



UBC100

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Vancouver Campus

Faculty of Applied Science  
Department of Civil Engineering

# **UBC Civil Engineering Graduate Student Handbook 2016-17**

## Welcome!

On behalf of faculty, staff, and current students I am delighted to welcome you to the Department of Civil Engineering at UBC in Vancouver. It is exciting for us to be joined by such a diverse group of bright and motivated students from around the world. Your admission into our graduate program, regardless of degree program, is a major accomplishment that you should be proud of. This year we reviewed nearly 600 applications from 53 countries for the MEng, MASc, and PhD programs. We could only admit a small fraction into our program; you are in a select group of 67 MEng students, 49 MASc students, and 17 PhD students we admitted. On an annual basis we have approximately 85 MEng students, 95 MASc students, and 60 PhD students enrolled in our graduate programs.

According to the 2016 QS World University Rankings the UBC Department of Civil Engineering is ranked number one in Canada and number 26 in the world. A very important reason for our success is our graduate students, namely you! The high caliber of our graduate students allow us to maintain a high standard in our graduate courses, and the research conducted in the MASc and PhD programs is consistently top-notch. Now that you have joined one of the best civil engineering departments in the world we simply say: Keep up the good work!

The intention with this handbook is to summarize in one place some information that we think is relevant for you. Much of this information is already available online, at different websites. You should treat the online versions as the official source of information, using this handbook simply as a starting point. When you review program policies then remember that the Faculty of Applied Science ([APSC](#)) oversees the MEng degree, while the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies ([G+PS](#)) who oversees the MASc and PhD degrees. On many policy issues relating to your degree the specialty groups and the department make recommendations but it is the Faculty who has the final say.

Your first academic assignment is to select courses. Using links provided in this document we suggest you begin by checking the discipline-specific and degree-specific course requirements. Then make a tentative course plan and talk to a specialty advisor if you have questions. It is common to shop around and change courses during the first couple of weeks of each term, but make sure to drop courses before the deadline to avoid a W for Withdrawn in your transcript. If a course is listed as “Full” online then please contact the instructor to hear if you can still get in; often space opens up at the beginning of the term. Also, please do not forget to maintain an up-to-date [Personal Data Form](#) while you are enrolled in our program.

Finally, many congratulations on your graduate admission and thank you for bringing your skills and inspiration to UBC Civil Engineering!

*Professor Terje Haukaas, Associate Head for Graduate Programs*

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## Graduate Program Calendar

Tue, Sep 6	First day of lectures for graduate courses in Term 1
Thu, Sep 8	Orientation session for new graduate students
~Sep 15	Email is sent out to solicit academic progress forms for “small awards”
~Sep 30	Deadline for submission of academic progress forms for “small awards”
Mon, Sep 12	Deadline for submission of Vanier applications
Fri, Sep 23	Deadline for submission of NSERC/Affiliated award applications (PhD)
Tue, Sep 27	G+PS receives department nominees for Vanier scholarships
Mon, Oct 17	G+PS receives department nominees for NSERC/Affiliated awards (PhD)
Tue, Sep 20	Last day to drop courses without a W standing, Term 1
Mon, Oct 10	Thanksgiving Day, university closed
Fri, Oct 14	Last day to drop courses WITH a W standing, Term 1
Fri, Nov 11	Remembrance Day, university closed
~Nov 24	Graduation ceremony at the Chan Centre
Thu, Dec 1	Deadline for submission of NSERC award applications (MAsc)
Fri, Dec 2	Last day of lectures, Term 1
~Jan 15	G+PS receives department nominees for NSERC awards (MAsc)
Dec 6-21	Final exam period, Term 1
Tue, Jan 3	First day of lectures, Term 2
Tue, Jan 17	Last day to drop courses without a W standing, Term 2
Tue, Jan 31	Application deadline for September 2017 admission
~Feb 1	Email is sent out to solicit academic progress forms for GSI merit awards (MAsc, PhD)
Fri, Feb 10	Last day to drop courses WITH a W standing, Term 2
~Feb 15	Deadline for submission of academic progress forms for GSI merit awards (MAsc, PhD)
Mon, Feb 13	Family Day, university closed
Feb 20-24	One-week mid-term break
Thu, Apr 6	Last day of lectures, Term 2
Apr 10-28	Final exam period, Term 2
~May 1	Email is sent out to PhD students who joined our program within the last 12 months to solicit academic progress forms for four-year fellowships (4YF)
~May 15	Graduation ceremony at the Chan Centre
~May 15	Deadline for submission of academic progress forms for four-year fellowships (4YF)
Fri, Jun 30	Application deadline for January 2018 admission
~Apr 15	Deadline for applying for Teaching Assistantships, Term 1 & 2
~Aug 15	Department allocation of Teaching Assistantships, Term 1

## Groups & Advisors

Civil engineering is a broad field with many possible specializations. At UBC Civil we are sorting our graduate program into eight groups, each with different course recommendations. The person overseeing the policy for a group is called Specialty Advisor. That person is your primary contact for advice on course selection. If you are an MSc or PhD student with a research supervisor assigned then that is the correct person to contact.

