by YSGPS.
- Students must be aware of the YSGPS Significant Dates, which outline the final date to clear outstanding graduation requirements (including submission of forms and approved dissertations to YSGPS) or the student must register for that term.

8.5.2 Submission and Deposit of Theses and Dissertations

Step 5: Final Submission to YSGPS

Your degree is complete only when YSGPS accepts your final, approved dissertation, so check the YSGPS Significant Dates for your term's deadline. YSGPS will not accept an incomplete dissertation or one with formatting errors. The GPA will send you instructions after your defense.

What to Submit

1. **The PDF (Student).** Send a PDF of your final dissertation to the GPA. You are responsible for creating the PDF. Remove all security settings and turn bookmarks off. Hard copies are NOT needed.

2. **Confirmation of changes (Supervisor).** The supervisor confirms with the GPA that all required changes are complete.

3. **Library and Archives Canada licence (Student).** Complete, and sign the TMU Non-Exclusive Licence (NLC) Form. Once completed, submit it to the program office by email.

4. **Make names match (Student).** Your full name and dissertation title must be identical on your title page and on the NLC Form.

Copyright and Permissions

- You keep the copyright. The final copy becomes TMU's property, and TMU gets a free, non-exclusive licence to keep it in the library, copy it for academic use and for other institutions, send it to Library and Archives Canada, and publish the abstract.
- Quoting more than a reasonable extract of someone else's work requires written permission from the copyright holder.
- A chapter you already published as an article or book chapter requires written permission from the publisher.
- Any part written with co-authors requires a written permission statement from each co-author.

- Permission letters should also cover Library and Archives Canada's use, as worded on the NLC Form. Place them just before your works cited.

Restricting Public Access

Your dissertation will be publicly available unless publishing it would harm your interests, for example a pending patent. In that case you can apply to the Dean of YSGPS to hold it back, normally for up to 1 year. The GPA can help with the form.

8.6 Research Ethics Board (REB) and Approvals

- **All** program students must submit an application for ethics review via the Online Ethics Protocol Submission and Review System prior to the commencement of your research, which can be accessed through your my.torontomu account. Note: the initial response time is typically six to eight weeks from the date of the original submission.
- Pursuant to its review, the REB may determine that your research requires ethics review and approval by the REB before research activities (including recruitment) may begin. Some research activities may fall outside of the scope of the REB and thus may not require REB review and approval. Only the REB can make this determination; students and/or their supervisors cannot, on their own, determine whether ethics review is or is not required.
- The REB recommends that all prospective applicants register and take the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS) TCPS online tutorial to become familiar with the TCPS 2 guidelines. **All** students must complete the TCPS 2 online tutorial before submitting the online application for ethics approval.
- The importance of ensuring that research activities that require REB review and approval receive REB review and approval cannot be overstated. In the event that researchers do not receive REB approval when it is required, they may have committed research misconduct under Senate Policy 118: Scholarly, Research and Creative (SRC) Activity: Integrity Policy.
- The REB hosts virtual office hours via Zoom every Thursday between 10 am - 12 pm. Join Zoom meeting to attend virtual office hours. Meeting ID: 949 1974 0301. If you have questions or need clarification, please reach out to the Research Ethics Office.

8.7 Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Graduate Studies and Research

Graduate students considering the use of generative artificial intelligence (GAI) tools in their coursework, research, scholarly activities, or dissertation should consult with their supervisor and follow relevant program and university requirements. Students are expected to seek and document approval for the use of GAI in their research and writing and to be transparent about how these tools have been used. Students remain responsible for the accuracy, originality, academic integrity, and appropriate attribution of their work and should be mindful of privacy, confidentiality, copyright, and intellectual property considerations when using GAI tools.

At Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU), the improper or unauthorized use of Generative AI (GAI) is treated as a major violation under Senate Policy 60: Academic Integrity.

Under Policy, academic misconduct is defined as "Any behaviour that undermines the university's ability to evaluate fairly students' academic achievements, or any behaviour that a student knew, or reasonably ought to have known, could gain them or others unearned academic advantage or benefit, counts as academic misconduct." (Section 3.1)

Additionally, Senate has approved the following changes to Appendix A of Policy 60, specifically, under the category of "Misrepresentation of Personal Identity or Performance":

> 5.5. submitting work created in whole or in part by artificial intelligence tools unless expressly permitted by the Faculty/Contract Lecturer;
>
> 5.6. submitting work that does not reasonably demonstrate your own knowledge, understanding and performance

The submission of false or fabricated material, such as data generated by artificial intelligence tools, may also be considered as cheating under Policy 60, Appendix A, Section 3.7, "presenting falsified or fabricated material, including research results".

