

DCL Seminar – Description and Procedure

McGill Faculty of Law

The DCL Seminar is a course that provides doctoral students in their third or fourth year of the DCL (DCL 4 or DCL5) with an opportunity to present their thesis, at a point close to completion, to the McGill Law community. In the DCL Seminar, students will share the development of their reflections and analyses developed over the course of their dissertation to-date. They will further test their arguments before, and receive feedback from, their supervisor, committee members and other members of the academic community. The Seminar is envisaged as an opportunity for planning the final steps of the thesis, for preparing for the thesis defence, and for students planning to enter the academic professional market, for academic job talks.

Students must register for the DCL Seminar no later than the first term of their fourth year in the DCL program, but they may register as early as the second term of their third year in this program. The DCL Seminar is mandatory for all students who began the DCL program in September 2014 or later. It is encouraged for any students who initiated their doctoral studies in the Faculty of Law prior to that date.

The procedure for the Seminar is as follows:

1. The student decides, upon consultation with her/his supervisor, about the term in which to register for the DCL Seminar, and then enrolls in this course.
2. The student confers with her/his supervisor and thesis advisory committee members to determine a date and time at which all can be present to take part in the Seminar. The student, supervisor and committee members will ordinarily be present in person but attendance may be made possible via videoconference/Skype, particularly for any faculty member on leave or a student no longer in residence. If a student experiences difficulty coordinating schedules, she/he should consult with the Associate Dean, Graduate Studies.
3. The student books a location for the DCL Seminar.
4. The student writes to her/his supervisor, thesis advisory committee members, and the Graduate Programs Office to communicate the date, time and location of the Seminar. The student should also provide, in this communication, the present document (DCL Seminar Description and Procedure) and the [DCL Seminar Evaluation Form](#), which must be used for the student's evaluation.
5. The Graduate Programs Office will announce the date, time and location of all DCL Seminars in the GradINFO bulletin. This information will also be shared via the Graduate Programs in Law website and the Faculty of Law's calendar of events.

6. The DCL seminar is open to faculty members, graduate students, and other interested individuals.
7. At her or his seminar, a DCL candidate will deliver an oral presentation of 20-30 minutes that addresses the following points:
 - The thesis' central research question(s) and argument(s);
 - Methodologies deployed in the thesis and justification for these methods;
 - The theoretical framework that contextualizes the thesis;
 - The analysis and conclusions drawn from the research; and
 - Questions with which the student may continue to grapple and on which she/he seeks guidance from the supervisor and committee members.

A discussion period will follow the student's presentation at which anyone in attendance may ask questions.

A DCL Seminar should not, ordinarily, last longer than one hour.

8. Students are not required to submit a written text for evaluation as part of the DCL Seminar.
9. The student and any members of the audience will leave the room following the presentation to allow the supervisor and committee members to meet in closed session to evaluate the student.
10. Evaluation occurs on a Pass/Fail basis. The supervisor's and committee members' assessment and comments will be recorded on the [DCL Seminar Evaluation Form](#). This form is then returned to the Graduate Programs Office, which in turn relays this to the student.
11. It should be noted that the DCL Seminar does not replace the annual progress tracking exercise that each DCL student must undertake.