### Specialty Advisors

Name	Room	Email
Civil Engineering Materials Dr. Nemkumar Banthia	2024	<a href="mailto:banthia@civil.ubc.ca">banthia@civil.ubc.ca</a>
Environmental Engineering Prof. Don Mavinic	2004B	<a href="mailto:dsm@civil.ubc.ca">dsm@civil.ubc.ca</a>
Environmental Fluid Mechanics Dr. Greg Lawrence	2030	<a href="mailto:lawrence@civil.ubc.ca">lawrence@civil.ubc.ca</a>
Geo-Environmental Engineering Dr. Loretta Li	2021	<a href="mailto:lli@civil.ubc.ca">lli@civil.ubc.ca</a>
Geotechnical Engineering Dr. Jonathan Fannin	2032	<a href="mailto:fannin@civil.ubc.ca">fannin@civil.ubc.ca</a>
Hydrotechnical Engineering Dr. Greg Lawrence	2030	<a href="mailto:lawrence@civil.ubc.ca">lawrence@civil.ubc.ca</a>
Project & Construction Management Dr. Thomas Froese	2021	<a href="mailto:tfroese@civil.ubc.ca">tfroese@civil.ubc.ca</a>
Structural & Earthquake Engineering Dr. Carlos Ventura	2018	<a href="mailto:ventura@civil.ubc.ca">ventura@civil.ubc.ca</a>
Transportation Engineering Dr. Tarek Sayed	2026	<a href="mailto:tsayed@civil.ubc.ca">tsayed@civil.ubc.ca</a>

### Graduate Program Advisor

Another person you can contact if you have questions, suggestions, or concerns about the graduate program is the Graduate Program Advisor. Currently Dr. Terje Haukaas ([terje@civil.ubc.ca](mailto:terje@civil.ubc.ca), Room 2014) serves in that role. He is also the Associate Head for Graduate Programs and does the work of the Graduate Advisor for Awards and Graduate Advisor for Admissions. He oversees the departmental implementation of the graduate program policies, and he signs off on requests that require departmental approval. If you need his a signature then simply drop off the form at the Civil Engineering Front Desk and staff will ensure the request is considered in a timely manner. Normally you should have all other signatures completed first.

## **Degree Programs**

### **MEng**

The Master of Engineering in Civil Engineering (MEng) Program is a non-thesis, course-based professional program designed for students who would like to further their studies without pursuing research. The program requires completion of at least 30 credits of coursework beyond the Bachelor's degree level. In addition to the required coursework, some specialty groups may require a project to be completed in partial fulfillment of the degree requirements.

### **MASc**

The thesis-based Master of Applied Science in Civil Engineering (MASc) is a research-based degree taken over two years of full-time study. The program includes a total of 18 credits or more of coursework and the completion of a thesis under the supervision of a faculty member. Admission into the MASc program is highly competitive. The MASc degree is the recommended course of study for students who are interested in eventually pursuing a PhD.

### **PhD**

The thesis-based Doctor of Philosophy in Civil Engineering (PhD) is an advanced research-based degree. The program normally takes four to five years of full-time study to complete and includes 30 credits of coursework beyond the bachelor's degree. Of those 30 credits the student would normally be allowed to count 18 credits from the preceding Master's degree coursework, having to take only 12 credits of coursework in the PhD program. It is normally required to have a Master's degree prior to admission into the PhD program. The PhD program requires the completion of a comprehensive examination and the completion of a dissertation under the supervision of a faculty member. The department may initially admit a student into the MASc program and to transfer them to the PhD program upon completion of the MASc degree, or earlier if recommended by the supervising faculty member.

## **Policies**

It is important that you are aware of the policies governing your degree program. Some of the policies are mandated by the Department of Civil Engineering. The Faculty that oversees your degree program (APSC or G+PS) mandates others. It is the responsibility of each student to be aware of these policies, as well as the content of the [UBC Academic Calendar](#) and have a full understanding of the regulations in it. Conduct of faculty, staff, and students is governed by a number of university policies that are posted [here](#). Please pay particular attention to Policy 85 on Scholarly Integrity, Policy 87 on Research, Policy 88 on Inventions and Discoveries, and Policy 97 on Conflict of Interest.

### **MEng**

The MEng policies specified by Civil Engineering are [here](#).  
The MEng policies specified by APSC are [here](#).

### **MASc**

The MASc policies specified by Civil Engineering are [here](#).  
The MASc policies specified by G+PS are [here](#).

### **PhD**

The PhD policies specified by Civil Engineering are [here](#).  
The PhD policies specified by G+PS are [here](#).

### **Group-specific Policies**

Each specialization within the Department of Civil Engineering has policies relating to course selection, etc. and these policies are [here](#).



## Length of Time to Attain Degrees

### MEng

With the 30-credit coursework requirement it is difficult to complete the MEng degree in one academic year. Regardless, MEng students are required to pay tuition fee for at least three terms. The typical approach is to obtain the degree over three terms, for example taking three courses in Term 1, four courses in Term 2, and three courses in Term 1 of the following year. Because few courses are offered in the summer it is common for MEng students to seek a Leave of Absence for the summer to avoid paying tuition fees while not taking courses. Another approach, challenging but achievable, is to obtain the degree in one year by taking four courses in Term 1 and four courses in Term 2, followed by up to six credits of CIVL 596 “directed study” supervised by a faculty member during the summer. Other recommendations are made for part-time MEng students ([Payment Schedule B](#)). Please note that we are unable to change a program back to full-time once a program has started. In either case, the MEng program must be completed within 5 years of initial registration.

### MASc

The MASc program is expected to take about 24 months to complete, and regardless of whether you are a full-time student or a part-time student (Schedule B) you must complete the degree within 5 years of initial registration. With the 18-credit course requirement it is typical to take three courses in Term 1, three courses in Term 2, and spend the subsequent summer and academic year conducting research for completion of the MASc thesis.

