

Ph.D. Program Guidelines
School of Communication Sciences & Disorders

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A. INTRODUCTION

This document is the primary resource for students enrolled in the doctoral program in Communication Sciences and Disorders and their supervisors.¹ Program requirements for the Ph.D. in SCSD are specified by McGill Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies and the School of Communication Sciences and Disorders. Details on University Regulations and Resources for Graduate and Postdoctoral studies are provided in the e-calendar, which is found online at:

https://www.mcgill.ca/study/2018-2019/files/study.2018-2019/2018-2019_graduate_postdoctoral_ealendar.pdf

It is the responsibility of the student and their supervisor to be aware of information contained in these guidelines and the university regulations as they apply to doctoral students. Students are expected to have read the relevant section of these documents before seeking information from their supervisor or the Graduate Program Director.

B. MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Ph.D. program in the School of Communication Sciences and Disorders is to provide a strong foundation for creative research and scientific problem-solving in communication sciences (speech, language, hearing, voice) in typical and atypical populations. We strive to provide the highest quality of education for students to develop research skills and scholarship that can be applied to the academic or professional setting of their choosing. We accomplish this mission by fostering a rich context of research excellence and innovation within our faculty and student body. SCSD faculty and students are actively pursuing research to understand the basic nature of communication processes and to better serve diverse clinical populations. We offer a flexible PhD program to attract and support students who seek to become experts in their chosen subfield. We encourage students to customize their program through the selection of coursework, seminars, comprehensive topics, research experiences, and thesis topics. Every student has the opportunity to chart a unique path through our program and develop their own research and scholarly expertise. This allows our graduates to follow diverse career paths in academic and non-academic contexts.

The doctoral program consists of **four primary components**: 1) academic coursework, 2) research experience, 3) comprehensive exam, and 4) a dissertation. Doctoral students have opportunities to collaborate with a number of faculty members in research experiences throughout their program. The doctoral dissertation is the independent, culminating research experience.

¹ Information on admissions requirements and applicant procedures can be found at: <https://www.mcgill.ca/gradapplicants/communication-sciences-and-disorders-0>

C. PhD PROGRAM OVERVIEW

This section provides an overview of the structure of the doctoral program in Communication Sciences and Disorders.

C.1 Entry Streams:

Students can enter the doctoral program in one of two ways:

Regular Program (registered as PhD-2): Students who have completed a Master's degree with research thesis in Communication Sciences & Disorders or a related area (e.g., linguistics, psychology, cognitive sciences) at an approved institution are admitted, on the recommendation of the department, to the Ph.D. program at level **PhD-2**. If the student has not completed a formal research thesis, a comparable level of research experience is required to be admitted as PhD-2.

OR

Qualifying Year Program (registered as PhD-1): High-caliber students who demonstrate all of the qualities necessary to enroll in the Ph.D. program, but who have not completed a research thesis at the Master's level, may qualify for the Qualifying Year program and enter at level **PhD-1**. Typically, students considered for this program have completed a Bachelor's degree or a Master's degree (without research thesis) in Communication Sciences' & Disorders or a related field and provide evidence of a strong interest in human communication and its disorders. Students accepted into this stream undertake a qualifying year of study comprised of coursework and a Qualifying-Year research project. Students who successfully complete all requirements of the qualifying year are permitted to continue in the doctoral program; at this point (beginning in PhD-2) they complete all of the same requirements as students in the regular doctoral program. If performance in the Qualifying Year is unsatisfactory, the student will not be permitted to continue in the PhD program. In some cases, these students may be permitted to complete a thesis leading to the M.Sc. degree.

C.2 Program Requirements

The PhD program at SCSD includes a set of **required elements** which are briefly outlined below (see also Table 1). There are additional program requirements for students in the Qualifying Year Program (PhD-1 entry); these are presented in italics and highlighted with ** below. Each component is described in more detail in section E.

[Course work](https://www.mcgill.ca/scsd/handbook/resources). PhD students are required to complete classes in graduate-level statistics (6 credits) and at least two Advanced Research Seminars offered by the SCSD (3 credits each). For information on statistics courses go to: <https://www.mcgill.ca/scsd/handbook/resources>

***Students in the Qualifying Year Program (entering as PhD-1) are required to take one additional Advanced Research Seminar (3 credits) and two additional courses (6 credits); they must complete at least one of their*

required statistics classes (3 credits) during their first year.

****[Qualifying Year project](#).** *Students in the Qualifying Year Program (entering as PhD-1) are required to complete a research project in their first year with the guidance of their supervisor.*

[The Comprehensive Exam \(“Comps”\)](#) typically takes place during the first 9 months of the PhD-2 year. The student is given two questions (one related and one unrelated to their thesis area) and must independently write two papers to scientifically discuss and answer each question. The Major paper (related to the thesis topic) will then be orally presented to SCSD students and faculty.

[PhD Thesis Proposal](#). In the PhD-3 year, the student will prepare a detailed (25-40 pages) thesis proposal, covering the research question, the methodological approach, hypotheses, proposed analyses, and a feasible timeline for completing all parts of the thesis-related work, including the anticipated date for the initial thesis submission. The student will give an oral presentation of the thesis proposal to their supervisory committee members, followed by a discussion.

[Thesis Research and written PhD thesis](#). Once the thesis proposal has been approved by the student’s supervisory committee (typically in the PhD-3 year), the student will work closely with their supervisor to carry out their proposed thesis research project. A PhD project typically involves designing, running, and analyzing one or more experiments that lead to new scientific insights and which advance the field in an original manner. The PhD thesis is a scientific documentation of the entire research project, including the student’s interpretation and discussion of the results. The written thesis and the student’s oral defense presentation are evaluated by internal and external faculty members who will determine if the student receives a ‘pass’ and if and how the thesis needs to be revised.

Residency (enrollment) requirements and expected program duration. The residency requirement specifies the minimum number of terms a student must register on a full time basis (with associated tuition fees) to earn the degree. The residency requirement in the PhD. program is 2 years (4 academic semesters) for students in the Regular Program (starting as PhD-2) and 3 years (6 academic semesters) for students in the Qualifying Year Program (starting as PhD-1). After meeting the residency requirement, students in both programs register and pay fees as a full time doctoral student for 1 additional year (i.e. until the end of their Ph-D4 year) and then in all subsequent years (PhD5 +), students register and pay a lower fee rate as a an Additional Session Student.²

² For details on residency requirement go to: https://www.mcgill.ca/study/2018-2019/university_regulations_and_resources/graduate/gps_gi_program_reqs
For information on fees go to: <https://www.mcgill.ca/student-accounts/tuition-fees/tuition-and-fees-tables-and-rates/rates-information>

Note that the residency requirement only specifies the minimum enrollment to obtain a degree, there is no guarantee that the degree requirements can be completed in this time. Students typically need to enroll beyond the minimum residency period in order to complete their program. Some factors contributing to the actual program duration for each student include, but are not limited to, the student's prior knowledge and familiarity with empirical research, the student's level of involvement in supplemental activities and research experience, and the particular demands of their thesis research (e.g. the specific methodology, the complexity of the experimental design and the stimulus materials, or potential challenges associated with subject recruitment).

