



# UBC Civil Engineering Graduate Student Handbook

2020-2021



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA  
Civil Engineering

[CIVIL.UBC.CA](http://CIVIL.UBC.CA)

## WELCOME

On behalf of all faculty and staff in the Department of Civil Engineering at UBC, I welcome you to the 2020/21 academic year. This handbook is directed to incoming and continuing graduate students in the Department. We are especially pleased to be joined by an incoming cohort of bright and motivated students from around the world. Each year, we review over 600 applications from over 50 countries, and are only able to admit a small fraction of these – your admission to one of our graduate programs is a major accomplishment that you should be proud of. Currently, there are approximately 128 MEng, 68 MASc, and 70 PhD students enrolled in our graduate programs.

As you review program policies and procedures, bear in mind that the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (G+PS) is responsible for the MASc and PhD degrees, whereas the Department of Civil Engineering is directly responsible for the MEng degree. That is, for many policy and progression issues relating to MASc and PhD students, the Department make recommendations and G+PS gives final approvals; whereas corresponding issues relating to MEng students are addressed by the Department directly.

This handbook summarizes the most important information that a Civil Engineering graduate student needs to know – with much of the information already available through a range of websites. The handbook begins with Key Reference Information (Section 1) – contacts within the Department and a calendar of dates and deadlines relevant to our graduate students. The next part of the handbook relates to the academic programs and research, with information relating to Program Requirements (Section 2), Coursework (Section 3), Student Status, Leaves of Absence and Extensions (Section 4), Research and Theses (Section 5) and Graduation Procedures (Section 6). The final part of the handbook refers to student support and the student environment, with information relating to Financial Support (Section 7), Health and Safety (Section 8), Department Support and Administration (Section 9), and, finally, Student Organizations (Section 10).

Your first academic assignment is to select courses. We suggest that you begin by reviewing the various program and specialization coursework requirements, then develop a draft coursework plan and discuss this with your Specialty Advisor (or Research Supervisor, if known). It is common to explore courses during the first two weeks of each term, but make sure to drop courses before the relevant deadline in order to avoid a W ("Withdrawn") appearing on your transcript.

I hope you find this handbook a useful resource, and I wish you every success in your program in Civil Engineering at UBC.

Professor **Mahdi Taiebat**  
*Associate Head and Graduate Advisor*

## CAVEAT

This Graduate Student Handbook is intended to provide general information and advice for graduate students in the Civil Engineering Department at UBC. It does not represent a formal statement of program requirements or of any other policies or regulations relevant to graduate students. Rather, formal statements relating to policies, regulations and requirements are provided in the University Calendar and within specific webpages of the Faculty of Graduate and Postgraduate Studies and the Department of Civil Engineering.

*Note: this version of the handbook was issued on 9/8/2020*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
1. KEY REFERENCE INFORMATION.....	1
1.1 Faculty and Staff Contacts.....	1
1.2 Dates and Deadlines.....	4
2. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.....	5
2.1 Program Summaries.....	5
2.2 Program Requirements.....	5
2.3 Specialization Requirements.....	6
3. COURSEWORK.....	7
3.1 Course Planning and Selection.....	7
3.2 Course Registration.....	7
3.3 Auditing Courses.....	7
3.4 Transfer Credits and Credit Exemptions.....	7
3.5 CIVL 597.....	8
3.6 Examinations.....	8
4. STUDENT STATUS, LEAVES AND EXTENSIONS.....	10
4.1 Student Status.....	10
4.2 Program Duration.....	10
4.3 Typical Progress.....	10
4.4 Leaves and Extensions.....	10
4.5 Transfers Between Programs.....	11
4.6 Academic Progress.....	12
5. RESEARCH AND THESES.....	13

5.1	Research Supervisor .....	13
5.2	Supervisory Committee.....	13
5.3	MASc Thesis Preparation and Completion.....	13
5.4	PhD Thesis Preparation and Completion.....	14
5.5	Academic Integrity.....	15
5.6	Supervisor-Student Relationship.....	16
6.	GRADUATION PROCEDURES .....	17
6.1	MASc Thesis Completion and Submission.....	17
6.2	PhD Thesis Completion and Submission.....	17
6.3	Degree Application.....	18
6.4	Graduation Ceremonies .....	18
7.	FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND EXPENSES .....	19
7.1	Personal Budget.....	19
7.2	Funding Sources.....	19
7.3	Employment Opportunities.....	20
7.4	Student Fees.....	20
7.5	Research and Travel Expenses.....	20
7.6	Graduate Student Travel Fund .....	20
8.	HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING .....	22
8.1	Safety Training and Assessments.....	22
8.2	Department Safety Practices.....	24
8.3	Health and Safety at UBC .....	26
8.4	Safety Abroad .....	27
8.5	Mental Health and Wellbeing.....	27
8.6	Assuring a Safe and Respectful Environment.....	28

9.	DEPARTMENT SUPPORT AND ADMINISTRATION .....	29
9.1	Mailboxes, Desks and Keys.....	29
9.2	Appointments and Payments.....	30
9.3	Document Requests .....	31
9.4	Health and Insurance Coverage.....	32
9.5	UPass and Compass Cards .....	33
10.	STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS.....	34
10.1	Civil Engineering Graduate Student Society.....	34
10.2	Graduate Student Society .....	34

# 1. KEY REFERENCE INFORMATION

## 1.1 Faculty and Staff Contacts

During your time in the Department, you may need to have contact with a range of Department faculty members and staff members. Relevant information on the roles and contacts is given below with respect to the Department's leadership, the Specialty Advisors and support staff.

### Program Leadership

The faculty members leading various aspects of our graduate programs are indicated below:

Position	Name	e-mail	Role / contact
Department Head	Dr. Bernard Laval	blaval@civil.ubc.ca	[Not normally contacted by graduate students]
Graduate Advisor	Dr. Taiebat	taiebat@civil.ubc.ca	*Leads development of policies and procedures; consulted by Specialty Advisors; liaison with the Civil Engineering Graduate Student Society; resolves individual student issues as necessary; approves or recommends to G+PS as necessary all aspects of individual student progression
Specialty Advisors	[See below]		

\*Note: If the Graduate Advisor's signature is needed, please do not see or e-mail Dr. Taiebat, but instead e-mail the material to [gradsupport@civil.ubc.ca](mailto:gradsupport@civil.ubc.ca) for processing. If you wish to meet with Dr. Taiebat, please e-mail him in the first instance with a summary of the matter you wish to raise.

### Specialty Advisors

All graduate students complete their programs within one of nine specializations, each with different coursework requirements and each one led by a Specialty Advisor. The Specialty Advisor (or your Research Supervisor if known) is your primary contact for advice on course selection. The Specialty Advisors for the nine specialization areas are listed in the following table.

