McGILL UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF MICROBIOLOGY AND IMMUNOLOGY

Ph.D.
HANDBOOK
2023-2024

FOR STUDENTS ENTERING THE Ph.D. PROGRAM WITH A M.Sc. DEGREE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Ph.D. Program Requirements

- A minimum of six terms in residence
- Completion of the graduate courses list below
- Submission and defense of a thesis

MIMM 611	**Graduate Seminar 1**
MIMM 612 ***Section 002***	**Graduate Seminar 2**
MIMM 713	**Graduate Seminar 3**
MIMM 701	**Comprehensive Examination**
***XXXX**	**Reading and Conference 1**
***XXXX**	**Reading and Conference 2**
***XXXX**	**Reading and Conference 3**

* The two Reading and Conference (R&C) courses can be any life science related course at the 500 level or higher. The Graduate Program Director (GPD) must approve the selection of the course prior to registering for it. Students must send the request to gpd.microimm@mcgill.ca and copy grad.microimm@mcgill.ca. For a list of recommended courses and their description, visit this link: List of R&C Courses

* To register for any non-MIMM R&C courses, please contact the graduate coordinators of the relevant department after getting the approval from the MIMM GPD.

Additional requirements:

- Attendance to the Departmental Orientation Session during the first term of residence is mandatory for new students and recommended for all graduate students. Attendance is determined by a sign-in sheet. Orientation sessions are held at the beginning of the Fall and Winter terms. Students starting in the summer term must attend the Fall Orientation. The dates of the orientation sessions are available on the departmental website.

- Attendance at an Ethics Workshop (NEUR 705 – Responsible Research Conduct) is mandatory for new MIMM graduate students. Students must register for NEUR 705 in Minerva during their first academic year (preferably during the first term of residence).

- The submission of an Advisory Committee Report in due time is mandatory for each year. Details are provided in the **Advisory Committee section** of this handbook.

Additional Requirements Continued:

- Attendance at the MIMM Graduate Student Seminars is mandatory during each term of residence. These seminars are accessible to the public and the broader McGill community. Students are permitted to miss just one (1) seminar day per term. Attendance is tracked through an online form available through a QR code. Additional information can be found in the MIMM Graduate Student Seminars section of this handbook. The schedule for these seminars during the fall and winter terms is accessible on the MIMM departmental website.

- Attendance at the annual Graduate Student Research Day is mandatory every year. Attendance is determined through registration and via a sign-in sheet.

- Participation in the annual Graduate Student Research Day through one oral and one poster presentation is mandatory during the residency.

- Graduate students in Microbiology and Immunology are required to attend ten (10) Current Topics - Scientific Seminars each semester. **Students have the flexibility to attend a variety of scientific seminars.** The following options can be used to count towards the scientific seminar requirements:

    - **Emerging Topics in Health (EToH) seminar series**: These are seminars organized by multiple units of McGill University. Attending these seminars counts towards your requirement.

    - **External Seminars**: You may also attend external seminars, which are any life sciences-related seminars held at McGill University or its affiliated centers, such as MUHC (McGill University Health Centre), LDI (Lady Davis Institute), and IRCM (Institut de recherches cliniques de Montréal).

    - **Seminars from External Recognized Academic Institutes**: Another option is to attend seminars presented by principal investigators from recognized academic institutes outside of McGill University.

    - **Online Platforms (GDP approval only)**: We understand that attendance at physical seminars may not always be possible. Therefore, we accept seminars attended via any online platform.

    - **EDI/Ethics/Professional Development Workshops (GDP approval only)**: Attendance at Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI), Ethics or various Professional development workshops will also be considered as part of your seminar attendance requirement.

- It is important to note that you can count up to two seminars out of the required ten from fields outside of life sciences. This allows students to explore topics beyond their primary area of study and broaden their knowledge.

- **All Graduate students are required to enroll in courses for the academic year (both the Fall and Winter terms), via Minerva no later than the second week of August each year.**

- **Failure to adhere to these additional requirements may result in ineligibility for departmental awards and fellowships, and students may be asked to leave the program.**

Recommended Program Timeline

For students entering the Ph.D. program in Fall or Summer

Year 1

Summer Term (if first term of residence)
Register for: REGN RCGR

Fall Term

- Attend Orientation Session
- Attend Ethics Workshop (NEUR 705)
- Attend MIMM Graduate Student Seminars
- Attend 10 Current Topics - Scientific Seminars
- Select Advisory Committee members
- Submit Advisory Committee report by the end of the term
- **Advisory Committee report should be scheduled in 6-8 months since starting the program:**
- **The next meeting should be- approximately 1 year (to the month) from the date of the first. It is advised that students should start planning months in advance of the meeting.**

Register for:	MIMM 611	Graduate Seminars 1
	NEUR 705	Responsible Research Conduct

Winter Term

- Attend MIMM Graduate Student Seminars
- Attend 10 Current Topics - Scientific Seminars
- Register and attend the Annual Graduate Student Research Day
- At least one oral and a poster presentation-total two is mandatory once during the residency.