Students are not permitted to register after the PhD-7 year. An approximate timetable for completing the PhD requirements is provided in [Table 1](#) below

C.3 Supplemental Activities and Experience

Beyond the required degree components, doctoral students are presented many opportunities to enrich their education in various ways, including supplemental research activities, teaching experience, involvement in the Centre for Research on Brain, Language and Music (CRBLM) or the Centre for Interdisciplinary Research in Rehabilitation of Greater Montreal (CRIR) and diverse co-curricular workshops. Most doctoral students choose to engage in some of these supplemental offerings to optimize their doctoral experience and to enhance their post graduate employment opportunities. Some typical supplemental experiences are described in section F. This list is not exhaustive and may not be entirely up-to date as these supplemental experiences continue to evolve and vary from year-to-year.

C.4 General Time Line

The minimum timeframe for completing required elements of the PhD program is three years for students entering via the Regular program and four years for students entering via the Qualifying Year program. A suggested general timeline for completing the required elements is shown in **Table 1** below. These guidelines are approximate and serve as a basic framework to assist students/supervisors in the planning and implementation of the student's research training program, particularly in the early stages of the student's program. This timeline is designed to be flexible and PhD students are encouraged to design and implement a more detailed, individualized program of studies that meets their specific needs and goals.

Table 1. General Timeline of Ph.D. Program in SCSD

PhD-1: Qualifying Year Program Only

entry year if admitted from a Bachelor's or non-thesis Master's degree

- Form an supervisory committee
 - 1 (minimum) or 2 semesters of graduate courses in statistics (3-6 credits)
 - SCSD advanced research seminar (3 credits)
 - Elective coursework (6 credits)
 - Qualifying Year Research project I (SCSD 685) & II (SCSD 686) (6 credits)
 - Approval of research project proposal (by end of first semester)
 - Submit research project report (by end of second semester)
-

PhD-2: Comprehensive Year (Qualifying Year Program)

- Revise supervisory committee, if needed
- 2nd semester of graduate courses in statistics, if needed
- SCSD Advanced research seminar (3 credits)
- Comprehensive exam (SCSD 701)

OR

PhD-2: Comprehensive Year (Regular Program)

entry year if admitted with a Master's degree with thesis

- Form an supervisory committee (Regular Program) in 1st month
 - 2 semesters of graduate courses in statistics (6 credits; Regular program)
 - SCSD Advanced research seminar (3 credits)
 - Comprehensive exam (SCSD 701)
-

PhD-3: Thesis proposal (Qualifying Year & Regular Program)

- Revise supervisory committee (if needed)
 - SCSD research seminar (3 credits)
 - Develop PhD thesis proposal
 - Approval of PhD thesis proposal (by end of year)
 - Optional teaching activities (from this point on)
-

PhD-4+: Research/preparation of thesis (Qualifying Year & Regular Program)

- Complete Ph.D. research (data collection, analyses, writing)
 - Submit and defend PhD thesis
- For a successful planning of the thesis submission and defense, it is essential that

students not only take into account the time necessary to write the thesis, but also considers (a) the time needed for supervisory committee members to read and provide feedback on draft versions and (b) the time necessary to revise the thesis based on this feedback. **Section 5.E** below (*Thesis Submission and Evaluation*) provides information about the general timeline and required steps when planning the thesis. Specific deadlines and regulations for thesis submissions at McGill are subject to change, so it is imperative that students check the relevant website (e.g., <https://mcgill.ca/gps/thesis/thesis-guidelines>) on a regular basis.

D. ACADEMIC SUPPORT AND MENTORING

Doctoral students are provided academic support and mentoring by their supervisor or co-supervisors, an supervisory Committee, and by the Graduate Program Director. The role of each is described below.

D.1 Supervisor

Each student has a research supervisor or two co-supervisors who work closely with the student in planning their doctoral program and research focus, structuring and evaluating their comprehensive exam, developing a thesis topic, carrying out the research, and writing the thesis. The supervisor is in charge of overseeing decisions about the thesis topic, the research design, procedures, data analysis, and the final draft of the thesis, in consultation with the student and his/her supervisory committee.

D.2 Supervisory Committee

The progress of each student is supported and monitored by an supervisory committee. The supervisory committee should be formed in the first month of the student's program. The composition of the committee should be first discussed by the student and supervisor and then the supervisor will contact faculty members to ask them to serve in this role. The supervisory committee has 3 members and must include the student's supervisor(s) and at least one other faculty member who holds a full-time appointment in the SCSD. One supervisory committee member may be an adjunct or associate member of SCSD or, with the approval of SCSD faculty, they can be from another McGill department or another university, if they have relevant expertise and are willing to serve in this role. To add an external member, the following steps are required: The supervisor (not the student) will contact the external faculty member to discuss/invite them to serve on the supervisory committee. The supervisor will share the Supervisory Agreement form (in Appendix A) which outlines the roles and responsibilities and procedures involved. If the external member wishes to take on this role, they are asked to provide a recent CV and sign the Supervisory Agreement form. The supervisor will present the CV with a brief rationale (in writing) for approval at a faculty meeting. Once approved, a signed copy of the Supervisor Agreement Form should be sent to the GPD and uploaded to MyProgress (students admitted Fall 2017 or later).

The committee must be consulted by the student/supervisor at every stage in the student's research program. Ideally the supervisory committee will be well-matched to the student's research interests and can advise them throughout their program. However, if necessary, the composition of the supervisory committee may be changed as the student progresses through their program.

In the PhD-1 year (for students entering the Qualifying Year program), the supervisory committee will provide input on the structure of their program, i. e., choice of courses and plans for the Qualifying Year Project.

In the PhD-2 year, the supervisory committee will provide input to structure the student's program and will also be involved in developing the comprehensive exam questions, supporting the student during the comprehensive exam period, and evaluating the comprehensive papers. Students in the Qualifying Year Program (entering as PhD-1) may need to change the composition of their supervisory committee to align with the topics of their Major and Minor papers.

In the PhD-3 year and subsequent years, the supervisory committee will provide input to support the student as they develop their thesis proposal and conduct their research, analyze data and prepare the written thesis. The supervisory committee will evaluate and approve the thesis proposal and the final written thesis.

The Supervisory Committee must meet at least once a year. It is the joint responsibility of the student and their supervisor to ensure that regular (at least annual) supervisory committee meetings are held. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that there is written record of each committee meeting in order to track ongoing discussions/feedback/decisions regarding the student's work. After each meeting the student should prepare a summary and share it with their committee; the summary should be edited, as needed, until the student and committee agree that it is accurate. It is the student's responsibility to forward the final summary (signed by both student and committee) to the Graduate Program Director (GPD) and the Graduate Program Coordinator (GPC) for placement in their graduate file (students admitted before 2017) or uploaded to MyProgress (students admitted in 2017 or later). This process is to be followed for ALL supervisory meetings. Note – as outlined below in section D.3 - the student's annual mandatory progress tracking may be conducted within the context of a supervisory meeting. In this case, the GPD would also attend the meeting and the required tracking forms would also be completed and placed in the student file; for details on progress tracking go to <https://www.mcgill.ca/gps/students/research-tracking>

In cases where the student, supervisor, and/or committee members cannot agree on the proper course of the student's research program, the Graduate Program Director and/or Director may be called in to mediate the disagreement to the satisfaction of all parties. For example, a compromise research approach could be suggested, the supervisory committee membership could be altered, the student could be required to change the research topic, or a new supervisor or co-supervisor could be assigned to the student, as needed.