Specialization	Specialty Advisor	Room No.	e-mail
Civil Engineering Materials	Dr. Nemkumar Banthia	2024	banthia@civil.ubc.ca
Environmental Fluid Mechanics	Dr. Greg Lawrence	2030	lawrence@civil.ubc.ca
Environmental Systems Engineering	Dr. Pierre Berube	2034	berube@civil.ubc.ca
Geo-Environmental Engineering	Dr. Loretta Li	2027	lli@civil.ubc.ca
Geotechnical Engineering	Dr. Jonathan Fannin	2032	fannin@civil.ubc.ca
Hydrotechnical Engineering	Dr. Barbara Lence	2012	lence@civil.ubc.ca
Project & Construction Management	Dr. Omar Swei	2004C	oaswei@civil.ubc.ca
Structural & Earthquake Engineering	Dr. Terje Haukaas	2014	terje@civil.ubc.ca
Transportation Engineering	Dr. Tarek Sayed	2026	tsayed@civil.ubc.ca

### Support Staff

The members of staff responsible for various aspects of our graduate programs are indicated below:



Position	Name	e-mail	Role / contact
Manager Student Services	Chris Gorczynski	managerstudentservices@civil.ubc.ca	Overall staff responsibility for graduate programs. [Not normally contacted by graduate students.]
Graduate Student Support	Kevin Veltheer	gradsupport@civil.ubc.ca	<b>Primary staff contact</b> for most aspects of an individual student's progression
Undergraduate Student Support	Kali Dumbrell	undergradsupport@civil.ubc.ca	Back-up to Graduate Student Support
Front Desk*	Claire Wei	info@civil.ubc.ca	Mail, keys and desks
Finance Office	May Liu	res-accounts@civil.ubc.ca	Appointments & expenses re. research accounts (e.g. GRA's)
	Helen Yau	gen-accounts@civil.ubc.ca	Appointments & expenses re. Department accounts (e.g. TA's)
Workshop Supervisor	Doug Hudniuk	dhudniuk@civil.ubc.ca	Access to and activities within the workshop and laboratories
Manager of Safety & Research Facilities	Scott Jackson	scottj@civil.ubc.ca	Safety training; safety issues

\* Hours: 8:30am - 12:00pm PST and 1:00pm - 4:00pm PST (during normal operations) - available virtually during these times as well.

## 1.2 Dates and Deadlines

The table below provides some of the key dates and deadlines in 2020-2021 as relevant to graduate students. Additional dates and deadlines are provided in the [University Calendar](#) and on the G+PS [deadlines](#) website.

Date	Event / deadline
9/8/2020	First day of lectures for graduate courses in Term 1
9/10/2020	Orientation session for new graduate students
9/11/2019	Deadline for applications to graduate in November
9/21/2020	Last day to drop courses <b>without</b> a W standing, Term 1
10/12/2020	Thanksgiving Day, University closed
10/30/2020	Last day to drop courses <b>with</b> a W standing, Term 1
11/11/2020	University closed in lieu of Remembrance Day
Nov 25 - 27	Graduation ceremonies at the Chan Centre
12/3/2020	Last day of lectures, Term 1
Dec 7 - 22	Examination period, Term 1
1/4/2021	First day of lectures, Term 2
1/15/2021	Last day to drop courses <b>without</b> a W standing, Term 2
2/15/2021	Family Day, University closed
Feb 15 - 19	Mid-term break, no scheduled classes
2/21/2021	Deadline for application to graduate in May
3/5/2021	Last day to drop courses <b>with</b> a W standing, Term 2
4/2/2021	Good Friday, University closed
4/5/2021	Easter Monday, University closed
4/8/2021	Last day of lectures, Term 2
Apr 12 - 27	Examination period, Term 2
5/18/2021	Victoria Day, University closed
May 20 - 30	Graduation ceremonies at the Chan Centre

## 2. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

### 2.1 Program Summaries

**MEng.** The *Master of Engineering in Civil Engineering* (MEng) program is a non-thesis, course-based graduate program in Civil Engineering. The program requires completion of at least 30 credits of coursework beyond the Bachelor's degree, subject to various constraints and requirements.

**MASc.** The *Master of Applied Science in Civil Engineering* (MASc) program is a research-based thesis graduate program in Civil Engineering. The program requires completion of at least 30 credits, including at least 18 credits of coursework beyond the Bachelor's degree, subject to various constraints and requirements, and completion of a 12-credit MASc thesis under the supervision of a faculty member.

**PhD.** The *Doctor of Philosophy in Civil Engineering* (PhD) program is an advanced research-based program for students who wish to pursue a program of independent research. Normally, students will have completed a Master's degree prior to admission into the PhD program. The program requires at least 30 credits of coursework beyond the Bachelor's degree, subject to various constraints and requirements, as well as the successful completion of a PhD thesis. In order to complete the thesis, PhD students are required to complete successfully a Comprehensive Examination, a Proposal Defence, and, eventually, a formal Thesis Examination.

### 2.2 Program Requirements

The Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (G+PS) is responsible for the MASc and PhD programs, and its policies and regulations apply to these programs. Students should review and be aware of the relevant policies, regulations and administrative requirements as may be relevant. A summary is given in the University Calendar (see [Academic Regulations](#)). Additional information is available through the [G+PS website](#). The Department of Civil Engineering is solely responsible for the MEng program, and as well for specific aspects of the MASc and PhD programs.

All students should also be aware of the relevant campus-wide [Policies and Regulations](#) within the University Calendar, including the [Statement on Academic Freedom](#). They should also be aware of the relevant [University Policies](#), giving particular attention to: [Policy 85 - Scholarly Integrity](#); [Policy 87 - Research](#); [Policy 88 - Patents and Licensing](#); and [Policy 97 - Conflict of Interest and Conflict of Commitment](#).

G+PS requirements for completing the MASc and PhD programs are specified [here](#) and through related links. The Department's requirements for completing the MEng, MASc and PhD programs are specified as follows:

- Department [MEng Requirements](#)

- Department [MAsc Requirements](#)
- Department [PhD Requirements](#)

## 2.3 Specialization Requirements

The Department offers its graduate programs in the following nine areas of specialization:

- Civil Engineering Materials
- Environmental Fluid Mechanics
- Environmental Systems Engineering
- Geo-Environmental Engineering
- Geotechnical Engineering
- Hydrotechnical Engineering
- Project & Construction Management
- Structural & Earthquake Engineering
- Transportation Engineering

The MAsc and PhD programs are offered in all nine specializations. The MEng program is offered in all but Civil Engineering Materials, Environmental Fluid Mechanics and Geo-Environmental Engineering.

Each of the nine specializations has a set of coursework requirements as specified through the [Specializations](#) webpages.

## 3. COURSEWORK

### 3.1 Course Planning and Selection

Prior to registering in any courses, students are required to consult with the Specialty Advisor (or Research Supervisor if known) regarding a Coursework Plan, and thereby secure approval of the Plan. The student should initially develop a draft plan using the relevant form available on the [Forms](#) page). The plan that lists the proposed courses and schedule, taking account of course availability (not all courses are offered every year) and term in which they are given (see [Course Schedule](#)), and may take account of prior courses and core course substitutions. This will assure adherence to course credit requirements, coursework regulations, an appropriate course load and selection, and no scheduling conflicts. Please be aware of the possibility of relying on CIVL 592 (which needs to be arranged with a particular instructor), and/or a relevant CIVL 598 section (if available, see [Course Schedule](#)), and/or on a range of elective courses that are not on the list of approved electives for the specialization.