### PhD

Doctoral students are expected to study full time. A typical plan for a PhD student in Civil Engineering is to use the first three terms to complete the coursework and the comprehensive examination. The subsequent two or three years are allocated for research to complete the PhD dissertation. Often PhD students are granted 18 credits of coursework from the Master’s degree towards the total 30-credit course requirement. Hence, it is typical to take two courses in Term 1, two courses in Term 2, whereby the 30-credit coursework requirement is satisfied and the student may proceed to the comprehensive examination. That exam may also be taken once 24 credits of coursework have been completed. The typical time to obtain a PhD degree is about four years. The minimum is two years, and if a degree is not awarded within six years of initial registration the student’s eligibility for the degree will end without completion. Under exceptional circumstances extensions may be granted by G+PS.

## Transfer Between Programs

Transfers between programs are relatively rare but possible in special circumstances. For example, we have seen transfers MEng → MASc → PhD for students who do exceptionally well in the MEng program and are then invited by a faculty member to do research in the MASc program, followed by a PhD degree. If the previous degree is completed before embarking on the new degree program then a new admissions application must be submitted. Any transfer to/from the MEng program must be accompanied by a new admissions application because different faculties administer the MEng degree and the MASc/PhD degrees.

### Eligibility

All transfer must be justified on the grounds of its appropriateness for the student's academic or professional goals. Moreover, all transfers must be discussed and approved by the research supervisor and the graduate program advisor.

### MASc to/from MEng

In exceptional cases, a student may transfer between the MASc and MEng programs with an academic justification from the graduate program advisor and the approval of G+PS. A recommendation to transfer must be supported by an academic justification and a review of the student's academic qualifications. There must be evidence of consultation with the student's current or future supervisor. This information is posted [here](#) and the relevant form is [here](#).

### PhD to Master's Programs

These transfers are very rare but may be approved if they are initiated early in the student's doctoral program. The transfer should be justified on the grounds of its appropriateness for the student's personal or professional goals, which should be discussed by the student and his or her supervisor. Transfer requires the full agreement of both student and graduate program. Transfers between programs involving a change of discipline must be treated as new admissions. Also keep in mind that transfers from doctoral to master's programs may have implications for student funding. Students must complete all the requirements for the master's program in order to be awarded their degree. This information is posted [here](#) and the relevant form is [here](#).

## Forms & Support Staff

Many aspects of your graduate program, including course registration and fee payments are now handled entirely online. However, whenever you venture beyond the basics you may need to fill out a form and obtain signatures.

### Forms

Most forms are available on our [website](#). Please email or deliver all completed forms to the front desk, and expect a turn-around time of at least 2 days, except for desk requests. If required, responses will be delivered by email.

### Front Desk

If you need assistance you can visit the staff at the Civil Engineering Front Desk, during their office hours. They may have the answer to your question, or they may direct you elsewhere to find the answer. Please try as hard as you can to find the answer to your question online before visiting the Front Desk.

### Support Staff

Name	Title	Email
Glenda Levins	Graduate Student Support	<a href="mailto:gradsupport@civil.ubc.ca">gradsupport@civil.ubc.ca</a>
Luyi Yang	Finance Specialist	<a href="mailto:res-accounts@civil.ubc.ca">res-accounts@civil.ubc.ca</a>
May Liu	Finance Clerk	<a href="mailto:gen-accounts@civil.ubc.ca">gen-accounts@civil.ubc.ca</a>
Claire Wei	Administrative Support	<a href="mailto:facultysupport@civil.ubc.ca">facultysupport@civil.ubc.ca</a>
Harald Schrempp	Manager of Labs & Workshop	<a href="mailto:haralds@civil.ubc.ca">haralds@civil.ubc.ca</a>
Scott Jackson	Manager of Safety & Research Facilities	<a href="mailto:scottj@civil.ubc.ca">scottj@civil.ubc.ca</a>

## Academic Progress

For an undergraduate student a grade below 50% is considered a failing grade. In contrast, a graduate student fails a course with a grade below 68%. If you are in the unfortunate situation of failing a course then you are normally allowed to include the credits of maximum two courses (maximum six credits) with a grade between 60% and 67%. For grades below 60% you are required to complete the Unsatisfactory Academic Progress Form, which is posted [here](#) for MEng students and [here](#) for MAsc/PhD students. Please note that you are required to obtain the grade 74% when you retake/replace the course. Supplemental examinations are not granted to graduate students.

If you find yourselves struggling in courses then please know that we are here to assist you. During the term, please talk openly with the instructor if you are having problems; you will find that he/she is always interested in helping you. If your problems persist, or if you have failed a course (<68%) then please IMMEDIATELY seek an appointment with the graduate program advisor. Together you will tailor your course-plan to improve the likelihood of a successful completion of your degree. The graduate program advisor can also draw upon other resources, either within the department or elsewhere on campus, and he/she can also communicate directly with course instructors if needed. If you receive a grade below 60% in more than two courses you will normally be required to withdraw from the program.

## Course Registration

You may register directly for all courses using the online registration system, including adding or dropping courses. If you are unable to do so, and require the department to register you in a Civil Engineering course, please complete the [course request form](#) and obtain the instructor's signature before you submit it to the Civil Engineering Front Desk for the graduate program advisor approval.

Graduate students wishing to register in undergraduate courses must receive the permission of their supervisor to take the course as a part of their program. Graduate students are allowed maximum six credits of undergraduate coursework to be used towards completion of their graduate program. Students must then fill out the online [undergraduate course registration form](#). For courses in other departments, please contact that department directly.