Register for:	XXXX	Reading and Conference 1*

Year 2

Fall Term

- Attend MIMM Graduate Student Seminars
- Attend 10 Current Topics - Scientific Seminars
- Submit Advisory Committee report by the end of the term

Register for:	MIMM 612 *Section 002*	Graduate Seminars 2
	XXXX	Reading and Conference 2*

Winter Term

- Attend MIMM Graduate Student Seminars
- Attend 10 Current Topics - Scientific Seminars
- Register and attend the Annual Graduate Student Research Day
- At least one oral and a poster presentation-total two is mandatory once during the residency.

Register for:	MIMM 701	Comprehensive examination⌘

Year 3

Fall Term

- Attend MIMM Graduate Student Seminars
- Attend 10 Current Topics - Scientific Seminars
- Submit Advisory Committee report by the end of the term

Register for: XXXX Reading and Conference 3*

Winter Term

Thesis submission allowed from the end of this term¶

- If thesis submission expected before the end of the next Fall term:
- Attend 10 Current Topics Seminars
- Attend MIMM Graduate Student Seminars
- Attend 10 Current Topics - Scientific Seminars
- Register and attend the Annual Graduate Student Research Day
- At least one oral and a poster presentation-total two is mandatory once during the residency.

Register for: MIMM 713 Graduate Seminar 3§

- If thesis will **not** be submitted before the end of the next Fall term:
- Attend MIMM Graduate Student Seminars
- Attend 10 Current Topics - Scientific Seminars

Year 4

Fall Term

- If thesis submission expected before the end of the next Winter term:
- Attend MIMM Graduate Student Seminars
- Attend 10 Current Topics - Scientific Seminars
- Submit Advisory Committee report by the end of the term

Register for: MIMM 713 Graduate Seminar 3§

- If thesis will **not** be submitted before the end of the next Winter term:
- Attend MIMM Graduate Student Seminars
- Attend 10 Current Topics - Scientific Seminars
- Submit Advisory Committee report by the end of the term

Winter Term

- If thesis submission expected before the end of the next Fall term:
- Attend MIMM Graduate Student Seminars
- Attend 10 Current Topics - Scientific Seminars
- Register and attend the Annual Graduate Student Research Day
- At least one oral and a poster presentation-total two is mandatory once during the residency.

Register for: MIMM 713 Graduate Seminar 3[§]

- If thesis will **not** be submitted before the end of the next Fall term:
- Attend MIMM Graduate Student Seminars
- Attend 10 Current Topics - Scientific Seminars

Year 5

Fall Term

- If thesis submission expected before the end of the next Winter term:
- Attend MIMM Graduate Student Seminars
- Attend 10 Current Topics - Scientific Seminars
- Submit Advisory Committee report by the end of the term

Register for: MIMM 713 Graduate Seminar 3[§]

- If thesis will **not** be submitted before the end of the next Winter term:
- Attend MIMM Graduate Student Seminars
- Attend 10 Current Topics - Scientific Seminars
- Submit Advisory Committee report by the end of the term

Winter Term

- If thesis submission expected before the end of the next Fall term:
- Attend MIMM Graduate Student Seminars
- Attend 10 Current Topics - Scientific Seminars
- Register and attend the Annual Graduate Student Research Day
- At least one oral and a poster presentation-total two is mandatory once during the residency.

Register for: MIMM 713 Graduate Seminar 3[§]

Years 6 and 7: same as Year 5

* *You may register to a Reading and Conference course in any term (except summer terms). It is highly recommended to complete one R&C course within the first year.*

⌘ Ph.D. candidates entering the program with a M.Sc. degree must take their comprehensive examination within 2 years of their initial registration as a graduate student in the Department.

§ *The final Ph.D. seminar (Graduate Seminar 3) should be presented during the final term in residence.*

¶ *Ph.D. thesis can be submitted after a minimum of six academic terms in residence.*

⊘ *Candidates for doctoral degrees must complete the degree by the end of Ph.D. 7.*

Recommended Program Timeline

For students entering the Ph.D. program in Winter

Year 1

Winter Term

- Attend Orientation Session
- Attend Ethics Workshop (NEUR 705)
- Attend MIMM Graduate Student Seminars
- Attend 10 Current Topics - Scientific Seminars
- Select Advisory Committee members
- **Advisory Committee report should be scheduled in 6-8 months since starting the program:**
- **The next meeting should be- approximately 1 year (to the month) from the date of the first. It is advised that students should start planning months in advance of the meeting.**
- Register and attend the Annual Graduate Student Research Day
- At least one oral and a poster presentation-total two is mandatory once during the residency.