Students should review YSGPS Guidance on the Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) in Graduate Studies for detailed information on the appropriate use of GAI in graduate research, writing, and scholarly activities: https://www.torontomu.ca/graduate/student-guide/academic-matters/policies-guidelines/ysgs-ai-guidance/.

9. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND SCHOLARSHIPS

At TMU, we recognize that pursuing graduate studies is a significant financial investment. To that end, we want to ensure that you are able to focus on your studies and research while pursuing your graduate degree. There are a number of funding packages – internal and external – available to graduate students. https://www.torontomu.ca/graduate/tuition-funding/funding/.

9.1 Graduate Scholarship and Awards Information

TMU is pleased to offer a wide variety of funding opportunities for graduate students. There are a number of scholarships and awards available to graduate students on a competitive basis. We want to make sure you are successful in meeting the financial demands of your graduate education. If you have questions about these scholarship and award programs, please check: https://www.torontomu.ca/graduate/tuition-funding/scholarships-awards/.

Funding provided directly by TMU, via the Graduate Fellowship, the Graduate Development Award, and faculty-specific graduate funding, do not require an application, as eligible students will be automatically considered.

Federal and provincial scholarships, along with Canada-wide and internationally provided scholarships, do require applications. Graduate students should also access Award Spring to apply for additional scholarships and awards relevant to their programs and studies. Further, Academic Assistant (AA) positions are also available (see below).

9.2 Bridging Divides (https://www.torontomu.ca/bridging-divides/opportunities/scholarships/)

Every year, Bridging Divides offers a limited number of stipends to full-time Master's and PhD students studying or applying to study at TMU on a topic related to one of Bridging Divide's four research themes: *immigrant health and well-being; employment and lifelong learning; place and infrastructure; and citizenship and participation*

Student recipients of the Bridging Divides Graduate Student Stipend will be expected to participate in the program's research training activities and workshops and will be integrated into a vibrant research team of scholars and graduate students, enjoying a comprehensive scientific and professional development experience. Supervisors or co-supervisors must be TMU faculty members directly involved in the program.

Bridging Divides Funding:
The PhD Entrance & Existing students' Bridging Divides stipend is available for domestic and international students. Renewals are subject to an annual review of the student's progress and availability of funds.

Graduate students holding external grants (such as SSHRC/CIHR/NSERC or similar scholarships from independent sources or foundations) can apply for a top-up from Bridging Divides provided they have a strong justification for receiving the additional grant. These will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Scientific Director.

10. STUDENT MENTORSHIP PROGRAM (New Initiative)

The goal of the student mentor is to welcome the 1st year students, share information about TMU and the program, answer any questions they have, discuss their research interests, share experiences and advice as a student in the program. Also share opportunities to become involved in student and extra-curricular initiatives. This is a volunteer initiative and the expectation in terms of time commitment involves meeting in person or virtually approximately 2-3 times over the academic year (ideally once in the Fall, Winter and Spring semesters). The program is also evaluated wherein in the month of June, a short google form is sent to the students to evaluate the initiative and their experience and is always willing to incorporate their feedback to improvise it for the future.

11. ACADEMIC ASSISTANTSHIP INFORMATION

At TMU an Academic Assistant (AA) is the title given to graduate students, previously known as Graduate/Teaching Assistant (GA/TA) who assist faculty members in teaching and/or evaluating the work of undergraduate students. Most universities refer to these positions as

‘*teaching assistants’*.

Many have found the experience very rewarding, working closely with a faculty member to help undergraduate students better understand course material, and facilitating undergraduate student learning. At the same time, the position of an AA can also be challenging. It demands attention, patience, professionalism, and collaboration. It is employment, with all the responsibilities and expectations that come with that designation.

The duties of the AAs in our program will typically involve leading/facilitating weekly tutorials and evaluating undergraduate student work. The duties may vary depending on the course.

Students interested in pursuing Academic Assistant (AA) opportunities at TMU are encouraged to remain attentive to postings and announcements throughout the academic year. AA positions are competitive and are not guaranteed. Opportunities may be communicated through the Policy Studies PhD program, the Faculty of Arts, and the broader university, so students should regularly monitor relevant communications and job postings and apply to positions for which they are eligible.

Incoming AAs will be expected to attend a Faculty of Arts training session before classes commence. Some departments also have training sessions. Details will be provided as they become available.