D.3 Graduate Program Director

The Graduate Program Director (GPD) is an SCSD faculty member responsible for research graduate admissions and for monitoring the progress of all SCSD graduate students once they are admitted to the doctoral program. The GPD oversees student research within the department and acts as a liaison to the Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies Office. His/her duties include: overseeing research student admissions; tracking and evaluating research student progress, dealing with problems raised by students or supervisors; communicating and interpreting departmental and university research policies to students and faculty, communicating and coordinating internal and external student funding opportunities, arranging doctoral oral defenses, proposing new initiatives or curricular changes to improve research training, ensuring that university offices are apprised of graduating students, and advocating for graduate students. The GPD works with the support of the Graduate Program Coordinator (GPC) and other SCSD staff who assist with administrative aspects of doctoral admissions, funding, and student progress tracking (e.g. scheduling meetings and milestone documentation, course registration, processing stipends and awards etc).

The GPD is responsible for overseeing a formal mandatory progress tracking evaluation of each research student in the school on an annual basis. If necessary, additional interim progress tracking evaluations will be held. Standard forms and procedures for this meeting can be found at <https://www.mcgill.ca/gps/students/research-tracking>

This evaluation forms an important part of the student's academic record while at McGill. The annual progress tracking evaluation is conducted during a meeting with the student, their supervisor and the GPD that is typically held early in the Fall semester. Alternatively (as mentioned above) the annual mandatory progress tracking can be conducted within the context of an supervisory committee. In this case, the GPD will also attend the supervisory meeting to assist with the progress tracking.

D.4 Conflict Resolution Procedures

In the event of a conflict between a student and his/her supervisor, the following steps should be followed and clearly documented (e.g., dates of meetings, attendees, etc.):

1. Identify the problem in a discussion with your supervisor. In many cases, an informal discussion may resolve a conflict quickly.
2. If this does not resolve the problem, contact the GPD who may be able to mediate a settlement of the conflict (should your supervisor be the GPD, contact the Director of the School).
3. If the GPD is unable to resolve the issue alone, s/he may liaise with the Associate Dean, Graduate and Postdoctoral studies at the Faculty of Medicine or university level to resolve the issue. More details are found at: <https://www.mcgill.ca/gps/about/organizational-structure>

4. If the relationship between the student and the supervisor is no longer appropriate for continued supervision, the GPD will attempt to make alternative arrangements for supervision by another faculty member (in keeping with Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies guidelines.)
5. If all of these steps fail or if your supervisor is also the Graduate Program Director, then you should contact the Director of SCSD or the Associate Dean, Graduate and Postdoctoral studies at the Faculty of Medicine or university level to resolve the issue. You can also contact the University Ombudsperson for assistance. Contact information for these individuals is available in the Calendar of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies found at: https://www.mcgill.ca/study/2017-2018/university_regulations_and_resources/graduate/gps_guidelines_policies

E. DOCTORAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

E.1 Course work

All PhD students in SCSD (Regular Program and Qualifying Year Program) must successfully complete the following courses:

- 6 credits in graduate-level statistics course (e.g., Psychology 650/651 or equivalent)

Note that while no statistics courses are taught within the SCSD, several departments at McGill offer a range of options (e.g., psychology, education, epidemiology, the integrated program in neuroscience (IPN), linguistics). A list of appropriate courses is provided at <https://www.mcgill.ca/scsd/handbook/resources>. Other graduate-level statistics courses may also meet this requirement if approved by your supervisory committee.

- Two 3-credit PhD research seminars offered by SCSD (Advanced Research Seminar I and II or similar course code)

Additional courses can be taken and will depend on the background and individual needs and research interests of the student. The decision to take additional courses is made jointly by the student/supervisor in consultation with their supervisory committee. Students do not pay extra fees for courses that are specified as part of their program.

Students in the **Qualifying Year Program**, are required to take additional courses in SCSD in the PhD-1 year. The additional coursework includes:

- One 3-credit PhD research seminar offered by SCSD (typically in the Winter semester)
- 6 credits in elective graduate coursework in SCSD (one full-year or two one-semester graduate-level courses)
 - The selection of elective courses will depend on the background and individual needs of the student and are chosen jointly by the student and supervisor. Students are expected to choose elective courses offered by SCSD; however, it is possible to take a course from outside SCSD if it is approved by the student's supervisory committee.

E.2 Qualifying Year Project

The student's aptitude for advanced research and continued candidacy in the Ph.D. program will be evaluated through a research project, to be completed and submitted to the supervisor by the end of the Qualifying Year. The purpose is to engage the student in a project that provides a comprehensive research experience, including the

opportunity to explore a small body of scientific literature with a well-formulated question or problem in mind; devise the rationale for implementing specific methods which address the question; obtain experience in the analysis and/or interpretation of data; and, report the research findings in good expository style in a format resembling that of a journal manuscript submission.

In terms of scope, the research project is meant to familiarize students with issues related to experimental design and analysis, and improve the student's ability to arrive at a reasoned explanation for a small set of data. To pass the Qualifying year requirement, the finished product is not required to provide new or original insight into the question being investigated, to present a comprehensive treatment of the subject matter, nor to result in a publishable research article. *As such, the scope of the research project may be considered analogous to that of an Honour's thesis at the undergraduate level.* The topic of the research project will be developed jointly by the student and the supervisor, who will be exclusively charged with evaluating the student's progress during the project.

The research topic may be assigned by the supervisor or devised by the student, and need not bear a close relationship to the topic developed for the Ph.D. thesis. Due to the restricted scope of the Qualifying Year project and strict timeline for completing this element, *research involving special populations or equipment/facilities not readily available to the student is highly discouraged.* Students will receive formal evaluation on their progress from the supervisor at the end of the first semester and following final submission of the written paper (typically, at the end of the second semester).

Many students complete Qualifying year projects that eventually result in publishable work with some additional investment beyond the Qualifying year assignment, e.g. further data collection, analysis or manuscript revision.

Qualifying Year Research Project: Step-by-step procedures and timeline

- a. The student registers for courses SCSD 685 and SCSD 686 (Research Project I & II - 3 credits each) in the fall and winter semesters of the Qualifying Year. In conjunction with the supervisor, the student begins immediately to identify the research topic to be investigated. A one-page overview of the topic (briefly summarizing the motivation for the research project and the approach to be taken) should be submitted to the supervisor for review by the end of the first month (e.g., October 1st for Fall admission, February 1st for Winter admission).
- b. After a topic has been formulated, the student will review the background literature directly pertinent to the research question. This exercise is constrained by the scope of the research project and should address a similar range of articles as one would expect for a short published journal article. The student will then prepare a draft written proposal of the research project (approximately 10-15 pages, double-spaced), in which they describe and critique the background literature and outline the methodology of the experiment to be undertaken. The proposal should be submitted to the research supervisor as early as possible, but not later than the end

of the first semester (e.g., December 15th for Fall admission, April 15th for Winter admission). The supervisor will evaluate progress leading to the proposal and assign a letter grade for SCSD 685.

Following approval of the draft proposal, students should be immersed in setting up and running the study, and/or analyzing and interpreting the collected data. Close interaction between the student and the research advisor is encouraged at all stages of this activity.

- c. Students will report their findings and conclusions in a final paper, to be submitted to the supervisor by the end of the second semester of the Qualifying Year (April 25th for Fall admission, August 25th for Winter admission). The final report should be written in APA format and not exceed 30-40 pages (double-spaced), inclusive of references, tables, and figures. As a guideline, the paper should be structured in a manner resembling a research paper submitted to a peer-reviewed journal appropriate to the topic. The final submission will be evaluated by the supervisor and a letter grade will be assigned for SCSD 686.
- d. After completing the project, students are required to present their findings to the SCSD faculty and students in the SCSD annual research day, typically held each November. (See Section F - SCSD Annual Research Day.) The presentation will be a poster or short oral presentation of the project, depending on the format adopted for the Research Day event. This presentation will not be graded or evaluated.