Register for: MIMM 611 Graduate Seminar 1
NEUR 705 Responsible Research Conduct

Fall Term

- Attend MIMM Graduate Student Seminars
- Attend 10 Current Topics - Scientific Seminars
- Submit Advisory Committee Report by the end of the term

Register for: XXXX Reading and Conference 1*

Year 2

Winter Term

- Attend MIMM Graduate Student Seminars
- Attend 10 Current Topics - Scientific Seminars
- Register and attend the Annual Graduate Student Research Day
- At least one oral and a poster presentation-total two is mandatory once during the residency.

Register for: MIMM 612 *Section 002* Graduate Seminar 2
XXXX Reading and Conference 2*

Fall Term

- Attend MIMM Graduate Student Seminars
- Attend 10 Current Topics - Scientific Seminars
- Submit Advisory Committee report by the end of the term

Register for: MIMM 701 Comprehensive examination⌘

Year 3

Winter Term

- Attend MIMM Graduate Student Seminars
- Attend 10 Current Topics - Scientific Seminars
- Register and attend the Annual Graduate Student Research Day
- At least one oral and a poster presentation-total two is mandatory once during the residency.

Register for: XXXX Reading and Conference 3*

Fall Term

Thesis submission allowed from the end of this term¶

- If thesis submission expected before the end of the next Winter term:
- Attend MIMM Graduate Student Seminars
- Attend 10 Current Topics - Scientific Seminars
- Submit Advisory Committee report by the end of the term

Register for: MIMM 713 Graduate Seminar 3§

If thesis will **not** be submitted before the end of the next Winter term: Attend
10 Current Topics Seminars
Attend public Graduate Student Seminars

Year 4

Winter Term

- If thesis submission expected before the end of the next Fall term:
- Attend MIMM Graduate Student Seminars
- Attend 10 Current Topics - Scientific Seminars
- Register and attend the Annual Graduate Student Research Day
- At least one oral and a poster presentation-total two is mandatory once during the residency.

Register for: MIMM 713 Graduate Seminar 3§

- If thesis will **not** be submitted before the end of the next Fall term:
- Submit Advisory Committee report by the end of the term
- Attend MIMM Graduate Student Seminars
- Attend 10 Current Topics - Scientific Seminars

Register for: MIMM 713 Graduate Seminar 3§

Fall Term

- If thesis submission expected before the end of the next Winter term:
- Attend Attend MIMM Graduate Student Seminars
- Attend 10 Current Topics - Scientific Seminars
- Submit Advisory Committee report by the end of the term

Register for: MIMM 713 Graduate Seminar 3§

- If thesis will not be submitted before the end of the next Fall term:
- Attend MIMM Graduate Student Seminars
- Attend 10 Current Topics - Scientific Seminars

Year 5

Winter Term

- If thesis submission expected before the end of the next Fall term:
- Attend MIMM Graduate Student Seminars
- Attend 10 Current Topics - Scientific Seminars
- Register and attend the Annual Graduate Student Research Day
- At least one oral and a poster presentation-total two is mandatory once during the residency.

Register for: MIMM 713 Graduate Seminar 3§

- If thesis will **not** be submitted before the end of the next Winter term:
- Attend MIMM Graduate Student Seminars
- Attend 10 Current Topics - Scientific Seminars
- Register and attend the Annual Graduate Student Research Day

Fall Term

- If thesis submission expected before the end of the next Winter term:
- Attend MIMM Graduate Student Seminars
- Attend 10 Current Topics - Scientific Seminars
- Submit Advisory Committee report by the end of the term

Register for: MIMM 713 Graduate Seminar 3§

Years 6 and 7: same as Year 5[?]

[*] *You may register to a Reading and Conference course in any term (except summer terms). It is highly recommended to complete one R&C course within the first year.*

[⌘] Ph.D. candidates entering the program with a M.Sc. degree must take their comprehensive examination within 2 years of their initial registration as a graduate student in the Department.

[§] *The final Ph.D. seminar (Graduate Seminar 3) should be presented during the final term in residence.*

[¶] *Ph.D. thesis can be submitted after a minimum of six academic terms in residence.*

[⊘] *Candidates for doctoral degrees must complete the degree by the end of Ph.D. 7.*

Ph.D. Research Progress Reports

Advisory Committee

Each Ph.D. student must have an Advisory Committee consisting of:

- The student's research supervisor(s)
- Two other faculty members, one serves as the Designated Chair

One of the faculty members must be a member or associate member of the department. The other faculty member can be an academic member in a tenure-track position in another department or university.