### 3.2 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 Graduate Support for the Graduate Advisor's approval. Graduate students are allowed a maximum six credits of undergraduate coursework to be used towards completion of their graduate program. For these courses, students must fill out the online [undergraduate course registration form](#). For courses in other departments, please contact that department directly.

### 3.3 Auditing Courses

Students must be approved to audit ("sit in" on) 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 [gradsupport@civil.ubc.ca](mailto:gradsupport@civil.ubc.ca) to obtain the approval of the Graduate Advisor. Note that a course that is audited does not count towards the credit requirements of a program.

### 3.4 Transfer Credits and Credit Exemptions

**MASc and MEng programs.** Students may apply for a maximum of 12 credits of coursework as transfer credits towards the MEng or MASc programs, for courses taken prior to or after admission to the program. The courses cannot have been used to satisfy the requirements of another credential; they cannot have been used as a basis for admission to the current

program; they must have been taken within five years of admission to the current program; and a standing of a least 74% must be obtained in the relevant courses. Also, for each such course, the Graduate Advisor will need to approve the appropriate course level (i.e. undergraduate / graduate) and category (i.e. civil engineering / other). For courses taken prior to admission, it is important to seek approval shortly after your program commences (using the relevant form available at [www.civil.ubc.ca/academic-programs/graduate-program/forms](http://www.civil.ubc.ca/academic-programs/graduate-program/forms)), so that there are no undue expectations regarding such courses. For courses to be taken at another institution, either in Canada or elsewhere, after admission, it is critical that approval is obtained prior to finalizing arrangements for taking such courses.

**PhD program.** For the PhD program, transfer credits are not granted, but instead exemptions may be granted for a maximum of 18 credits of coursework taken after the Bachelors degree for courses with a standing of at least 74%.

### 3.5 CIVL 597

All graduate students are required to register once in the appropriate section of CIVL 597 *Graduate Seminar* (1 credit, Pass/Fail mark); however, they are encouraged to attend the seminar series (without subsequent registration) throughout their time in the program. All MAsC students are required to give at least one seminar presentation within CIVL 597 during the program.

The different specialization seminar series corresponding to different sections of CIVL 597 as follows:

Section	Specialty series
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

Again, please register for the appropriate section of CIVL 597 ONCE ONLY, but attend the seminars throughout your time in the program.

### 3.6 Examinations

Most courses entail final examinations during the University’s designated exam periods in December and April. Prepare yourself well in advance to write exams successfully. In addition to studying, this includes informing yourself of important exam dates, and understanding expectations for student conduct during exams.

The start and end dates of the exam periods are published in the UBC Academic Calendar (and

are provided in this handbook). Until your exam schedule has been posted, you should be prepared to be available for the duration of these exam periods – avoid making travel plans until you know the exact dates of your scheduled exams. The detailed examination schedule is released by mid-October for December exams, and by mid-February for April exams. Please note that the first exam schedule released may be subject to change. You can view the complete exam schedule [here](#).

A *Deferred Examination* may be taken when a student misses an exam due to illness or other unforeseeable event, and applies to write an exam at a later date (referred to as an "academic concession"). If you missed an exam and think you are eligible to write a deferred exam, instructions on how to apply for academic concession are given [here](#).

*Supplemental examinations* are not available to graduate students.

## 4. STUDENT STATUS, LEAVES AND EXTENSIONS

### 4.1 Student Status

All students are designated as holding full-time or part-time status. MEng and MASc students are normally considered full-time, but may apply for part-time status. (Such changes in status impact the level of tuition fees charged.) PhD students should be full-time only.

### 4.2 Program Duration

Regardless of whether students hold part-time or full-time status, the MEng and MASc programs need to be completed within 5 years of initial registration, and the PhD program needs to be completed within 6 years of initial registration. It is possible that extensions may be granted under certain circumstances (see below).

### 4.3 Typical Progress

**MEng students.** Given 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 by 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. Part-time MEng students (tuition fee payments according to "Schedule B") progress with widely variable schedules. Please note that we are unable to change program status back to full-time once a program has started.

**MASc students.** The MASc program is expected to take about 24 months to complete; regardless of whether you are a full-time student or a part-time student (tuition fee payments according to "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 then spend the subsequent summer and academic year conducting research for completion of the MASc thesis.

**PhD students.** Doctoral students are expected to maintain full-time status. Typically, a PhD student uses the first two terms to complete coursework, followed by the comprehensive examination a few months later, and then followed by the Proposal Defense a further few months later. The subsequent two to four years are then dedicated to research towards completion of the PhD dissertation. Often PhD students are exempted from up to 18 credits of coursework of the total 30-credit course requirement, based on courses taken for the Master's degree, so that it is typical to take two courses in Term 1, and two courses in Term 2. The typical time to obtain a PhD degree is about four years.



## 4.4 Leaves and Extensions

Students who need to interrupt their 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 academic responsibilities. Leave, not including parental leave or leave to pursue concurrent programs, is limited to one year for Master's students and two years for PhD students. A leave will normally begin on the September 1, January 1 or May 1, and will extend for a period of four, eight, or twelve months. As mentioned above, some MEng students seek a Leave of Absence for the summer in order to avoid paying tuition fees while not taking courses.

Students granted a leave-of-absence or parental leave retain the full value of any fellowship or award whose terms and conditions are established by G+PS. However, award payments will be suspended at the onset of the leave and reinstated at the termination of the leave period, provided the student then returns to full-time study. Other awards will be paid in accordance 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 University 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.

**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 a leave of between 4 and 12 months. Where possible, students enrolled in courses should coordinate their leave to coincide with the beginning of an academic term.

**Extension.** Extenuating circumstances may justify allowing a student additional time to complete the degree program. A request for a one-year extension must be justified and supported by the student's Research Supervisor, but this requires a compelling rationale. A second year's extension requires a compelling rationale from the Research 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.

## 4.5 Transfers Between Programs

Transfers between programs are uncommon but may be possible under special circumstances. The following transfers may be possible.

- **MASc to/from MEng.** A transfer from the MEng to the MASc is usually based on an invitation from a faculty member.
- **MASc to PhD.** A transfer from the MASc to the PhD is usually based on an invitation from a faculty member, and needs to be initiated within the two terms of the MASc program.
- **PhD to MEng/MASc.**

- *Program transfers involving other Departments.* Such program transfers are possible if the original and intended disciplines are closely related. Otherwise, if the intended transfer is to a distinct discipline, then it is treated as a new admission.
- *Transfer of Specializations.* It is also possible to transfer between specializations within the same program.

The following requirements relate to the various transfers:

- All transfers must be supported by a strong rationale relating to the student's personal or professional goals and a review of the student's academic qualifications.
- All transfers need be approved by the current and intended Research Supervisors / Specialty Advisors and the Graduate Advisor.
- The effective date of transfer must correspond with the beginning of a term, and must not be earlier than the beginning of the term in which the transfer is recommended.
- A program transfer does not change the maximum time allowed for completion of degree program, so that the start date of the intended program is taken as the start date of the original program.
- Transfers between programs involving a change of discipline are treated as new admissions.
- Bear in mind that transfers between programs may have implications for student funding.