Students who successfully complete all required elements of the Qualifying Year will be allowed to maintain their registration status in the PhD program and will proceed directly into the Comprehensive Examination period (PhD-2). In the event of unsatisfactory progress or failure of required elements during the Qualifying Year, the student will be asked to withdraw immediately from the PhD program. In rare circumstances, a student whose performance during the Qualifying Year is marginal, or a student who “opts out” of this program, may be permitted to complete a M.Sc. thesis after withdrawing from the PhD program. In this event, following successful completion of all Qualifying Year requirements, the student would be transferred to the MSc Research program and register for one semester at the M.Sc. 2 level and complete 24 thesis credits (M.Sc. Thesis I & II, 12 credits each).

E.3 Comprehensive Exam (PhD-2 year)

E.3.1. Objectives – The Comprehensive Exam requires the student to write one MINOR paper (not related to the student’s PhD thesis topic area) and one MAJOR paper in an area that may be relevant and lead to the development of the thesis topic. The main objectives of the Comprehensive Exam are:

(1) to build the student knowledge within the field of Communication Sciences and Disorders;

(2) to develop and evaluate the student’s ability to synthesize and critically review and evaluate original research literature and to formulate a set of logical arguments in writing (critical thinking, argument mapping);

(3) to familiarize the student with literature in one new unfamiliar area within Communication Sciences and Disorders (Minor paper);

(4) to build an in-depth understanding of some aspect of their PhD thesis area (Major paper). The major paper should help the student expand the depth and breadth of their knowledge in their thesis topic area, to prepare them for the process of developing their thesis proposal in the PhD-3 year (see Section E.4).

(5) to practice independent scientific writing similar to a single-authored research paper;

(6) to ensure that the student is prepared to proceed as a candidate for the PhD degree with the necessary skills to conduct and write a dissertation.

E.3.2 General Exam Format – The general format and timeline of the Comprehensive Exam is as follows (refer E.3.9 for schematic timeline):

First month (or earlier for students in the Qualifying year program):

- For the *MINOR paper*, the student and the supervisor will jointly identify one topic area from the list below in [Table 2](#). The minor topic area should be selected with the goal of exposing the student to a broader range of problems in a field of Communication Sciences and Disorders. For this reason, the topic should be in an area that the student is not yet familiar with.
- For the *MAJOR paper*, the student and supervisor will jointly identify a *preliminary* question within the student’s thesis topic area.
- Based on these choices, the composition of the student’s Supervisory Committee will be structured to optimally support the student’s experience and success during the comprehensive exam period. The student and supervisor must agree on the committee membership. The student’s supervisor is responsible for lining up faculty to serve on the student’s comprehensive committee, consulting with the student and GPD as needed. The committee will include the supervisor plus two faculty members

with expertise in areas relevant to the student's major and minor paper topics³. The committee will meet (without the student) and will either choose a question for the MINOR paper in the selected area from an established list or develop a new question. The student and supervisor will work together to develop the question for the major paper; the supervisory committee will provide input (in writing or in a meeting) to refine the major question if necessary. The student will send the final version of each question to the GPD for approval. The final version of the questions will be provided in writing to the student by the GPD, along with information on the specific deadlines for each paper. The rubric that the committee will use to evaluate the papers is found in [Appendix B](#). Once the questions are presented to the student they cannot be changed without the approval of the supervisory committee and the GPD.

- **Students are strongly encouraged to consult their supervisory committee if any of the assigned questions are problematic**, e.g. difficult to interpret, target literature that seems too narrow or too broad, there is difficulty adapting the scope of their essay to the page limit of the paper or any other issues that may arise. Students are advised to address such global issues early on (within the first month) to avoid serious delays in their progress.

Months 2-9:

- After the final versions of the two questions have been provided *in writing* to the student (typically by the end of the first month of PhD-2 year), the student will begin to conduct independent research and analysis of each question in reference to the empirical literature and prepares two separate papers which respond appropriately to each of the two questions. The first paper (usually the MINOR) is due 2 months after receiving the questions and the second paper is due 6 months after receiving the questions (details outlined below in ***Submission/Evaluation Procedures***).
- The **comprehensive exam is evaluated by the supervisory committee** who (a) rate each paper according to a list of criteria outlined on the Comprehensive Evaluation Form (see [Appendix B](#)), (b) provide written comments either on the paper or in a separate document to elaborate on and clarify the ratings, and (C) render a pass/revise judgment of each paper. This evaluation should be completed within 3 weeks after receiving the paper. A detailed evaluation of each paper will be conducted by at least 2 members of the supervisory committee. If two readers cannot reach a consensus on the pass/revise decision, a third committee member will conduct a detailed evaluation and the pass/revise judgment will be determined by a majority vote of the committee. Exceptionally, the supervisory committee may enlist an additional SCSD faculty member to evaluate the paper in place of the third committee member if a reader with more expertise in the content area of the paper is needed. After receiving the decision and evaluation form (by email) the student will meet with the committee to discuss the decision and the evaluation ratings and comments.
- If revisions are required, the student has to resubmit a revised paper that addresses the committee's concerns. The revision will be due at the end of month 5 (typically

³ Associate and Adjunct faculty in SCSD can serve on this committee.

January 31) for the 1st paper and at the end of month 8 (typically April 31) for the 2nd paper. This allows one month to prepare the revision when the paper is submitted according to the specified deadlines, i.e. at the end of month 4 (typically December 31 for 1st paper) and at the end of month 7 (typically March 31st for the 2nd paper). However, if a paper is submitted before the deadline, then the time allowed for the revision period will increase accordingly.

- The revised paper will be evaluated following the same process as the initial paper except that the final decision will be either pass or fail (revise is not an option). (The steps following a fail are outlined in section E.3.8 below)
- After both papers have received a pass the student will give a 20-30 minute public **oral presentation of the MAJOR topic** to students and faculty in SCSD. The talk will be followed by an open 15-20 minute discussion period. The objective of the talk is practice presenting and discussing a body of research. The talk and discussion period will not be formally evaluated. The talk will be held within one month after the paper received a pass, i.e. in month 9 or 10, (typically May or June) of the PhD-2 year.

Table 2: List of topics from which the MINOR paper question must be selected:

1. Acquired neurogenic language disorders
2. Acquired neurogenic speech (motor) disorders
3. Normal speech production and perception
4. Hearing science
5. Developmental language disorders
6. Developmental speech/phonological disorders
7. Normal language development
8. Normal language processing
9. Deafness and hearing impairments
10. Communication disorders in special populations
11. Physiological bases of communication sciences and disorders
12. Physiological bases of swallowing and its disorders
13. Voice sciences and disorders
14. Modelling in communication sciences and disorders

E3.3 Exam period requirements and formatting guidelines

- During the exam period, it is the responsibility of the student to undertake independent review of the literature which allows them to develop an insightful and empirically-defensible response to each question in the form of a concise, well organized scientific essay.
- Each paper should include: a title page, a clarification and/or motivation of the research question and a summary of the paper's approach to it, a critical discussion of related controversies, and a final evaluation that reflects the student's conclusions drawn from their analysis of the literature. Figures and tables should be integrated in the running text (if possible) or placed in an appendix and referred to in the text. The maximal number of graphic elements (figures and tables) is four, taking up no more than 3 pages total.

