

Department of Human Genetics, Faculty of Medicine Requirements for completing a Master's Degree

Program Requirements

A Master's Degree in Human Genetics requires the student to:

- Complete a minimum of 9 course credits at the 500+ level, which includes HGEN 692 (mandatory).
- Register for laboratory research techniques (HGEN 662); credits assigned for work in the lab.
- Register for 33 thesis credits (HGEN 680, 681, 682); credits assigned for work on the thesis.
- Present their work at an acceptable Master's seminar venue. [See presentation requirements.](#)
- Submit a thesis based on their research that is passed by either an internal or external examiner. [See thesis requirements.](#)

NOTE: The M.Sc. thesis is not required to display original scientific work. The thesis will be judged on its demonstration of technical mastery and presentation of results in an organized, clear and literate style. Theses are graded as "Pass" or "Fail".

For graduate students, the minimum acceptable grade in required courses is B-.

Time Requirement

- The Master's Program at McGill University requires a minimum residence of three full-time terms, i.e. 1½ years.
- The Master's Program must be completed within 3 years of first registration.
- A student must register for at least three residency terms and pay full fees.
- After the residency period, students register for additional sessions at reduced fees.
- Students are encouraged to complete their Master's Degree as soon as possible. Most students in the Department of Human Genetics complete their Master's Degree in less than 2½ years.

Course Requirements

- HGEN 692 for 3-credits, must be completed during the first available Fall term of registration.
- The remaining 6-credits may be selected in consultation with the primary supervisor, at the 500+ level. If eligibility for degree credit remains uncertain, please contact the [Graduate Program Coordinator](#).
- HGEN 662 for 3-credits, must be registered for during the first term of admission (Fall or Winter). A mark of "P" will be recorded thereafter, for work completed in the lab.
- A supplementary list of Human Genetics courses may be found under "[Graduate Courses](#)".

Thesis Requirements

- The total number of credits allotted to the Thesis in the Master's Program is 33. These credits are obtained by registering for the following:

Term/Semester	Course No.	Course Name	No. of Credits
First	HGEN 680	Thesis Research I	9
First	HGEN 681	Thesis Research II	12
Second	HGEN 682	Thesis Research III	12

All three thesis courses must appear on your transcript. **NOTE: You must not register for any of these courses more than once.**

- The Master's Thesis must be prepared following the guidelines and requirements outlined on the [Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies website](#).
- A detailed outline of the [departmental submission process](#).

Presentation Requirements

- All M.Sc. students must give a public seminar of their thesis research as a requirement for graduation.
- The supervisor and student must confirm with the [Graduate Program Coordinator](#) approximately 3-6 months before the thesis is to be submitted, that the seminar has taken place or request arrangement for booking.
- The seminar is expected to be 20-25 minutes in length.

The seminar may take one of the three formats:

- At a research institute sponsored research seminars,
- At the Department of Human Genetics "Research Day", or
- The student's final supervisory committee meeting could be made public to provide a venue for such a presentation. Indeed, priority in scheduling students for these events will be given to those students who must fulfill the requirement for a research seminar prior to graduation.