Additional information is available on the G+PS website. The relevant forms, which indicating the supporting materials and approvals required, are available [here](#):

## 4.6 Academic Progress

For graduate students, a grade below 68% is considered a failing grade. If you are in the unfortunate situation of failing a course then you are normally allowed to include the credits of a maximum of 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 a minimum grade of 74% when you retake/replace the course. Supplemental examinations are not granted to graduate students.

If you find yourself struggling in a course, please discuss this with the instructor. If your problems persist, or if you have failed a course (< 68%) then you should IMMEDIATELY write to the Graduate Advisor, with a copy of your transcript to date and your coursework plan form. This way, it may be possible to tailor your course-plan to improve the likelihood of successful completion of your program. If you receive a grade below 60% in more than two courses you will normally be required to withdraw from the program.

## 5. RESEARCH AND THESES

*[This Section does not apply to MEng students.]*

### 5.1 Research Supervisor

If you are enrolled in the MASc or PhD program you will need to arrange for a [Research Supervisor](#) who will guide you through the program. Depending on your specialization, it is not unusual for MASc students to be 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 Advisor immediately.

All MASc students must arrange for a faculty member to serve as the Research Supervisor by April of the first full year of study; all PhD students must arrange for a faculty member to serve as the Research Supervisor within six months of initial registration in the PhD program. The principal roles of the Research Supervisor are to provide guidance on the selection of coursework, to collaborate on and supervise the research effort, and to provide guidance on preparation of the thesis. On occasion, a student may be co-supervised by two faculty members.

Prior to identifying a Research Supervisor, the student may be assigned an interim supervisor, usually the [Specialty Advisor](#). If the Research Supervisor is on study leave or other leave exceeding two months, it is recommended that an interim co-supervisor be appointed.

### 5.2 Supervisory Committee

*[MASc students do not require a formal supervisory committee. Instead the Research Supervisor appoints a "second reader" near the time of thesis completion.]*

PhD students require a formal [Supervisory Committee](#) comprised of at least three members, including the Research Supervisor who normally chairs the committee. The Supervisory Committee is established by the Research Supervisor in consultation with the Graduate Advisor, within 6 months of the student's registration in the PhD program. The Committee membership is approved by G+PS. Preferably, the committee should include one member from outside the Department, who need not be a [member of G+PS](#).

### 5.3 MASc Thesis Preparation and Completion

At the appropriate time, all MASc students should register and maintain registration in *CIVL 599 MASc Thesis* in order to complete the 12-credit research thesis. The thesis is prepared under the guidance of the Research Supervisor. The Research Supervisor, in consultation with a second reader, may request revisions to the thesis and must approve the thesis. They assign a

grade to the thesis. A minimum grade of 68% must be obtained, in order to submit the thesis and request approval for graduation.

## 5.4 PhD Thesis Preparation and Completion

All PhD students should register and maintain registration in *CIVL 699 Doctoral Dissertation* in order to complete the PhD thesis. The thesis is prepared under the guidance of the Research Supervisor. In order to complete the thesis, PhD students are required to successfully complete the following four milestones:

- Comprehensive Exam
- Proposal Defence
- Advancement to Candidacy
- Thesis Defence

These are outlined in turn:

***Comprehensive Examination.*** A student needs to complete successfully the Comprehensive Examination in order to commence with preparation of a Thesis Proposal. The purpose of the examination is to evaluate the student's comprehension of scientific and engineering principles in the chosen field of study, as well as the potential for independent and original research. The examination can only be taken after completing 24 credits of the 30-credit coursework requirement, and must be taken within 24 months of initial registration in the program. At the discretion of the Research Supervisor, the examination may be conducted in one of two formats either (i) a take-home examination followed by an in-camera oral examination, or (ii) a take-home research assignment followed by an in-camera oral examination. A Comprehensive Examination Committee conducts the examination in accordance with Department Guidelines. The Committee is comprised of a chair appointed by the Graduate Advisor, the Research Supervisor and at least two other members as determined by the Research Supervisor in consultation with the Graduate Advisor. The Chair conveys the Committee's recommendations in writing to the Graduate Advisor for transmittal to G+PS.

***Proposal Defence.*** Upon successful completion of the Comprehensive Examination, the student prepares a thesis Research Proposal that must be approved by the Supervisory Committee. The format of the proposal defence and its evaluation vary between each area of specialization. Accordingly, the student is required to consult with the Research Supervisor on the development of the proposal.

***Advancement to Candidacy.*** Upon successful completion of all required coursework, the comprehensive examination and the proposal defence, the student may be admitted to candidacy through the submission and approval of the relevant [G+PS form](#). All doctoral students must be admitted to candidacy within 36 months of initial registration in the PhD program.

*Thesis Defence.* For detailed information on the final doctoral examination, including appointment of the External Examiner, the constitution of the Examination Committee, and the oral defence, refer to [Final Doctoral Examination](#).

## 5.5 Academic Integrity

### Syllabi Statements

Many course syllabi include a statement similar to the following:

*Academic Integrity.* Students should not cheat, copy, plagiarize or mislead others with respect to their individual work. All student submissions should be original work undertaken by the student alone (except for team assignments), with attribution given as appropriate to all other sources of information and ideas. In examinations, students should not seek aid from others, nor give aid to others, nor make use of unauthorized materials or aids. More generally, students are deemed to be aware of and adhere to the relevant University regulations as provided in [Campus-wide Policies and Regulations](#), and in particular those relating to *Academic Honesty and Standards* and to *Student Conduct and Discipline*. All cases of suspected academic misconduct must be reported and addressed. When academic misconduct is found to have occurred, the consequences are serious.

We urge that all graduate students, given the diversity of backgrounds, carefully review the above statement. If there were informal practices in your education elsewhere that violated any of the above principles, then you should be particularly aware of the need to avoid academic misconduct. Never copy or reformulate any part of any work without providing a citation to that work. Bear in mind that 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 to do so. 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.

### Proper Citations – Avoiding Plagiarism

Academic scholarship requires honest and accurate reporting of other people’s ideas and material. Whenever you use someone else’s words (phrases, sentences, or paragraphs), ideas, or figures, you must acknowledge the original source. The citation can be placed in the text, footnotes, or endnotes. Where direct quotations are made, they must be clearly delineated, for example, within quotation marks or separately indented.

Where part of a figure or the entire figure comes from another source, the citation must be provided adjacent to the figure or in the figure caption.

Failure to provide proper citation is, in the best case, poor scholarship (when there is no intent to deceive), and, in the worst case, plagiarism. Students who are in doubt about citation requirements should consult the instructor before handing in any work.

In this modern era, it has become very easy to cut-and-paste text or figures from one document to another. One of the most common forms of poor scholarship and plagiarism is the use of figures from other documents or the web without any citation. If you include a figure in your work that you did not create yourself from entirely your own ideas, you must provide citation.

When using a figure or other content from a web page, provide as much of the following information as is known: name of author(s), title of the work (in quotes), title of web page (in italics), date of last revision, URL, date accessed.