- The minor paper must not exceed 15 pages and the major paper must not exceed 20 pages (excluding title page, references, figures and tables). Both papers should be written in either 11 Pt Arial font or 12 Pt Times font, double-spaced; 1 inch margins; APA or MLA format.
- Submission process: each paper should be submitted by electronically (by email) to the supervisory committee and also to the GPD and GPC. The paper should be submitted in word document format for easy mark-up with comments etc.

It is crucial that the student demonstrate the ability to select and critically integrate the *most relevant* literature pertaining to each question and to adopt a critical position based on their own analysis. While it is expected that the student will complete the exam independently, s/he may consult members of their supervisory committee to discuss their research topic(s) and/or the general structure of their paper(s). The role of the supervisor and the supervisory committee is to provide guidance. They can answer questions, discuss relevant topics and direct the student to relevant resources. With respect to the writing, the supervisor and committee can provide general feedback regarding the coherence of the paper, but they are not permitted to give detailed input on the comprehensive exam paper(s) before they are formally submitted by the student. Analogous to submitting a review paper to a journal as a sole author, the guidance from your supervisor, committee or peers should not be at a level that would warrant co-authorship.

E.3.4 Additional Support – In addition to supervisor and committee guidance, other resources are available to support the student through the comprehensive experience:

- An **information session** will be held for students and faculty by the Graduate Program Director (GPD) early in the fall and winter semesters. The GPD will give an overview of the comprehensive process, answer questions, offer advice and solicit feedback to clarify and improve the comprehensive experience.
- Students can read previous comprehensive papers if their peers are willing to share them.
- McGill offers a number of workshops on scientific writing etc., e.g., within the Skillsets program (<https://www.mcgill.ca/skillsets/>) or through Graphos (<https://www.mcgill.ca/graphos>)
- For critical thinking and argument mapping, the following website may provide relevant information: <https://www.reasoninglab.com/> (Note: this is a commercial website but it offers basic information at no cost)
- Students often consult with and support each other. Students may also discuss questions related to writing and organizing the paper with other students, but the actual selection and evaluation of the literature should be done independently. Any questions regarding the acceptable level of help from others should be discussed with the supervisor, the committee, or the GPD. Reading and commenting on a

draft paper or papers prepared by your peers is encouraged as this exercise also helps build critical thinking and writing skills.

E.3.5 Submission/Evaluation Procedures (see section E.3.9 below showing the timeline for the Comprehensive year). The two papers must be submitted in a successive manner: The 1st paper (usually the MINOR paper) must be submitted to the committee no later than 2 months after the student receives the questions (e.g., December 1st if the questions are received by October 1st; April 1st if questions are received by February 1st). It will be evaluated by the committee within 3 weeks. This means that the student will receive the committee's feedback on the first paper early enough to help them when preparing the 2nd paper. If a revision of Paper 1 is required (see below), the revised version of Paper 1 must be submitted within one month of receiving committee feedback, thus prior to the first submission of the 2nd Paper, which is due 6 months after the student received the questions (i.e., normally either by April 1st or August 1st). This timeline will ensure that potential problems identified in Paper 1 (MINOR) can be avoided in Paper 2 (MAJOR).

The students' supervisory committee is charged with providing feedback on any submitted paper(s) within three weeks of submission (unless special circumstances are identified by the committee in advance). The scientific merit of each independent paper will be evaluated by the committee, leading to a pass/fail decision for each paper at the final stage. The committee will complete an evaluation form and also provide written comments to the student for each paper. The completed evaluation form will be shared with the student during the evaluation process. The student will meet with the committee to discuss the evaluation regardless of the outcome (pass or revise), unless the student and the committee agree that a meeting is not needed. It is the supervisor's responsibility to set up the evaluation meeting and to give written feedback (evaluation form + comments) to the student.

Papers are completed sequentially because students often progress more efficiently with their second paper after receiving evaluation and feedback on a first paper, especially those less experienced with literature review or scientific writing. It is recommended that the MINOR paper be completed first and the MAJOR paper second for several reasons. The MINOR paper provides experience with all aspects of the comprehensive exam. The feedback provided by the committee on the first submitted paper often helps students while writing the second paper. Thus skills gained in completing the MINOR paper are expected to lead to improvements on the MAJOR paper, which will be particularly beneficial to the student when they begin developing their thesis proposal. It is also more efficient for students to prepare their oral presentation of the MAJOR paper shortly after they finish it rather than 3-4 months later.

If there are good reasons, the MAJOR paper may be submitted first and the MINOR paper second. This can be requested by either the committee or the student, and the specific reasons need to be explained and discussed between student and committee in a meeting (default) or, if both student and committee members agree, via email. The

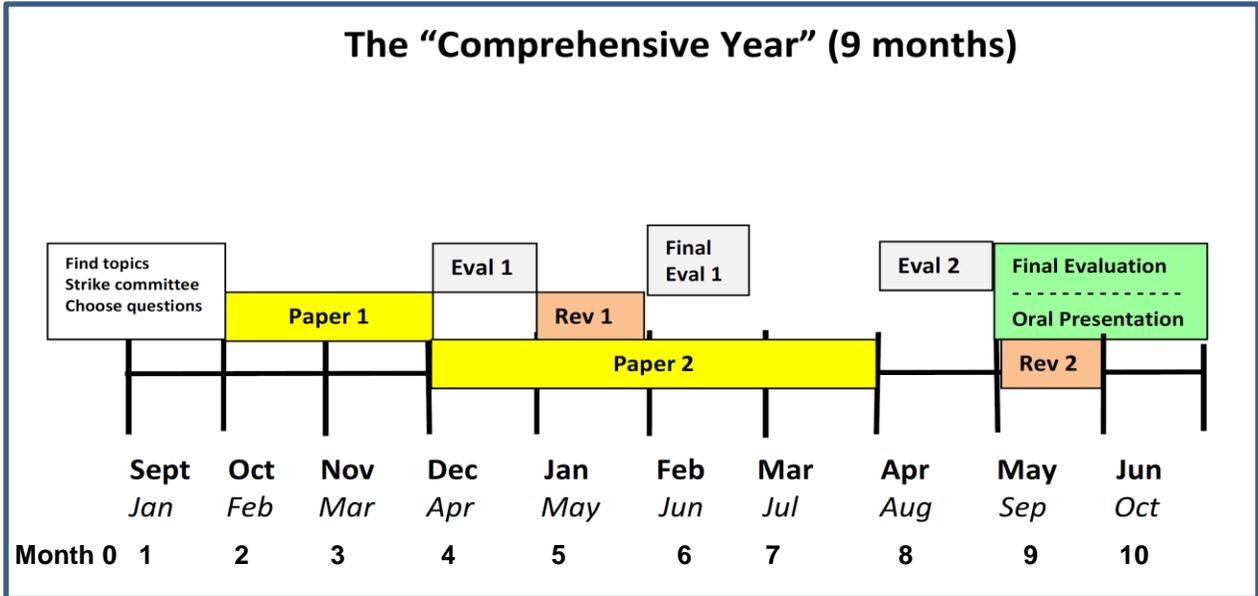
final decision as to whether the MAJOR paper should be submitted first will be made by the committee (consensus or 2/3 majority). If so, the decision and its underlying rationale have to be documented in writing (by the supervisor) and be (a) sent to the student and (b) added to the student's record. In addition, the committee and the student together may extend the deadline for the first (MAJOR) paper (e.g., by 2-4 weeks), however, the second paper would still be due 6 months after the questions have been made available.