### Auditing Courses

Students must be officially approved to audit ("sit in") courses. They are expected to complete all course requirements except the final exam, and may be given a failing grade for the course if their performance is not satisfactory. Students auditing a course may not change to regular status during the term nor may a regular student change to audit status after the normal date for adding and dropping courses. The code "Audit" will be recorded on the transcript. To audit a course, download and complete the [course request form](#), obtain the approval of the instructor, and submit the form to the Civil Engineering Front Desk to obtain the approval of the graduate program advisor.

### Seminar Course CIVL 597

All graduate students are required to attend the CIVL 597 seminars for the duration of their degree program. There are different seminars for the different specializations in Civil Engineering:

Course	Section	Specialty
CIVL 597	002	Hydrotechnical
CIVL 597	003	Environmental
CIVL 597	004	Structural & Earthquake
CIVL 597	005	Project & Construction Management
CIVL 597	006	Transportation
CIVL 597	007	Geotechnical
CIVL 597	008	Materials

Please register for the appropriate section of CIVL 597 ONLY ONCE, but attend the seminars throughout your whole program.

## Academic Integrity, Attribution

The academic enterprise is founded on honesty, civility, and integrity. As members of this enterprise, all students are expected to know, understand, and follow the codes of conduct regarding academic integrity. At the most basic level, this means submitting only original work done by you and acknowledging all sources of information or ideas and attributing them to others as required. This also means you should not cheat, copy, or mislead others about what is your work. Violations of academic integrity, i.e., misconduct, lead to the breakdown of the academic enterprise, and therefore serious consequences arise and harsh sanctions are imposed. For example, incidences of plagiarism or cheating may result in a mark of zero on the assignment or exam and more serious consequences may apply if the matter is referred to the President's Advisory Committee on Student Discipline. Careful records are kept in order to monitor and prevent recurrences.

The above paragraph, which is the formulation included in many course outlines, should be carefully studied also by our diverse group of graduate students. If there were informal practices in your education elsewhere that violated any of the above principles then be particularly aware to avoid discipline for academic conduct. **Never copy or reformulate any part of any work without providing a citation to that work.** As it says [here](#), all work submitted by students (including, without limitation, essays, dissertations, theses, examinations, tests, reports, presentations, problem sets, and tutorial assignments) may be subjected to review by the University for authenticity and originality. The University may use software tools and third party services including Internet-based services such as Turnitin. By submitting work, you consent to your work undergoing such review and being retained in a database for comparison with other work submitted by students.

Remember, you are responsible for understanding the policies in the UBC Academic Calendar. Please carefully study Section 2 on Academic Misconduct [here](#) to make sure you are aware of this important issue.

## Student-Supervisor Expectations

If you are enrolled in the MASc or PhD program you will sooner or later select a research supervisor who will guide you through the program. Depending on your specialization, as an MASc student it is not unusual that you are admitted without an assigned supervisor. The student-supervisor relationship is sometimes established only after more than one term in the program. The same may be the case for PhD students, but more often a PhD student will have an assigned supervisor from the program start date. If you have been enrolled in our program for two terms and you still do not have a research supervisor then please contact the graduate program advisor immediately.

Prior to selecting a research supervisor we encourage all MASc and PhD students to visit as many professors as possible, to learn about the different research topics and supervision styles. Some students will be paid a Graduate Research Assistantship, others not, and the amounts vary. Once the student-supervisor relationship is established that is a commitment that should be taken seriously by both parties.

We are grateful that you have brought your skills and inspiration to UBC, and we are well aware that good research happens when the graduate student maintains that joy and inspiration. For that reason we think it might be useful to review and discuss the following tentative expectations, which could help both you and your supervisor. These lists and more information are available [here](#). Remember, these lists are little else than words on a page until you discuss them with your supervisor.

### Suggested Graduate Student Expectations of Supervisor

- Demonstrate commitment to research and educational program, and offer stimulation, respectful support, constructive criticism, and consistent encouragement.
- Assist with identification of a research topic that is suitable for and manageable within the scope of degree.
- Have sufficient familiarity with field of research to provide guidance as a supervisor.
- Assist in gaining access to required facilities or research materials for projects.
- Discuss financial support issues and assist with scholarship applications and/or provide advice on academic employment opportunities.
- Provide guidance in the ethical conduct of research and model research integrity.
- Discuss the implications of engaging with activities/work unrelated to thesis topic.
- Provide information about availability for meetings and expectations about preparation for meetings.
- Assist in planning research program, setting a time frame, and adhering as much as possible to the schedule.

- Encourage finishing up when it would not be in best interest to stay longer.
- Be accessible for consultation and discussion of academic progress and research at a minimum of once a term.
- Minimize expectations for activities/work that may interfere with thesis completion.
- Institute a supervisory committee (with appropriate input from student) and prepare for committee meetings, which will occur on a regular basis (at least once a year) to review your progress and provide guidance for your future work.
- Act as a resource about managing program requirements, deadlines, etc.
- Attend presentations in appropriate venues and join in associated discussion.
- Submit recommendations for external examiners and university examiners for the doctoral dissertation within the time frames required by the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.
- Acknowledge student contributions, when appropriate, in published material and oral presentations in accordance with good scholarly practice and the University of British Columbia scholarly integrity policies.
- Provide reasonable expectations about work day hours and vacation time in accordance with University of British Columbia policies.
- Clarify preferred style of communication with students about areas, such as student independence, approaches to conflict, direct questioning, and mentoring.
- Explain expectations for mode of address, professional behaviour (e.g. punctuality), when to seek assistance, response to constructive criticism, and academic performance expectations.
- Assist in overcoming any cultural difficulties with norms and expectations.
- Respond thoroughly (with constructive suggestions for improvement) and in a timely fashion to submitted, written work.
- Promote a research environment that is safe and free from harassment.
- Assist in managing conflict or differences among members of the supervisory committee.
- Make arrangements to ensure adequate supervision if absent for extended periods, e.g. more than a month.
- Encourage presenting research results within and outside the University.
- Provide mentoring in academic writing.
- Provide advice and mentorship with respect to career opportunities, which may be assisted by resources, skills, professional development, and other avenues.