The UBC Library provides a guide for citing sources, documenting research, reporting results and avoiding plagiarism: [help.library.ubc.ca/evaluating-and-citing-sources/ how-to-cite/](http://help.library.ubc.ca/evaluating-and-citing-sources/how-to-cite/)

## 5.6 Supervisor-Student Relationship

The Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies has issued a [Handbook of Graduate Supervision](#) that provides detailed advice relating to the supervisor-graduate student relationship, so as to assure a productive, effective and positive experience in the development of the thesis and the research record. In particular, [this webpage](#) contains advice relating to graduate student responsibilities. Note that this advice is distinct from formal policies and procedures relating to graduate work. Suggested graduate student responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Take personal responsibility for progress towards degree completion; make a commitment and show dedicated effort to gain the background knowledge and skills needed to pursue your research project successfully.
- With your supervisor, develop a plan and timetable for completion of all stages of the thesis project and adhere to the timetable to the extent possible.
- Meet with your supervisor when requested (varies widely) and report fully on progress, results and issues.
- Maintain orderly and detailed records of your research activities and work.
- Respond respectfully and fully to advice and criticisms received from Supervisor (and the Supervisory Committee) if any.
- Behave in a tolerant and respectful manner with peers and colleagues.

If a student has concerns relating to the supervisor-student relationship, in the first instance you should attempt to resolve this directly with the supervisor. If this is unsuccessful, you may confer with the Graduate Advisor.

## 6. GRADUATION PROCEDURES

In order to complete graduation requirements, all students need to confirm that all program requirements have been met and all fees have been paid, and then formally submit an application to graduate (Section 6.3 below). Prior to doing so, each MASc and PhD student needs to complete the thesis and secure approval of the thesis (Section 6.1 below for MASc students and Section 6.2 below for PhD students). All graduating students are invited to attend graduation ceremonies at which the degree parchments are issued (Section 6.4). Further information on these component steps is given below.

### 6.1 MASc Thesis Completion and Submission

For detailed information on thesis preparation, refer to [Dissertation & Thesis Preparation](#). When the thesis has been completed and approved by the Research Supervisor and second reader<sup>1</sup>, the student should arrange for the submission of completed and signed Department and G+PS [Thesis Approval Forms](#), and the thesis should then be submitted electronically following the G+PS [Instructions](#). The thesis needs to be approved by G+PS before a student is eligible to graduate. When the thesis meets all G+PS requirements, it will be added to the [UBC Library's cIRcle Institutional Repository](#). The submitted thesis must be complete and accurate – it cannot be subsequently changed and re-submitted. IMPORTANT: If a student wishes the thesis to be [delayed from publication](#), G+PS approval must be obtained **before** thesis submission.

### 6.2 PhD Thesis Completion and Submission

*Thesis Completion.* For detailed information on thesis preparation, refer to: [Dissertation & Thesis Preparation](#). Normally, early drafts of the PhD thesis are prepared with guidance from the Research Supervisor, who must agree to its technical content and findings. In preparing the final draft, the thesis should be circulated to all other members of the Supervisory Committee for comments and suggestions. Upon receiving a recommendation from the Supervisory Committee, the Department Head gives approval that the thesis is ready to be submitted for examination.

*Final Doctoral Examination.* For detailed information on the final doctoral examination, including the appointment of the External Examiner, the constitution of the Examination Committee, and the oral defence, refer to [Final Doctoral Examination](#).

*Thesis Submission.* Upon a successful defence of the thesis and approval by the Examination Committee, the student should arrange for the submission of completed and signed G+PS [Dissertation Approval Form](#), and the thesis should then be submitted electronically following the relevant [G+PS Instructions](#). The thesis needs to be approved by G+PS before a student is eligible to graduate. When the thesis meets all G+PS requirements, it will be added to the [UBC Library's cIRcle Institutional Repository](#). The submitted thesis must be complete and accurate –

---

<sup>1</sup> The second reader signs the G+PS *Thesis Approval Form* and needs to be identified on the Department *Thesis Approval Form*.

it cannot be subsequently changed and re-submitted. IMPORTANT: If a student wishes the thesis to be [delayed from publication](#), G+PS approval must be obtained **before** thesis submission.

### 6.3 Degree Application

Students are responsible for ensuring that all program requirements have been met and all fees have been paid. If you have any questions, please contact the Civil Engineering [Graduate Support Office](#). Upon completing the program requirements, a student must apply for graduation through the [Application for Graduation](#) website, and immediately thereafter inform the Civil Engineering [Graduate Support Office](#).

### 6.4 Graduation Ceremonies

Graduation ceremonies, at which degree parchments are presented to graduates, take place twice a year at the Chan Centre, once in November and once in May. Attendance is not mandatory but is highly recommended – the ceremony will show you an additional aspect of academic life and give you a sense of the proud traditions of our academic community. If your graduation does not exactly match the date of a graduation ceremony, please consider coming back to campus for the next one; it will be worth it to celebrate this occasion with your mentors and peers.

Note that MASc and PhD students are able to have their degrees awarded on any one of four dates in a given year. Once Senate awards the degree, a notation will appear on the transcript. However, formal conferral at Congregation ceremonies and the degree parchments will remain available in May and November only.



## 7. FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND EXPENSES

### 7.1 Personal Budget

You are advised to develop and update a personal budget for your time in the program.

On the revenue side, MASc and PhD students in the Department may receive financial support from a variety of sources and in a variety of forms, as described in Section 7.2. [MEng students have virtually no such opportunities.] Standard funding models do not exist and multiple arrangements are possible, often contain a mix from several sources.

On the expense side, UBC expects you to assume primary responsibility for covering your living costs and the costs 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. Information on such fees is available [here](#).

### 7.2 Funding Sources

Most MASc and PhD students receive financial support from a primary source, and may do so from one or more supplementary sources. In general MEng students do not receive financial support, except that a very few MEng students may receive supplementary funding from Teaching Assistantships and Marker positions. The most common primary and supplementary sources of funds are as follows:

#### Primary Sources

- Graduate Research Assistantships (GRA)
- Four-Year Doctoral Fellowships (4YF)
- NSERC Scholarships
- Civil Engineering Excellence Awards
- Affiliated Fellowships
- Other Awards

#### Supplementary Sources

- Top-Ups
- International Student Tuition Fee Awards
- Teaching Assistantships & Marker Positions (TA)
- Other Opportunities

Department information on these various sources is provided [here](#). As well, further information about scholarships, awards, and funding is available at [this page](#) maintained by the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies and [this page](#) at UBC Student Services.

## 7.3 Employment Opportunities

Beyond the funding sources identified above, students may also earn a salary and gain work experience through paid employment opportunities – subject to being able to secure suitable employment, having sufficient time available, and assuring the necessary documentation / approvals. Two such opportunities that relate to student status in the Department are the Co-op Program and the Work Learn Program, as summarized below.

**Co-op Program.** MEng & MAsC students have the opportunity to apply to the Co-op Program in order to gain paid work experience during their program at UBC. Typically, the program starts with a mandatory pre-employment training workshop in the Fall; then, after completing two terms of study, the students proceed with two four-month work terms (in the summer and fall), and then return to campus to complete their programs as necessary. MAsC students should consult their Research Supervisor prior to applying to the co-op program. MEng students [apply here](#) and MAsC students may [apply here](#).