E.3.6 Revision Procedures - Before rendering a pass/fail decision, the committee may request revisions to one or both papers to address unsatisfactory performance in one or more of the components rated on the evaluation form. When revisions are required, it is the responsibility of the committee to arrive at a consensus about what specific actions (i.e. major and minor revisions) are necessary for the student to achieve a "pass" for the paper; this feedback should be outlined in the written comments provided with the evaluation form with further clarification provided (if needed) when the student meets with their committee to discuss the evaluation of the paper. The student must submit a revised paper which adequately responds to the concerns raised by the original submission. (see Figure 1 below showing the timeline for the Comprehensive year). The revised paper must be accompanied by a succinct letter written by the student outlining how the major concerns raised by the committee were addressed in the revised paper (similar to the 'response letter' to reviewers of a manuscript submitted for publication). Also, any issues raised in the evaluation that did not result in change(s) in the paper should be explained, e.g. they were beyond the scope of the paper or were no longer relevant once you re-directed the focus. This letter should facilitate re-evaluation of the paper for the committee by providing a road map to new structure and content introduced in the revised paper.

E.3.7 Oral Presentation After both comprehensive papers have received a passing grade the student will orally present their work in the MAJOR topic area to SCSD students and faculty. The oral presentation should typically take place within one month of passing both comprehensive papers. The oral presentation is a mandatory requirement which marks the completion of the comprehensive exam, although it will not be formally evaluated. The oral presentation should be approximately 20-30 minutes in duration and be tailored to a knowledgeable lay audience. The presentation is followed by a discussion period.

E.3.8 Comprehensive Failure Policy – After submitting a revised paper, if either the major or the minor paper receives a fail judgment, the student will be offered a supplemental exam question in the same topic area in which the failure occurred. The student will receive a new question selected by the committee and must submit a new paper. The deadline for submitting the supplemental paper or papers will be determined by the supervisory committee. If the student is required to complete a supplemental for the 1st paper the supervisory committee may revise the timeline for submitting the 2nd paper. A supplemental paper will be evaluated strictly on a pass/fail basis with no opportunity to revise. If a supplemental paper – either the major or the minor topic – receives a fail judgment the student will be withdrawn from the PhD program immediately.

E.3.9 Comprehensive Exam: Step-by-step procedures and timeline



Month 0

The student registers for course SCSD 701 (which has no credit weight) during their first semester of their PhD-2 year.

Month 1 (or earlier for students in the Qualifying Year):

The student and supervisor jointly identify a preliminary question for the MAJOR paper and the topic for the MINOR paper.

The student’s Supervisory Committee is formed or revised to align with the topics selected for the Major and Minor papers and approves the questions for each paper.

Months 2 & 3:

The student receives the questions from the GPD by the beginning of month 2. The student works on the 1st paper (usually the MINOR) which is due at end of Month 3.

Month 4:

Student begins working on the 2nd paper while the committee evaluates the first paper.

Month 5:

The student receives feedback on the 1st paper and spends this month revising the paper, if necessary. When require, the revised paper 1 is due at end of month 5.

Work on the 2nd paper will continue or will be paused while working on the revision which should be submitted one month after feedback was received.

Month 6 and 7:

Student continues to work on the 2nd paper while the committee evaluates the revised 1st paper.

2nd paper is due at end of month 7

Month 8:

Committee evaluates the 2nd paper.

Month 9 & 10:

Student revises 2nd paper, if necessary.

Student gives oral presentation on major paper.

E.4 Thesis Proposal

As the final required element of the PhD program, each student will undertake independent research under the guidance of the supervisor and prepare an original PhD thesis. The student must play a principal role in arriving at the research question, developing the rationale and methods of the thesis, implementing the methods to collect data and analyze the data, and must independently prepare the written thesis in accordance with published guidelines of the Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies Office. For details go to <https://www.mcgill.ca/gps/thesis>

E.4.1 Written Thesis Proposal

Prior to undertaking the thesis research, the student must submit a detailed written thesis proposal to the student's supervisory committee for approval. The proposal should be developed during the first 6-7 months after completion of the comprehensive requirement and must be approved by the end of PhD-3. It should include, but not be limited to, the following components:

1. Title page;
2. Introduction, background, literature review, i.e., the theoretical and empirical context for undertaking the study;
3. Motivation for the study, research hypotheses and objectives;
4. Methodology for each objective, including the rationale for the choice of methods, data analysis and interpretation, potential problems, and alternative strategies;
5. Preliminary results to date, if applicable (can include in Introduction or Methods if appropriate);
6. Anticipated original contributions to field, significance, and anticipated merits of the proposed research;
7. Confirmation of access to all resources required to conduct the research;
8. An estimated *detailed* timeline for the completion of *all parts* of the thesis project, including appropriate ethics approval(s), data collection and analysis for each study, deadlines for manuscripts and/or chapters of the thesis, and anticipated defense date (see example below in table 3). Also, anticipated threats to this timeline and its feasibility as well as strategies to deal with them should be included;
9. Bibliography.

When the complete thesis proposal is ready the student will share it with their supervisory committee. The committee will have 4 weeks to read and review the proposal. The supervisory committee will provide written feedback prior to the oral presentation.

- **Meetings with the GPD.** To facilitate the proposal process, the Graduate Program Director (GPD) will hold informal monthly meetings with all students (and their supervisors if available) who are in the PhD-3 year and are working on their proposal. These meetings are optional. The goal is to have an interactive exchange about the students' progress, to learn from each other, discuss challenges and identify solutions, and to promote a smooth overall experience during this critical stage of the PhD program.

E.4.4 Oral Presentation of the Thesis Proposal

Following submission of the written proposal, the student will give an oral presentation outlining their proposed research to their thesis committee. Taking advice from the committee members into account, the PhD student and the supervisor will decide if the oral presentation will be public (open to SCSD students and faculty) or not. A public presentation has the advantage of providing an opportunity (a) to receive feedback and suggestions from students and faculty members beyond the committee, and (b) to practice public speaking. The presentation will be approximately 20 minutes and should touch on all of the basic elements that are required in the written proposal (outlined above). A question/discussion period of 15-40 minutes with the committee will follow the presentation. After that, other members of the audience (if present) will be encouraged to join the discussion, ask questions and share comments.

The goal of the oral presentation is to discuss the proposed project with the committee and to guide the student in ways that will clarify and improve the conceptual and methodological aspects of the project. This is also an opportunity for the student to seek advice and input from their committee, thus the PhD student is welcome to raise issues/questions with the committee. Immediately following interactive discussion, the committee will discuss and evaluate the thesis proposal in closed session (without the student or others present) and may suggest revisions, as deemed necessary. The student's supervisor will take notes to summarize this discussion and will send a draft summary of the committee's feedback (prepared after the meeting) to the committee to review and suggest changes. This draft summary will include a recommendation to either approve or to revise the proposal.

The supervisor will compose a final feedback summary (incorporating any changes from the committee) that will be signed by each committee member to show that they confirm the status of the proposal (approve or revise). This document will be shared with the student and added to the student's academic record. If the student is required to revise or clarify the written proposal, the time line for the revision will be decided jointly by the student and the committee. The revision must be reviewed by the committee; however, a second oral presentation is not required. A second feedback summary document (assessing the revised proposal), approved by all committee members, will be appended to the original feedback summary in the student's academic record to show that the revised proposal was approved.