### **Suggested Supervisor Expectations of Graduate Student**

- Take responsibility personal progress towards degree completion.
- Demonstrate commitment and dedication in gaining the necessary background knowledge and skills to carry out the thesis.



- At all times, demonstrate research integrity and conduct research in an ethical manner in accordance with University of British Columbia policies and the policies or other requirements of any organizations funding my research.
- In conjunction with Supervisor, develop a plan and a timetable for completion of each stage of the thesis project.
- As applicable, apply to the University or granting agencies for financial awards or other necessary resources for the research.
- Meet standards and deadlines of the funding organization for a scholarship or grant.
- Adhere to negotiated schedules and meet appropriate deadlines.
- Keep Supervisor and the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies informed about current contact information.
- Meet and correspond with Supervisor when requested within specified time frames.
- Report fully and regularly on progress and results.
- Maintain registration and ensure any required permits or authorizations are kept up to date until the program is completed.
- Be thoughtful and reasonably frugal in using resources.
- Behave in a respectful manner with peers and colleagues
- Conform to the University and departmental/school requirements for degree program.
- Meet at regular intervals with supervisory committee (no less than yearly).
- Keep orderly records of research activities.
- Develop a clear understanding concerning ownership of intellectual property and scholarly integrity (refer to UBC policy on Patents and Licensing, and the scholarly integrity policy 85, and the University Industry Liaison Office).
- Take any required training programs that are discussed and agreed.
- Work at least regular workday hours on research project after course-work has been completed.
- Discuss, with Supervisor, the policy on use of computers and equipment.
- Complete thesis and course work within timelines specified by the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies and suitable for discipline.
- Finish work and clear up my workspace when program requirements have been completed.
- Return any borrowed materials on project completion or when requested.
- Explain to Supervisor comfort with modes of communication (e.g. formal or informal, use of questioning) and independent activities.
- Describe comfort with approaches to academic relationship, e.g. professional versus personal.
- Contribute to a safe workplace where each individual shows tolerance and respect for the rights of others.
- Respond respectfully to advice and criticisms (indicating acceptance or rationale for rejection) received from Supervisor and members of supervisory committee.

## Leaves & Extensions

Students who need to interrupt their graduate studies may apply for a leave of absence. Leave is granted when a student is best advised for personal, health, or other reasons to have time completely away from their academic responsibilities. Leave, not including parental leave or leave to pursue concurrent programs, is limited to one year for Master's students and 2 years for PhD students. A leave will normally begin on the first day of a term, for a period of four, eight, or twelve months.

Students granted leave-of-absence or parental leave retain the full value of any university graduate fellowship or other award whose terms and conditions are established by G+PS. Awards will be suspended at the onset of the leave and reinstated at the termination of the leave period, provided the student returns to full-time study at that time. Other awards will be paid according to the conditions established by the donor or granting agency.

Both the department and G+PS must approve all leaves of absence, and requests for leaves for medical reasons must be accompanied by a doctor's note recommending the leave. It is understood that students with on-leave status will not undertake any academic or research work, or use any of the University's facilities during the period of leave. Students must inform the University immediately upon return. Building access requests during leaves will be denied.

The time spent on leave is not counted as part of the allowed time for completion of the degree. On-leave students continue to be registered and must pay a reduced fee for the leave period.

### Parental Leave

A graduate student who is bearing a child or who has primary responsibility for the care of an infant or young child is eligible for parental leave. Students are permitted to leave for a minimum of 4 months to a maximum of 12 months. Where possible, students enrolled in course world should coordinate their leave to coincide with the beginning of an academic term.

### Extension

Extenuating circumstances not of the student's making may justify allowing the student additional time to complete their degree program. A request for a one-year extension must be fully justified and supported by the student's Supervisor. A second year's extension requires a compelling rationale from the student's Supervisor and an explanation of the special circumstances that would justify the exception. All extension requests must be made through the department by emailing [gradsupport@civil.ubc.ca](mailto:gradsupport@civil.ubc.ca) and must include a schedule showing how the thesis will be completed in the period requested. Extensions will not be granted beyond two years.

## **Administrative Matters**

### **Student Mailboxes**

Student mail is delivered to the Student Mail Slots, sorted by the first letter of the last name, located in CEME 1007. Any mail received for students who have completed their programs will be returned to sender.

### **Desk Requests**

Desks are allocated to PhD and MASc students only. The Department strives to provide new PhD. students with a desk by no later than the end of the first term that they are here, and for MASc. students, no later than the end of the second term they are here. The availability of desks is dependent on previous students completing their thesis work in a timely way.

If a PhD or MASc student is absent for more than 3 consecutive months, any desk assigned to the student will be reassigned. Desks are grouped in areas of specialization; therefore, priority is given to students in that group area. If you are allocated a desk outside your specialization group, you should be prepared to move to your group space once a desk becomes available.

Desk allocations will commence during the last week of September. There is normally a waitlist, so be sure to make your request for a desk as soon as possible by filling out a Desk Request Form and submitting it to the Graduate Student Support office.