**Work Learn Program.** The [Work Learn Program](#) supports and subsidizes work experiences on campus so as to offer students the opportunity to develop their professional skills and learn in a work environment.

## 7.4 Student Fees

Student fees, including tuition, student society and other fees, are detailed on the following sites:

- For the MEng (referred to as a "Specialized Master's Degree Program") and the MAsC (referred to as a "Standard Master's Degree Program"), please see: [Master's Program Fees](#)
- For the PhD, please see: [Doctoral Program Fees](#)

## 7.5 Research and Travel Expenses

Most commonly, the direct expenses of your research will be covered by grants and/or contracts held by your Research Supervisor. In addition MAsC and PhD students may apply for support from the Graduate Student Travel Fund as detailed below.

## 7.6 Graduate Student Travel Fund

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.

## 8. HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING

The safety and wellbeing of students, faculty, staff and visitors is a paramount concern for the Department of Civil Engineering; the responsibility for your safety is something we all share.

### 8.1 Safety Training and Assessments

The Department has instituted a comprehensive set of safety training and assessment requirements. The first of these requirements, with four components, is mandatory for all graduate students, while the remaining three requirements relate to specific circumstances.

#### 1. Mandatory Training

All students must complete the relevant online training and assessment with four components:

- A. *Department Safety Orientation and Quiz*. (This is a Department-specific orientation.)  
For further information and to undertake the training, visit:

<http://www.civil.ubc.ca/webform/department-safety-orientation>

- B. *Bullying and Harassment On-line Training Course*. (This is a University-wide course.)  
For further information and to undertake the training, visit:

<http://www.civil.ubc.ca/our-department/health-safety-environment-hse/workplace-online-training>

- C. *Workplace Violence Prevention Training Course*. (This is a University-wide course.) For further information and to undertake the training, visit:

<http://www.civil.ubc.ca/our-department/health-safety-environment-hse/workplace-online-training>

- D. *Privacy and Information Security Fundamentals Training Course*. (This is a University-wide course.) For further information and to undertake the training, visit:

<https://privacymatters.ubc.ca/content/training>

#### 2. Site-Specific Laboratory Training

All graduate students who work in or volunteer in any Department laboratory are required to undertake additional training specific to the laboratory. This is one-on-one training with a lab manager or lab supervisor associated with various labs. In order to participate in this training, please see one of the contacts listed below.

#### 3. Environmental / Materials Laboratory Training

All graduate students who work in or volunteer in the Environmental and/or Materials

Laboratory are required to undertake chemical safety training. Please contact a lab manager (see below) or the environmental lab supervisor to get details on the course required for the work you doing.

#### 4. Specialized Training

Finally, additional safety training is required for specific situations as may be relevant. For example, this training may relate to biosafety, radiation safety, the use of lasers, wilderness survival/first aid training, operation of specific equipment or any other training deemed necessary for the situation. Please contact a lab manager (see contacts below) for the applicable specialized training requirements.

University-wide information on safety training for graduate students is available at this site:

<http://rms.ubc.ca/health-safety/student-safety/graduate-student-safety/>

#### Applicability

The aforementioned mandatory training requirements must be undertaken by all graduate students with any appointment (e.g. GRA, GTA, ...) or those who undertake any laboratory work or those who are allocated a desk in the Department (i.e. MASC and PhD students). The remaining training requirements are specific to particular circumstances. The various requirements are triggered by any appointment that is made, laboratory access requests, the completion of a project proposal form, or by a desk assignment.

#### Administration

Scott Jackson, Manager, Labs & Department Safety, maintains the Department's Safety Training Log (spreadsheet) that tracks the successful completion of the required laboratory training. As well, Harald Schrempp, Manager, Labs & Workshops, maintains paper copies that track the successful completion of site-specific training and other specialized equipment training. These records are made available to relevant faculty and staff.

The Department of Civil Engineering has a Safety Team made up of faculty, staff, and students that meets monthly to discuss issues of Health, Safety and Environmental impact, and to review any safety incidents. The minutes of each meeting are available on the HSE bulletin boards in the Department.

#### Contacts

Students may contact the following for further information or to participate in safety training as may be relevant

- Scott Jackson, Manager, Labs & Department Safety, [scottj@civil.ubc.ca](mailto:scottj@civil.ubc.ca), 604-822-4143
- Doug Hudniuk, Workshops Supervisor, [dhudniuk@civil.ubc.ca](mailto:dhudniuk@civil.ubc.ca), 604-822-4851
- Supervisor of Civil Environmental Labs, 604-822-4397

- Graduate Student representative on the Department Safety Team,

## 8.2 Department Safety Practices

The information below provides a general introduction to some important components of the Department's HSE Program. It does not replace formal HSE training.

### Your Responsibilities

You are responsible for following all safety rules. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Ensure you receive safety training for the work you are doing
- Use appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) correctly at all times
- Obey all warning signs
- Do not operate any equipment that you have not been trained to use
- Do not access labs after hours or on weekends, unless you have formal permission, and never work alone
- Do not engage in horseplay inside the labs
- Do not take short cuts in your work – follow all instructions and procedures fully
- Maintain good housekeeping practices at all times in your workspace
- Do not bring food or beverages inside the labs

### Preventing Common Incidents and Injuries

Two of the most common causes of incidents and injuries are:

- slips, trips or falls (often due to poor housekeeping), leading to cuts, bruises, sprains, and broken bones;
- improper material handling (lifting and moving things), causing back injuries.

You can help prevent these injuries by striving for excellence in housekeeping and using good material handling techniques. Excellence in housekeeping means cleaning up after yourself, removing trip hazards, disposing of trash promptly, keeping clear routes of access to emergency exits, phones, and fire extinguishers, and more. Factors in good material handling include assessing the weight of an object, seeking assistance if you need it, and using your legs while keeping your back straight.

### Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Incidents and injuries can also be prevented by the correct use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). PPE includes gloves, eye protection, proper footwear, respiratory protection, hearing protection and head injury protection (hard hats). Different tasks require different types of PPE – make sure you are using the correct type of equipment for your task. If you have any doubts, always ask; a TA or lab staff member can help you make sure you are using PPE correctly.