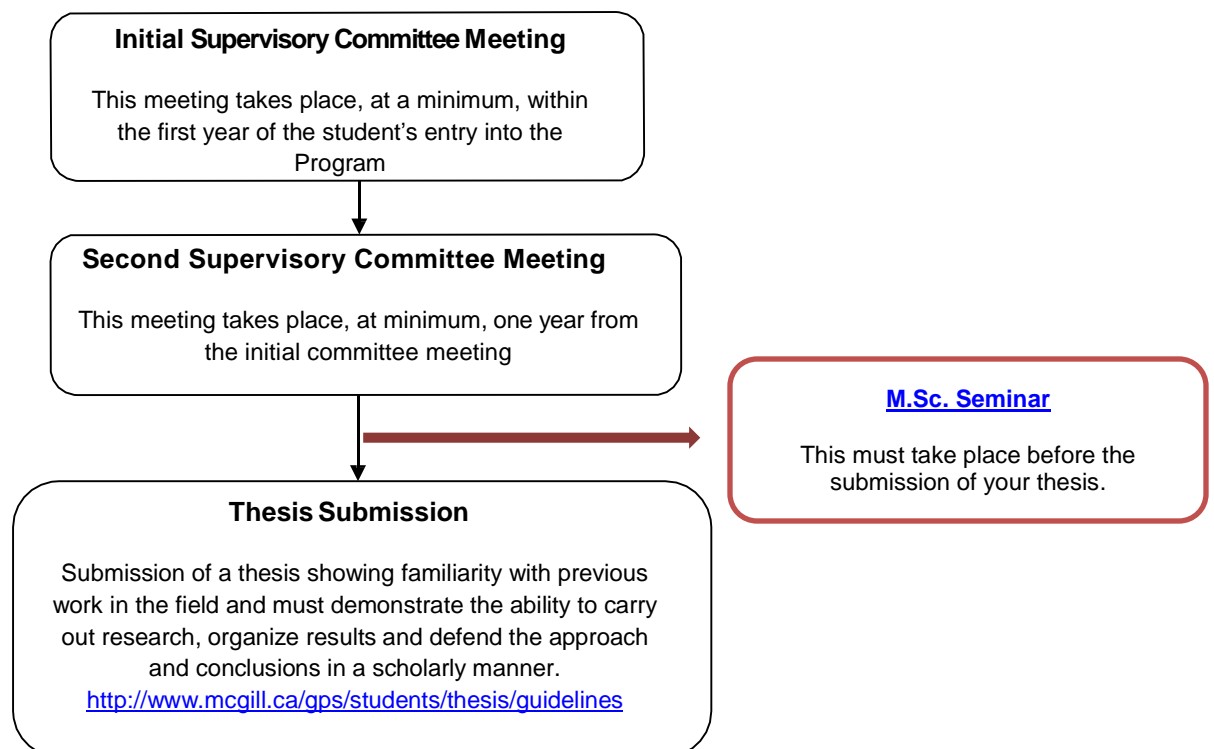
NOTE: Should students choose option 3, they must confirm the date and time of the seminar with the Graduate Program Coordinator at least three months in advance so there may be sufficient publication of the event. The seminar will typically be held on Wednesdays in the Stewart Biology Building, Room W4/12.

Supervisory Committee Composition

During the first term of study, both the student and supervisor are required to appoint a Supervisory Committee. This committee consists of the supervisor and two additional faculty members, one of whom must hold at least an adjunct appointment in the Department of Human Genetics.

Progress Tracking

Subsequently, progress for the Master's Program is tracked with the following schedule of meetings:



Supervisory Committee (SC) Meetings

- The **student** and **supervisor** are responsible for calling SC meetings and arranging a time and place suitable for all members of the committee.
- The initial SC meeting must take place, and the SC form must be completed and signed, within one year of student's entry into the program and yearly thereafter, following satisfactory progress. SC forms are to be delivered electronically to the [Graduate Program Coordinator](#).
- Following a meeting where progress was deemed to be unsatisfactory, a supplementary SC meeting must be held within six months.
- A student will be asked to withdraw from the Program following two consecutive SC meetings where progress is deemed to be unsatisfactory.

More information:

- [Supervisory Committee Guidelines](#)
- [Compulsory Research Progress Tracking Form \(The SC Form\)](#)
- [Simple Steps for Completing the SC Form](#)
- Support for students with unsatisfactory progress, as well as, details on the report and presentation can be found under [Supervisory Committee Guidelines](#).

Other Supervisory Committee Functions

A number of situations may arise in a student's career in which the consultative process of the SC may be helpful.

- Students who have entered the graduate program at the M.Sc.1 level may wish to [transfer to the Ph.D. program](#). This should be a joint decision by the student and the supervisor. The Graduate Training Committee (GTC) must approve the proposed switch, but first the SC must be consulted. The SC in turn, makes the recommendation to the GTC on behalf of the student. See fast-tracking procedures.
- The most important function of the SC is to provide both the student and supervisor with some necessary perspective on the student's progress.
 - Has the student or supervisor chosen a problem, which is intrinsically too difficult?
 - Could failure of a single approach mean the end of the project?
 - Is there a difference of opinion between the student and supervisor as to whether the student already has enough data for a thesis?
- Members of the SC are expected to provide constructive criticism of at least one draft of the M.Sc. or Ph.D. thesis prior to initial submission.
- The student should view the SC as a resource for dealing with any problems that may occur during their study.

The Graduate Program Coordinator and Director are willing to assist students in dealing with problems arising in their research. However, the first line of approach to resolving such problems should be the members of the student's SC.

Fast-Track Transfer to the Ph.D. Program

There is a provision in the Human Genetics regulations that allows students to proceed directly to the Ph.D. Program without having to complete a Master's thesis. This arrangement is called Fast-Tracking and is used only in special circumstances where the student has performed well in assigned courses and demonstrated exceptional research/creative potential, and their Master's research has given rise to a project that can be extended to a Ph.D. level project. [See policy and procedures for a Fast-Track Transfer to the Ph.D. Program](#).