### **Key Requests**

Please complete and submit a Key Request Form in order to obtain keys to a building entrance, or study desk room. Your supervisor's approval is required. It will take a minimum of 48 hours to process your key request form and you will be notified by email when it is ready. A \$50 deposit is required by the Department and a \$20 deposit by Parking & Security. The deposit is refundable upon the return of the keys.

### **Graduate Student Database**

Please complete and submit a Graduate Student Data form with your new contact information. If you change your address/email address at any time, please inform the Graduate Student Support office by submitting a Graduate Student Data form with your new information.

### **Proof of Enrolment Letters**

Proof of Enrolment letters are available for students to download through the Student Service Centre.

## **Salary Verification, Record of Employment, or Statement of Earnings Letters**

These letters can be obtained through the UBC Finance Payroll [website](#). There you may download and complete a Request for Information Form and submit it to the UBC Financial Services Department, 305-2075 Wesbrook Mall. It takes 2-5 business days depending on the type of letter you are requesting.

## **Departmental Letters**

In the case where a departmental letter is required, a Letter Request Form must be completed then submitted to the Graduate Student Support office. Note: we will only verify current employment earnings information for Visa Renewal purposes. You will be contacted by email when the letter is ready for pick up. For all other Student Administrative Forms, please visit our [forms page](#).

## **Study Permits**

Do not forget that if you renew your study permit, you must also renew your MSP and SIN. You should apply for a new study permit 60-90 days before it expires.

## **Health, Safety & Environment (HSE)**

All students must complete the training available on the Civil Engineering website: 1) Department Safety Orientation and 2) Workplace Bullying and Harassment Training.

## **Health and Dental Plans**

iMED is a temporary basic health insurance plan required for new international students, and will provide you with health insurance coverage during the three month waiting period for BC's Medical Services Plan (MSP)

iMED is provided at a low cost for the three-month waiting period before you qualify for the BC Medical Services Plan (MSP) or for the duration of your study term if you are a one-term exchange student. Once you register for your first class, the iMED fee will be assessed to your student account and you will be covered from the coverage starting date for the term you register. An email from UBC will be sent to you about iMED coverage. For more information, visit: iMED: Temporary Health Insurance for International Students.

## **BC Medical Services Plan (MSP)**

MSP is BC's provincial health insurance plan. Anyone living in BC for six months or longer, including international students, is required by law to enrol in MSP and pay the plan's premiums. Apply for MSP as soon as you arrive in BC. Application forms are available on the MSP website, at the International House, at UBC Student Health Services, the AMS/GSS Health & Dental Plan, and the Student Health Plan. It is important that you have extended health and dental coverage while you are in Canada. All UBC students (domestic and international) who pay AMS fees are automatically enrolled in the AMS/GSS Health & Dental Plan. To verify that you are enrolled, check your fees online and look for the "Med/dent fee".

NOTE: This plan does not replace basic MSP (or an equivalent plan). To be eligible for all aspects of the AMS/GSS Health & Dental Plan, you must first be covered by MSP or iMED (or have equivalent coverage purchased in Canada).

### **UPass, Compass Card**

U-Pass BC provides unlimited bus, SeaBus, SkyTrain, and Canada Line transit services within Metro Vancouver, as well as discounts on West Coast Express. All eligible students at UBC's Vancouver campus have access to the U-Pass BC program. You can load your U-Pass BC onto an adult-class Compass Card, which are available from any SkyTrain Station and TransLink Fare Dealers including the UBC Bookstore. The U-Pass BC program currently costs \$39.50 per month and is assessed as part of your student fees. Students at UBC's Vancouver campus, Vancouver School of Theology, St. Mark's/Corpus Christi, and Regent College are eligible for the UPass if they are: registered in full-time or part-time studies with a minimum of three credits, or assessed tuition fees of more than \$170/month; fee-paying members of the AMS.

### **Department Policy on Student Insurance**

All students in the Department of Civil Engineering should have the following insurance coverage provided by external agencies:

- British Columbia Medical Services Plan (basic health insurance)
- AMS/GSS Healthplan (prescription drugs, travel health coverage, vision care, psychologist, dental benefits and more).

Students who travel to study or work sites off-campus may be asked by the owners of these sites to have Workers Compensation Board (WCB) coverage. Anyone who has income processed through UBC Payroll is considered to be a UBC employee and should have WCB coverage. Employees generally include full-time, part-time, sessional or casual workers and graduate and undergraduate teaching/research assistants (when they are performing their duties as teaching/research assistants). Coverage can be verified from paystubs or account ledgers, which show WCB deductions.

As an alternative to WCB, or for other reasons UBC provides the opportunity for students to purchase Student Accident Insurance at a cost of \$7/student/year. This is a defined benefits plan that is in effect "only during the involvement of the student in course work. The plan does not provide 24 hour coverage".

Student Accident Insurance is not mandatory. The Department of Civil Engineering does not provide Student Accident Insurance coverage on behalf of students. Students who wish to purchase Student Accident Insurance may do so by paying the applicable premium to the Department Finance Office. Collected premiums will be forwarded to UBC Treasury along with the purchaser's complete name, student number and department. Students may be required to obtain verification from a course instructor that an insured activity will be, or was, performed as coursework.