Familiarize yourself with the locations of the first aid stations in the Department:

- The workshop (RH146)
- The Environmental lab (CEME1301)
- The Civil Engineering front office ( CEME 2002)

### Important Safety Contacts

EMERGENCY (Ambulance, Fire, Police, Spills)	911
FIRST AID (if local first aid attendant is not available and help is required)	911
HAZARDOUS MATERIALS RESPONSE	911
RCMP - POLICE (Non-emergency)	604-224-1322
CAMPUS SECURITY	604-822-2222
STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES	604-822-7011
Poison Control Centre	604-682-5050
UBC Hospital Urgent Care Department	604-822-7121
Building Emergency Directors: Sylvia Margraff	604-822-1212
Paula Parkinson	604-822-4397
TROUBLE (UBC BUILDING OPERATIONS)	604-822-2173

### Civil Engineering Facilities

The Department of Civil Engineering has several laboratories, some of which you may use during your courses, TA duties and/or research. You are not allowed in the labs without correctly wearing the appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

Laboratory	Room No	PPE Required
Structures Teaching Laboratory	CEME 1001	Closed-toe shoes and safety glasses (safety shoes and/or hard hats may be required for specific tasks)
Undergraduate Geotechnical Laboratory	CEME 1006/1008	Closed-toed shoes and safety glasses (safety shoes, gloves and/or ear plugs may be required for specific tasks)
Environmental Laboratories	CEME 1301	Lab coats, long pants, closed-toed shoes and safety glasses (gloves required for specific tasks)
Materials Laboratory	CEME 1012	Long pants, closed toed shoes and safety glasses (Lab coats, safety shoes, gloves, dust masks and ear protection req'd for some tasks)
Hydraulics Laboratory	RH (Rusty Hut) 139	Closed-toed shoes and safety glasses
Structures Research Laboratory	RH (Rusty Hut) 100	Hard hats, safety glasses and safety shoes

Earthquake Engineering Research Facility	EERF	Hard hats, safety glasses and safety shoes
--	------	--

## Safety in the Field

If you are visiting a construction site or some other industrial operation, you will be required to wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). You will not be allowed on site without a high visibility vest, a hard hat, safety glasses and CSA approved safety shoes.

If you are going to be working on a project in the field (off campus), you must prepare a field safety plan. The form required for this can be obtained [here](#).

## Personal Belongings: Lost and Found

If you lose a personal item in the CEME building, check first at the Civil Front Desk. Check next at Engineering Student Services (Kaiser Building), where lost items are sometimes turned in, and finally check with UBC Campus Security. Check with UBC Campus Security right away if you have lost a personal item of high value. To learn more, and to search the online lost and found items database, see [here](#).

## 8.3 Health and Safety at UBC

There are many campus services that support your personal security and your physical and mental health.

### Personal Security on Campus

UBC is generally a safe place, but the risk of crime is present, as it is on every university campus. Campus Security, RCMP, and AMS Safewalk strive to reduce the risk to students and to enhance the security of the UBC community.

### Campus Security

UBC Campus Security strives to ensure the campus is a safe place to study, work, and live. Campus Security personnel patrol the UBC campus around the clock, in vehicles, on foot, and on bicycles, and you are welcome to address any of these personnel at any time if you have questions or need assistance.

They also maintain the Campus Blue Phones, which are located throughout the campus and can be used for emergencies, directions, and assistance. For crime prevention tips, security announcements, and more information on security services provided, visit: [security.ubc.ca](http://security.ubc.ca)

### RCMP

UBC - Vancouver Campus is under the jurisdiction of The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) for law enforcement. There is an RCMP detachment located on campus - dial 604-



224-1322 for non-emergency situations. In the case of an emergency, always dial 911.

## Safewalk

*Safewalk* is a free service provided by AMS that provides a co-ed pair of volunteer walking companions to any student who would prefer not to walk alone at night. The service is available most nights during the school year, and Safewalk volunteers will meet you anywhere on campus and escort you anywhere you need to go. To request Safewalk services, call 604-822-5355. For more information, go [here](#).

## UBC Services for Living Well

Medical services, counselling services, and more are in place to support all students on campus. For details about the services listed below, go [here](#).

*UBC Student Health Service* - free medical care to registered students, provided year round by family doctors and registered nurses

*Nurses on Campus* - personalized advice, outreach, and information on a variety of topics offered by registered nurses

*UBC Counselling Services* - free and confidential counselling for students facing challenges relating to mental health and mental illness

*Access and Diversity* - support and advocacy for students with disabilities or ongoing medical conditions

*Sexual Assault Support Centre* - emotional, medical, and legal support for survivors of sexual assault in the UBC community

*Student Services Wellness Centre* - health promotion, education, and a safe space for discussion of your personal wellness, facilitated by trained student volunteers

*AMS Speakeasy* - free and confidential peer crisis support, information, and referrals to the UBC community, provided by trained student volunteer

## 8.4 Safety Abroad

UBC requires graduate students to register travel plans and, in some cases, seek authorization. If you anticipate travelling abroad for a University activity, please visit the Safety Abroad website for details: [safetyabroad.ubc.ca](http://safetyabroad.ubc.ca)

University activities include conferences, research, volunteering, service learning, varsity sports and studying abroad. University activities do not include activities sponsored or organized by student clubs or the AMS or the Graduate Student Society unless the activity is funded, coordinated or sponsored by UBC. Students engaged in these activities are welcome, and encouraged, to use the Student Safety Abroad resources and registry.

## 8.5 Mental Health and Wellbeing

If you feel you are suffering from undue stress, depression or other mental health conditions, there are a number of avenues for you to seek support. Within the Department, you could initially discuss your situation with your Research Supervisor or the Graduate Advisor. Or there may be several relevant campus services as identified above. If you are concerned about a fellow student you can either talk to the Graduate Advisor or visit [this webpage](#) for information about how to help and how to obtain support from UBC professionals or your peers.

## 8.6 Assuring a Safe and Respectful Environment

Related to physical and mental health and safety is the need to assure a safe, supportive, respectful environment, including freedom from discrimination and harassment, for all faculty, staff and students in the Department.

***Personal Code of Conduct.*** In order to contribute to such an environment, we request that all students adhere to a code of conduct that includes: treating others with respect and dignity; avoiding or declaring conflicts of interest or perceptions of conflict of interest, respecting confidentiality, demonstrating environmental responsibility, cultural sensitivity, and equity awareness.

***Respectful Language.*** Respectful language in the context of diversity should be followed in order to avoid causing discomfort to others. Suggestions include, for example the need to avoid referring to a person's race, ethnicity, or country of origin or that may imply gender inferiority or a person's disability – unless any of these are necessary in the context of a conversation.

***Getting Help.*** If you experience discrimination or harassment, it is important for you to raise your concerns as early as possible and as close to the source as possible. Within the Department, try letting the individual know about the discomfort that has been caused and how best this can be addressed. If you are uncomfortable doing so, then contact the faculty member responsible for the activity, such as the course instructor or the faculty supervisor; if that does not solve the problem or you still have concerns, then contact the [Department Head](#). If you witness discrimination, in the form of offensive remarks or inappropriate jokes, have the courage to speak out against it, following the same sequence of possible approaches.

## 9. DEPARTMENT SUPPORT AND ADMINISTRATION

This section of the Handbook refers to such items as Department support (mailboxes, desks and keys), student appointments, document requests and health and insurance coverage. Note that, as a general approach, many aspects of your graduate program, including course registration and fee payments, are handled online. Otherwise, you may need to complete forms and obtain signatures. Many forms are available on our website. Please e-mail or deliver all completed forms to the Front Desk, and expect a turn-around time of at least 2 days (except for desk requests).

### Graduate Student Database

Please complete and submit a Graduate Student Data form with your new contact information when you commence your program. If you change your address/e-mail address at any time, please inform the Graduate Student Support office by submitting an updated Graduate Student Data form with your new information.

### 9.1 Mailboxes, Desks and Keys

#### Student Mailboxes

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

#### Desk Requests

Desks are allocated to MASc and PhD students only. The Department endeavours to provide new PhD students with a desk 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. The Research 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.