After the proposal is approved, the student may need to make a substantial change in their project. The student should discuss any changes in their project with their

supervisor to determine if they need to consult with their committee for additional input or formal re-approval. If it is unclear whether a change is substantial, it is the best to share it with the committee to avoid problems when submitting the final thesis.

E.4.5 Thesis Proposal Approval

The thesis proposal must be approved by the supervisory committee before the student submits the research for ethics approval or initiates thesis research that goes beyond collecting and analyzing pilot data. However, if the committee agrees, previously collected pilot or preliminary data can be included as part of the thesis. Before initiating data collection, the student must ensure that the proposed research (and any related research) is ethically approved by all relevant boards (IRB at the Faculty of Medicine, REB at the MUHC, ACC for animal research) and committees that govern where the research will be performed, and that they acquaint themselves fully with these ethical procedures. Note – any substantial changes to the research protocol (e.g. revision to the consent form, adding experimental conditions, increasing sample size) also need to be have ethics approval; this is typically accomplished by submitting a supplemental ethics approval form. Note: All McGill University students engaging in human subjects research must complete human research ethics training prior to submitting an application for ethics review. This requirement can be fulfilled by completing the Tri-Council Policy Statement 2 (TCPS2) Course on Research Ethics (CORE). Details can be found at: <http://pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/education/tutorial-didacticiel/>

E.5 Final Thesis Submission and Evaluation

E5.1 *Written PhD Thesis*

The PhD thesis is one of the most significant accomplishments for students enrolled in a PhD program. As most procedures, timelines, types of permitted styles and formats for PhD theses at SCSD follow McGill guidelines that are subject to occasional updates and changes, the current thesis guidelines for thesis preparation are found at: <http://www.mcgill.ca/gps/thesis>. The information found on this website will answer questions such as: How long should the thesis be? How many articles have to be included in a manuscript-based thesis? Can co-authored articles be part of the thesis, and does the order of authors play a role? What software can I use when preparing the (e-)thesis? Who can serve as an examiner or an oral defense committee member, and how are they selected? When does the first thesis version have to be submitted in order to complete the degree at a certain date? What resources are available at McGill that can help advance writing (and other) skills?

PhD students are expected to familiarize themselves with the most recent documents provided on this website and its corresponding sections and to discuss any questions they may have with their supervisor, their Supervisory Committee, and the GPD. It is essential that the student is fully aware of all requirements, procedures and deadlines related to their thesis project, the writing, revision and submission of their (e-)thesis, and the oral thesis defense (including internal and external reviewers, committee members, etc.). Knowledge of these details is also necessary to write a realistic thesis proposal.

E.5.2 Thesis Approval and submission

Before the student can formally submit the thesis to the Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies office **each member of the student's supervisory committee must review the thesis and approve it for submission**. Committee members can communicate their notice of approval in an email to the student, supervisor, GPD and the GPC. First the supervisor and then the committee should be given at least one month to complete this review. Following this review, the student typically needs some time to integrate the comments in a revised version, which then needs to be approved by the committee members. In some cases, more than one such cycle (read/comment – revise – approve revisions) may be required, each of which can take up to 2 months (sometimes longer). It is important for students to include this review time in their planning. **At least 4 months should be reserved for the review process between completing the first full version of the thesis and the 'initial thesis submission' date**. The review cycles serve the important goal of ensuring that the thesis' quality meets international standards and is likely to pass subsequent evaluations by the internal and external examiners and the Oral Defense Committee. It is also prudent for students to inform their committee in advance of when they expect to send the complete thesis to their committee so committee members can allocate the time needed for this task.

E.5.3 Initial Thesis Submission

Once the thesis is approved for submission, the student must prepare the thesis for initial submission following the specifications by the thesis office; details can be found at: <https://www.mcgill.ca/gps/thesis>. A thesis submission form must also be completed and submitted with the thesis; this requires the specification of an internal examiner and external examiner for the thesis. Potential internal and external examiners are selected jointly by the supervisor and student, consulting with the GPD as needed. It is the supervisor's responsibility to identify and contact an appropriate internal and external examiner who does not present a conflict of interest and to obtain their agreement to serve in this role. Both examiners should be identified at least one month before the initial thesis submission. For details on selecting thesis examiners go to <https://www.mcgill.ca/gradsupervision/timelines/exams/selecting-examiners>. Should the student wish to pursue McGill's paid *Doctoral Internship Program*, specific deadlines need to be considered *prior to* the initial thesis submission (for details see Section F.5 below and <https://www.mcgill.ca/gps/funding/dip>),

E.5.4 Oral PhD Thesis Defense

The GPD is responsible for setting up the oral defense committee. Once the (e-) thesis has been submitted, the GPD can begin identifying members of the oral defense committee and a tentative oral defense date. The thesis office will inform the GPD of the earliest date that the defense can be held. The supervisor and student will provide input to the GPD regarding relevant choices for the oral defense committee. The composition of the committee has to meet a number of criteria and options should be discussed with

the student and confirmed by the GPD. More details can be found at <http://www.mcgill.ca/gps/thesis/thesis-guidelines/oral-defence>

E.5.5 Timeline for PhD Thesis Submissions and Oral Defenses

To avoid last-minute surprises and to reduce stress during the last phases of thesis preparation, oral thesis defense, and possible revisions, **students and their supervisors should determine likely dates for the thesis submission and oral defense well in advance (i.e., ~ 1 year)**. Below is a list of the main steps during the phase leading up to the thesis defense, along with a graphical illustration:

-11 months:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Complete first rough draft (of all parts) of the thesis, ready for feedback by supervisor + Together with supervisor, determine likely defense date + Identify and contact ext. and int. examiners + Inform Advisory Committee about timeline and ensure they will block time for thesis evaluation 	
-10 months:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Get feedback from supervisor and revise thesis accordingly (1 or more cycles) 	
-6 months:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Get feedback from Advisory committee and revise accordingly (1 or more cycles) 	
-2 months:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Get final approval from Advisory committee + INITIAL THESIS SUBMISSION (GPS will forward thesis to ext. and int. examiners) + Student may take doctoral internship or work on manuscripts or thesis defense presentation 	
-2 weeks:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + External and Internal examiners submit their evaluations. 	
0:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + THESIS DEFENSE + Oral Defense Committee (ODC) determines required thesis revisions 	
+1 week or more:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Final revisions (minor: to be approved by supervisor; major: to be approved by ODC) 	
By GPS deadline:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + FINAL THESIS SUBMISSION (and approval by supervisor) 	

- **-12 months:** Student and supervisor(s) identify an **internal thesis examiner** (from McGill, including at SCSD) and an **external thesis examiner** (from another university, NOT McGill), and contact them to confirm their availabilities (in writing), including absence of conflicts of interest (<https://mcgill.ca/gps/thesis/thesis-guidelines/examination/thesis-examiners>).
- **-10 to -2 months:** Prepare a complete first version of your thesis, following all requirements regarding format etc. (<https://mcgill.ca/gps/thesis/thesis-guidelines/preparation>) and have (1) the supervisor and (2) the Supervisory committee members read and (ultimately) approve it. This may take several rounds