## Finance Matters

### Expense Reimbursement Requests

There are three types of reimbursement requests: 1) Travel expenses, 2) General expenses, and 3) Petty Cash (claims under \$50). A petty cash payment request/order form or travel [expense claim form](#) must be completed (whichever is applicable). The form must have all ORIGINAL, ITEMIZED receipts/invoices attached. Credit/Debit Card Machine receipts alone are insufficient. If the receipt is not available, please fill out the missing receipt memorandum. The Supervisor must approve the forms and a Speedchart must be provided before it can be processed. Reimbursement may take up to 4-8 weeks for processing. If the reimbursement has not been received within 6 weeks, please contact the Finance Office for follow up or call 604-822-0662 to book an appointment or speak with a Department representative.

### Student Appointments

There are different types of appointments and you should discuss the applicable category with your supervisor and or course instructor once he/she has committed to pay you:

- Graduate Research Assistantships
- Graduate Academic Assistantships
- Teaching Assistantships
- Marker positions

Offer letter packages will be distributed to the students for teaching assistantship and marker positions. These packages are to be completed and returned to the Front Desk for processing by Graduate Support. Research and academic assistantship appointments are given to the finance clerk for processing. In order to complete the process, copies of valid work/study permits and social insurance numbers are to be submitted to the finance office as soon as possible.

A safety training record is also included with and required for all appointments. Please complete this form with your supervisor. An email will be sent to the student from the Finance Clerk confirming the process of their student appointment and providing Employee ID and CWL pin if this is your first appointment.

Paper copies of the pay information are not available. You can access this information via the employee [self service page](#). The Employee ID and CWL pin will be needed the first time you log in. Please see the UBC Finance payroll [website](#) for further information.

### Receiving Pay

The student should set up Direct Deposit for their bank account. A direct deposit form must be filled out by the student and submitted to UBC Payroll. If Direct

Deposit is not set up the pay cheque will be available at the UBC Finance office for pickup. Picture ID will be required to pick up the cheque. Cheques will be available for pickup in the afternoon of the cheque cycle (15th & end of every month). Questions regarding pay can be directed to the department finance office at [res-accounts@civil.ubc.ca](mailto:res-accounts@civil.ubc.ca) or [gen-accounts@civil.ubc.ca](mailto:gen-accounts@civil.ubc.ca).

### **Note to International Students**

In order to work in Canada you must obtain a nine-digit Social Insurance Number (SIN) through Service Canada. SIN applications can be mailed to Service Canada, or you can apply in person at your nearest Service Canada Centre. The receipt provided to you will have your SIN number and this can be used for payroll. Once you have obtained a SIN, you will need to submit a copy of your Study Permit and your SIN to the Finance Office at the Department of Civil Engineering.

### **Key Deposit Refunds**

The Civil Engineering Front Desk processes key requests. A refundable cash deposit of \$50 must be provided at the time of request. When the key is no longer needed the key must be returned to the UBC Parking and Access Control Services in the bookstore. The office clerk will provide a receipt indicating that the key(s) have been returned. The student will provide the receipt from Parking and Access to the Finance Clerk for the refund of the department key deposit. The student will be asked to sign the receipt again showing proof that the deposit has been returned.



## Mental Health and Wellbeing

Graduate studies can be fun, but it can also be stressful at times. Overcoming stressful situations often makes us stronger, but we often need advice and assistance to get through it. If you are struggling, please do not suffer alone. Starting with faculty and staff within the department, but including several offices on the UBC campus, there are many resources available to you. You could start by discussing your situation with the graduate program advisor. If you are more comfortable going outside the department to discuss your state of mind then you may find [this website](#) a good starting point. From there you can talk to a counsellor, visit a doctor, and get support from your peers.

If you are concerned about a fellow students you can either talk to the graduate program advisor or visit [this webpage](#) for information about how to help and how to obtain support from UBC professionals or your peers.



## Graduate Student Societies

### **Civil Engineering Graduate Student Society**

CEGSS is the Civil Engineering chapter of the UBC Graduate Student Society. This is the student-run group representing all graduate students in the Civil Engineering Department. It is a vibrant and active organization that arranges social and sporting events and provides a forum for graduate student issues all year round. The CEGSS also maintains copying and printing services. You will find more information [here](#) and you can direct inquiries to [president@cegss.ca](mailto:president@cegss.ca).

The parent organization, GSS, represents and advocates on behalf of all UBC Graduate Students to the University, the Government, and the public. They provide academic, professional, social, and recreational services to their members and act as stewards of the Thea Koerner House Graduate Student Centre. GSS is the organisation that advocates for and protects the interests of graduate students at UBC; supports graduate students in their studies or facing academic problems; organises social, sport, and recreational events; publishes The Graduate Magazine monthly and the annual Graduate Student Handbook; operates the Thea Koerner House Graduate Student Centre, including Koerner's Pub, Thea's Lounge, and more. For more information contact: [president@gss.ubc.ca](mailto:president@gss.ubc.ca).

### **CSCE Student Chapter**

The UBC chapter of the Canadian Society for Civil Engineering (UBC CSCE) is a student group with a passion for civil engineering. Nationally, the CSCE is a learned society created to develop and maintain high standards of civil engineering practice in Canada and to enhance the public image of the civil engineering profession. UBC CSCE is run by student volunteers who are committed to connecting the student experience to industry through many different facets. Many of the events put on by UBC CSCE not only allow students to meet with industry and establish contacts for future employment prospects, but also provide unique and genuine opportunities to learn and understand many aspects of civil engineering that would not normally be explored inside a classroom. Some of these events are listed below. If you are interesting in joining the UBC CSCE Student Chapter, or have any other questions or comments, please contact [ubc.csce@gmail.com](mailto:ubc.csce@gmail.com). You can also visit our [website](#) or the ubccsce Facebook page.