### 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.

### Printing Facilities

A black-and-white printer for the exclusive use of graduate students is available in CEME 1007, and is administered by the CEGSS. The Department provides printer toner, while the graduate students are responsible for supplying their own paper. There is no cost to the students to use the printer, but there is a 30-page printing limit per month per student. All students are expected to use the printer conservatively and only print a maximum of 30 pages per month.

## 9.2 Appointments and Payments

### Student Appointment Processing

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 Department's 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 (the 15th and 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).

## Expense Reimbursement Requests

There are three types of reimbursement requests: (i) travel expenses, (ii) general expenses, and (iii) 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.

## Social Insurance Number – 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 the 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 Department Finance Office.

## 9.3 Document Requests

### 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 to 5 business days depending on the type of letter you are requesting.

## Department Letters

In the case where a Department 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 e-mail 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.

## 9.4 Health and Insurance Coverage

### 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 enroll 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).

## 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).

*WCB Coverage.* Students who travel to study or work sites off-campus may be asked by the hosts at those 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.

*Student Accident Insurance.* 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.

## 9.5 UPass and Compass Cards

UPass 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 \$41.00 per month and is assessed as part of your student fees. Students at UBC’s Vancouver campus are eligible for U-Pass 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.

## 10. STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

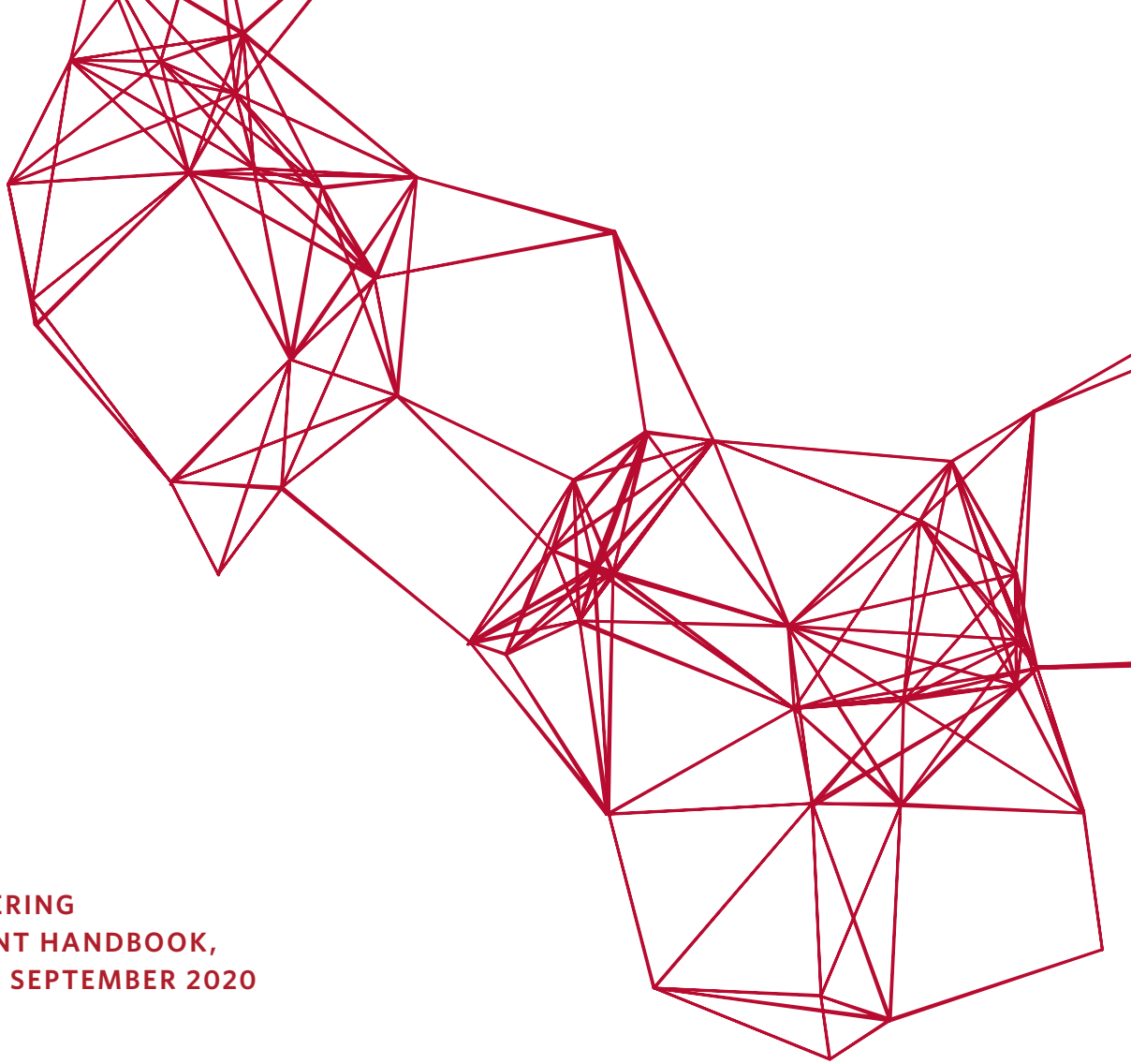
### 10.1 Civil Engineering Graduate Student Society

CEGSS is the Civil Engineering chapter of the UBC Graduate Student Society. This is the student-run group representing all graduate students within the Civil Engineering Department. It is a vibrant and active organization that is active year-round, arranging social and sporting events and providing a forum for graduate student issues. The CEGSS also maintains copying and printing services. You will find more information [here](#) and you can direct inquiries to relevant stakeholders at [contacts](#).

### 10.2 Graduate Student Society

The parent organization, GSS, represents and advocates on behalf of all UBC Graduate Students to the University, the Government, and the public. It provides academic, professional, social, and recreational services to their members and acts as a steward of the Thea Koerner House Graduate Student Centre. GSS is the organization that advocates for and protects the interests of graduate students at UBC; supports graduate students in their studies or facing academic problems; organizes 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. You will find more information [here](#) and you can direct inquiries to [president@gss.ubc.ca](mailto:president@gss.ubc.ca).





**UBC CIVIL ENGINEERING  
GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK,  
SEVENTH EDITION, SEPTEMBER 2020**

**PUBLISHED BY**

Department of Civil Engineering  
The University of British Columbia  
2002-6250 Applied Science Lane  
Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z4

**FOLLOW US**

[Instagram.com/ubccivil](https://www.instagram.com/ubccivil)  
[Facebook.com/ubccivil](https://www.facebook.com/ubccivil)  
[Twitter.com/ubccivil](https://twitter.com/ubccivil)  
[Youtube.com/ubccivil](https://www.youtube.com/ubccivil)

**CONTRIBUTORS**

Faculty, staff and students in the Department of Civil Engineering, with additional contributions from staff in the Faculty of Applied Science, and UBC Access and Diversity.

We welcome your feedback  
– please send any corrections  
or suggestions on how this  
handbook can be improved to  
**[communications@civil.ubc.ca](mailto:communications@civil.ubc.ca)**.