- of revisions, each of which may last 2 months.
- **-3 months:** If you are interested in an internship, discuss possible options with your supervisor and consult the DIP websites (<https://www.mcgill.ca/gps/funding/dip>). Specific deadlines may need to be met and to be considered while planning your thesis submission (see also **point F.5** below).
 - **-3 months:** Prior to the initial thesis submission, you and your supervisor you may want to **identify potential members of your Oral PhD Defense Committee**. This information should be shared with the GPD who will determine the members of the oral defense committee and arrange the defense date in coordination with GPS.
 - **-2 months:** Approximately 7-8 weeks prior to the defense date, **submit the initial version of your thesis online** (<https://mcgill.ca/gps/thesis/thesis-guidelines/initial-submission>). GPS may need up to 2 weeks of processing time and will then forward this initial thesis version to the internal and external examiners, who will have up to 4 weeks to submit their written evaluations. GPS will notify the GPD of the earliest date for scheduling the defense. The defense must be scheduled 4 weeks in advance.
 - **-1 week:** The examiners' reports typically arrive at the GPS office around 1 week prior to the defense date. GPS will send these reports to the members of the Oral Defense Committee, including the Pro-Dean who will chair the oral defense session. (The student will also receive a copy but only after the oral defense).
 - **-1 week:** Once the reports arrive, SCSD can formally announce (and advertise) the oral defense session.
 - **After a (successful) Thesis Defense**, the student may need to revise the thesis and receive final approval from the supervisor or the defense committee before the 'final' version can be submitted online. This may take a few days or several weeks, so make sure there is enough time between the oral defense date and the deadline for the final thesis submission. **After the PhD candidate has submitted the final version, the supervisor has to approve it electronically within the McGill system**, only then the submission has been completed (but please check McGill websites as these requirements are subject to changes).

The PhD candidate should familiarize themselves early on with all formal **requirements regarding possible thesis formats permitted at McGill**. In some cases, just creating the final searchable PDF version (with a required Table of Contents etc.) that needs to be submitted online can take several days (even if the WinWord or LateX version already looks great).

In order to complete your degree requirements within a given semester, there are specific deadlines to meet regarding the initial thesis submission, the thesis defense date, and the final thesis submission (after a revision). **Missing these deadlines usually requires the student to enroll (and pay enrollment fees) for an additional term** (for more details see <https://www.mcgill.ca/gps/thesis/thesis-guidelines> and corresponding subsections, e.g., <https://mcgill.ca/gps/thesis/deadlines>).

F. SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES AND EXPERIENCES

There are diverse opportunities to expand the depth and breadth of your doctoral training; the major ones are listed below. These elements are not required for degree completion but participation in these offerings will enrich your academic and professional development.

F.1 Department Colloquia and Research Seminars

Whenever possible, PhD students are expected to attend departmental colloquia and to participate in research seminars as an important complement to their research program. Upcoming talks will be announced in emails and on the SCSD webpage.

F.2 Teaching

Students who have teaching as one of their goals will be encouraged to take opportunities to assist in teaching M.Sc. Applied students, whenever possible. The department will treat such teaching as a part of the learning experience of the student; discussion of aims and techniques as well as advice and criticism will be involved. Students may choose to enroll in a graduate level course on teaching as part of their coursework.

F.3 Graphos

Graphos teaches graduate students and postdocs how to become accomplished scholarly communicators by offering different ways for graduate students to become more efficient, precise, and effective scholarly communicators. This is accomplished through courses, workshops, peer writing groups, tutorial sessions and more. For details go to <https://www.mcgill.ca/graphos>

F.4 Skillsets Program

The Skillsets program offers a wide variety of co-curricular workshops for graduate students to optimize their graduate education experience, enhance research skills or acquire relevant skills. Graduate students receive regular email communication on the Skillsets activities. For details go to <https://www.mcgill.ca/skillsets/>

F.5 McGill's *Doctoral Internship Program (DIP)*

Presently (Fall 2019), McGill offers a *Doctoral Internship Program (DIP)* that provides funding (\$2,000/month) for up to three months to work for a company or organization after the initial thesis submission. Currently, DIP applications have to be submitted 2 months in advance of the proposed start date and prior to initial

thesis submission. Interested students can find more information (including eligibility criteria) at the DIP website (<https://www.mcgill.ca/gps/funding/dip>) and should first discuss this option with their supervisor(s). (An internship may conflict with plans to prepare manuscripts for publication.) If an internship is considered, related deadlines need to be included in one's individual timeline when planning the initial thesis submission and thesis defense.

F.6 SCSD Annual Research Day

This annual event (typically held each November) is an opportunity to learn about the research activities and scientific accomplishments of SCSD students and faculty and to promote interaction and collaboration within the department. Details will be provided at the beginning of each fall semester.

(Note: a research presentation is required for those students who have successfully completed the Qualifying Year Option project)

F.7 Centre for Research on Brain, Language, and Music (CRBLM).

The CRBLM brings together faculty and graduate students from diverse programs at McGill, University of Montreal, University of Quebec at Montreal and Concordia University. All MSc and PhD students in SCSD are eligible for student membership in the CRBLM and can register online at: <http://crblm.ca/members/become-a-member>

The CRBLM supports student research development in many ways including invited speaker series, an annual Student Research Day, research funding opportunities, travel awards, specialized student workshops, reading groups. How-to and informational workshops are organized during the year. These workshops focus on a wide range of areas from research tools and techniques (Matlab, EEG, acoustic analysis) to preparing students for grant writing and academic and industry employment preparation.

F.8 Centre for Interdisciplinary Research in Rehabilitation of Greater Montreal (CRIR)

Students enrolled at an affiliated university directed by a full CRIR member can become members of the CRIR General Assembly. Details can be found at crir.ca

The CRIR supports student research development through

- CRIR Student Research Days
- CRIR Research Seminar Series
- Student funding opportunities
- Possibility of participation in cross-disciplinary research projects focused on rehabilitation (aiming to contribute comprehensively to the autonomy and social integration of persons with physical disabilities, including communication disorders).

APPENDIX A
McGill School of Communication Sciences and Disorders
Supervisory Agreement Form

Role and Responsibilities of supervisory committee member:

The supervisory committee **provides input** to support the student as they develop their thesis proposal and conduct their research, analyze data and prepare the written thesis. The student may meet individually with their respective committee members for this input.

The supervisory committee will **evaluate and approve** the thesis proposal and the final written thesis. Feedback on a major stage of work, (e.g., thesis proposal or written thesis draft), should be provided within 3 weeks of the date the student submits the work in order to allow them to progress in the program in an appropriate manner.

The Supervisory Committee **must meet at least once a year** (video conference is acceptable).

In cases where the student, supervisor, and/or committee members cannot agree on the proper course of the student's research program, the Graduate Program Director and/or Director may be called into mediate the disagreement to the satisfaction of all parties. For example, a compromise research approach could be suggested, the supervisory committee membership could be altered, the student could be required to change the research topic or a new supervisor or co-supervisor could be assigned to the student, as needed.

Procedure for Supervisory Meetings:

- It is the joint responsibility of the student and their supervisor to ensure that regular (at least annual) supervisory committee meetings are held.
- It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that there is a written record of each committee meeting in order to track ongoing progress (discussions; feedback; decisions) regarding the student's work.
- After each meeting the student should prepare a summary and share it with their committee; the summary should be edited, as needed, until the student and committee agree that it is accurate.
- It is the student's responsibility to forward the final summary (signed by both student and committee) to the Graduate Program Director (GPD) and the Graduate Program Coordinator (GPC) for placement in their graduate file (students admitted before Fall 2017) or to upload the summary to MyProgress (students admitted in Fall 2017 or later).

I have read the information outline above and accept these responsibilities as a member of the supervisory committee of <Enter Student's Name> .

External Supervisor name: _____

External Supervisor Signature: _____

Date: _____

