

**Graduate Program, Department of Biochemistry  
LETTER OF AGREEMENT**

***Signing of this Agreement attests to compliance with:***

**1. University regulations and guidelines governing graduate students and supervisors**

- General University policies, procedures and guidelines (<http://www.mcgill.ca/secretariat/policies/>).
- Policies regarding all students (<http://www.mcgill.ca/secretariat/policies/students>) including the *Handbook on Student Rights and Responsibilities*.
- Policies regarding graduate students, graduate programs and supervisors, defined by Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies in the *Graduate e-Calendar* (<http://www.mcgill.ca/gps/students>)

**2. University regulations on the ethical conduct of research** (<http://www.mcgill.ca/secretariat/policies/research>), overseen by the Office of the Vice-Principal Research and International Relations

**3. University safety regulations**, established by Environment Health and Safety (<http://www.mcgill.ca/ehs/>).

**4. Regulations and guidelines of the Biochemistry Graduate Programs**, documented on the Biochemistry Graduate Studies site (<http://www.mcgill.ca/biochemistry/graduate-studies-2>), and overseen by the Graduate Program Director (GPD), the Graduate Advisory Committee (GAC) and the Chair.

***Financial Commitment***

- All students receive a stipend paid from the supervisor's grant and/or student scholarships. The student is responsible for seeking alternate sources of funding through scholarships from the University and external granting agencies.
- The supervisor is responsible for providing sufficient resources for the student's research project.
- Students may request an unpaid leave of absence for medical, parental, personal/family health or military service, on a term-by-term basis for up to one year, and requiring appropriate documentation (*Graduate e-Calendar*, Leave of Absence).

***Research Progress***

- Regular reviews of student performance are mandatory (*Graduate e-Calendar*, Research Progress Tracking).
- The student's **Research Advisory Committee (RAC)** consists of the supervisor and two other faculty members, one from the Biochemistry Department and one from another department. The RAC should have appropriate expertise to evaluate progress, and is established within the first semester of study.
- The first RAC meeting must be no later than in the third semester, and at least once each following year. Failure to hold annual RAC meetings will be **grounds for withdrawal**.
- The student is responsible to arrange RAC meetings, and submit the evaluation reports signed by the student and RAC members to the Student Affairs Officer of Biochemistry.
- If a grade is "conditional", the RAC will indicate conditions required for a "satisfactory" grade. If a grade is "unsatisfactory", the student may be asked to leave the program. A second "unsatisfactory" grade will be **grounds for withdrawal**.
- RAC approval is required to submit the M.Sc. thesis, and to present the Junior and Senior Seminars.

***Timeline and Comprehensive Examinations (Research Seminars, Thesis Proposal)***

- Residency requirements, timing of Comprehensive Examinations, and expected times to completion are on the Biochemistry Graduate Studies site and the attached Timeline Chart.
- Degrees must be completed before the end of M.Sc. year 3, and Ph.D. year 7. Registration beyond time limitation will not be allowed.
- M.Sc. students may transfer (fast-track) to the Ph.D. program in their second year. Transfer requires permission of the supervisor, completion of required courses, and a "Strong" grade in the Research Seminar I (**Junior**) presented to and evaluated by the Department in the third semester. A "Weak" grade will require a second evaluation by the GAC.
- Ph.D. students must pass the **Ph.D. Thesis Proposal** oral examination in their sixth semester, evaluated by the GAC. The examination may be taken a second time if not passed, but a second "Fail" grade will be **grounds for withdrawal**, with the possibility of submitting an M.Sc. thesis instead.
- Ph.D. students must pass the Research Seminar II (**Senior**) presented to and evaluated by the Department, around 6 months before submission of the thesis.



## TIMELINE CHART

Fall Start	Winter Start		MSc thesis	MSc transfer to PhD (fast-track)	PhD (direct entry after BSc)	PhD (after MSc)
Fall 1	Winter 1 Summer 1	semester 1	MSc1 RAC established	MSc1 RAC established	PhD1 RAC established	PhD2 RAC established
Winter 1 Summer 1	Fall 1	semester 2				
Fall 2	Winter 2 Summer 2	semester 3	MSc2 first RAC meeting residency complete	MSc2 first RAC meeting Junior Seminar	PhD2 first RAC meeting Junior Seminar	PhD3 first RAC meeting Junior Seminar
Winter 2 Summer 2	Fall 2	semester 4	thesis submission			residency complete
Fall 3	Winter 3 Summer 3	semester 5		PhD2 transfer to PhD	PhD3	PhD4
Winter 3 Summer 3	Fall 3	semester 6		PhD Proposal	PhD Proposal residency complete	PhD Proposal
Fall 4	Winter 4 Summer 4	semester 7		PhD3	PhD4	PhD5
Winter 4 Summer 4	Fall 4	semester 8		residency complete		
Fall 5	Winter 5 Summer 5	semester 9		PhD4	PhD5	PhD6
Winter 5 Summer 5	Fall 5	semester 10				
Fall 6	Winter 6 Summer 6	semester 11		PhD5	PhD6	PhD7
Winter 6 Summer 6	Fall 6	semester 12				Senior Seminar* thesis submission*
Fall 7	Winter 7 Summer 7	semester 13		PhD6	PhD7	
Winter 7 Summer 7	Fall 7	semester 14			Senior Seminar* thesis submission*	
Fall 8	Winter 8 Summer 8	semester 15		PhD7		
Winter 8 Summer 8	Fall 8	semester 16		Senior Seminar* thesis submission*		

Residency: minimum time which students must be registered in the program, and when full-time fees are paid. PhD students pay full-time fees for one year after residency. MSc and PhD students then pay additional session fees for the remainder of the program. The *fee table pre-calculated per year* on the web site shows total fees.

\*may be earlier, depending on progress of research.