### **UBC Student Chapter of ITE**

The objective of the UBC Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Student Chapter is to provide civil engineering students with an understanding of the field of transportation engineering, and the career opportunities in the field that are available to them. If you are interesting in joining UBC ITE (first year membership is free), or have any other questions or comments, please contact [president@ubcite.org](mailto:president@ubcite.org).

## Travel Funds

Graduate students are eligible for reimbursement from the Graduate Student Travel Fund once per degree program. The Travel Fund provides travel support to a maximum of \$500 per graduate student. To be eligible for the Travel Fund:

- Students must be registered in a graduate program administered by G+PS.
- Students must present a paper or poster at an official conference or symposium (student workshops are ineligible), participate in a music competition, or perform by invitation at a music professional conference
- The conference or competition must take place while the student is enrolled full-time in a graduate degree program. Students on official on-leave status are not enrolled full-time. Full-time enrolment ceases at the end of the month when all degree requirements are completed, not at the time of convocation
- Only one student may receive travel funding per paper / poster / performance. In cases where there are multiple presenters of a co-authored paper or poster, the student who made the greatest contribution to the paper or poster should apply to Graduate Travel Award funding.
- Students must not have previously received the travel award during the same degree program.

## Safety Abroad

UBC is a global university with internationalization as one of the core elements of its mission, and an increasing number of students undertake international travel for the purpose of study, research, work, volunteer and service learning as part of the UBC experience. Such activities can expose students to certain health and safety risks. UBC's Student Safety Abroad Program supports safe experiences abroad. The Program is based on the requirements outlined in UBC's Student Safety Abroad Policy. This is done by offering advice for assessing and mitigating risks, making it easier for UBC to assist you if you encounter critical incidents, if you're intending to go to locations with increased travel warnings, offering a clear and simple process for adjudicating your travel proposals, if you're intending to go to locations with increased travel warnings, providing tools to prepare you for regional hazards.

The policy applies to you if you're traveling outside of Canada for university activity, including conferences, research, volunteering, service learning, varsity sports, and studying abroad. In most cases, you will be travelling to regions where all you will need to do is register your travel details, emergency contacts, and review pre- departure materials to prepare you for a safe journey. If you're traveling to a location with an increased travel warning, you will need to get permission to travel and undertake additional preparation for risks associated with your location.

## Funding

Graduate studies at prestigious North-American universities can be expensive, and beautiful Vancouver has a relatively high cost of living. Hence, it is important that you start making a financial plan now, unless you have one already. UBC expects you to assume primary responsibility for covering the cost of your education. For more information on helping you to prepare for costs of tuition, housing, meal plans, and textbooks you can visit [this page](#). Note that fees, including tuition, program, course, special, and student society fees, are approved by the Board of Governors following consultation with students and are subject to change.

### Sources of Funding for MAsc/PhD students in Civil Engineering

There are a number of strategies available for students to help fund their graduate studies in Civil Engineering. These options include scholarships and awards for our strong academic students, various grants, fellowships and degree-related student employment. Graduate students are encouraged to apply for external awards, such as Tri-Agency funding. Please visit our [Funding](#) page to explore the awards, grants, fellowships and graduate student employment available to Civil Engineering graduate students. The funding sources include:

- Graduate research assistantships (GRA)
- Four-year fellowships (4YF)
- NSERC Awards (MAsc and PhD)
- Affiliated awards (PhD)
- Vanier scholarships (PhD)
- Top-ups
- GSI merit awards
- Teaching assistantships (TA)

## Graduation Procedures

When you approach your graduation, please do not forget to attend the Graduation Ceremony, which takes place twice a year at the Chan Centre. The ceremony in May is the one attended by most. Attendance is not mandatory but highly recommended; it will show you an additional aspect of academic life and give you a sense of the proud traditions you have been part of in the academic community. If your graduation does not exactly match the date of a graduation ceremony then please consider coming back to campus for the next one; it will be worth it to celebrate this occasion with your mentors and peers.

### MEng

Upon completing the program requirements, a MEng candidate must apply for graduation by submitting an application through the Student Service Centre. Please inform the Graduate Support staff in Civil Engineering.

### MASc

Typically the coursework is completed during the first half of your degree program; hence, it is the completion of the MASc thesis that stands between you and graduation. Please remember that your thesis submission is not complete and you will not be eligible to graduate until your thesis has been approved by G+PS. When your thesis meets all University requirements, it will be added to the UBC Library's cIRcle Institutional Repository. Please make sure that the thesis you submit is complete and accurate; you cannot re-submit an updated or changed thesis at a later date. Upon completing the program requirements, a MASc candidate must apply for graduation by submitting an Application for Graduation through the Student Service Centre. Please inform the Graduate Support staff in Civil Engineering.

### PhD

Upon a successful defence of the dissertation, the final approved copy of the dissertation must be submitted to G+PS. It will be added to the UBC Library's cIRcle Institutional Repository. Please make sure that the dissertation you submit is complete and accurate; you cannot re-submit an updated or changed dissertation at a later date. The Ph.D candidate must apply for graduation by submitting an application through the Student Service Centre. Immediately thereafter, please inform the Graduate Support staff in Civil Engineering.

### General

- If you would like your thesis to be delayed from publication, you must obtain approval from G+PS before submitting the thesis.
- Students are responsible for ensuring that their program registration is complete, that all fees have been paid, and that they meet all course requirements for the degree and program. If you have any questions then please contact [gradsupport@civil.ubc.ca](mailto:gradsupport@civil.ubc.ca) or the graduate program advisor.