The mandate of the Advisory Committee is to:

i) Provide overall guidance for the student
ii) Evaluation of the research proposal/progress
iii) Help with the student's communication skills
iv) Follow-up on the program timeline

Students, in consultation with their supervisor, submit the names of the members of their Ph.D. Advisory Committee to the **Graduate Program Director** using the **Ph.D. Advisory Committee Nomination Form**.

The student must meet with the Advisory Committee **every 12 months,** and it is the student's responsibility to schedule these meetings. The student does not need to hold an advisory committee meeting on the same year as the Ph.D. Switch seminar, however there must be an advisory committee meeting in the year of the Ph.D. Comprehensive exam.

For each meeting, the student should prepare a brief outline, no longer than 8 double-spaced pages (excluding references and figures), describing the progress made towards their research objectives over the past year. The outline must be distributed to the members of the Committee at least one week prior to the meeting.

At each meeting, the student must orally present the progress of their research project and outline the future plans for the upcoming year. The presentation is followed by a discussion with the committee members.

The student should also fill in the appropriate sections of the **Ph.D. Advisory Committee Report** prior to the meeting. The supervisor, committee members and the student should review the report and the committee should provide an overall evaluation on the last page of the report. The student's progress will be marked as one of the following: excellent, very good, good, fair or unsatisfactory. A student not agreeing with the evaluation must append to the report a written statement detailing their objections.

It is the student's responsibility to electronically submit the completed Ph.D. Advisory Committee Report to the Student Affairs Administrator by email to grad.micoim@mcgil.ca within a week of the meeting.

The first Advisory Committee meeting **is to be held within the first two terms (6 to 8 months) in residence.** At this first meeting two program requirements must be completed:

- Evaluation of the MIMM 611 course
- Submission of an Advisory Committee Report

For the evaluation of the MIMM 611 course, the student is to present their research project both orally and in writing. Please refer to the course description of MIMM 611 for more details on the format of the oral presentation and the written research proposal. The advisory committee will evaluate the oral presentation, the written research proposal and the performance of the student in the question period.

The length of the presentation should be appx. 30 minutes which is a flexible suggestion. Time might vary depending on the students and the supervisor's discussion. Most Advisory Committee Meeting lasts about 2 to 2.5 hours, given that the maximum length of the meeting should be no more than 3 hours.

If an Advisory Report is judged unsatisfactory, a follow-up progress tracking meeting must occur not sooner than 4 months and not later than 6 months after the first report. A deadline for the follow-up meeting must be indicated in the **Ph.D. Advisory Committee Report**. A new set of objectives for the next four to six months should be developed at the meeting and recorded on the Report. If at the follow-up meeting, the student's progress is still evaluated unsatisfactory by the Advisory Committee, the student may be required to withdraw from the program.

Two unsatisfactory Reports (not necessarily successive) constitute unsatisfactory progress towards the degree. For more University policy details on Research Tracking, visit http://www.mcgill.ca/gps/students/research-tracking.

IMPORTANT NOTES:

1. Research progress tracking is mandatory until the student submits their Ph.D. thesis.

2. Students not submitting Advisory Committee Reports to the Student Affairs Administrator in due time will not be eligible to departmental awards and fellowships unless special circumstances affecting the timing of the Advisory Committee meetings have been discussed ahead of time with the Graduate Program Director.

3. It is highly recommended to students to provide the Advisory Committee Guidelines for Members to each member of their committee prior to each meeting.

MIMM 611
Graduate Seminar 1

Course Coordinator: Dr. Ciro Piccirillo (gpd.microimm@mcgill.ca)

The objective of this course is to ensure rapid immersion of the student into a defined research project to promote on time graduation.

To this end, registered students must present orally and in writing a research proposal during their first 2 terms in residence in the context of the first Ph.D. Advisory Committee meeting. As soon as the date has been set for the Advisory Committee meeting, the student must inform the Student Affairs Administrator by emailing grad.imciroimm@mcgill.ca**.**

One week prior to the first Advisory Committee meeting, the student must submit a written summary/abstract of the research proposal to the members of the committee. The written summary should include an abstract of 250 words or less, be typed double-spaced using a 12-point Times font and not exceeding 8 pages (including the abstract, figures, figure legends and references).

In the oral presentation, the student must provide the relevant background of the research project, state the hypothesis to be tested, the objectives of the research project and summarize the experimental approaches that will be used. The presentation should last 30 minutes and is followed by a question period.

The course is evaluated on a Pass or Fail basis by the members of the Advisory Committee, according to the outcome of the 1st Advisory Committee Meeting (Satisfactory or non-Satisfactory). Note that absence of preliminary data cannot be grounds for a Fail grade and that exhaustive knowledge of the research field is not required to get a Pass.

In case of a Fail, the supervisor should review the weaknesses of the presentation with the student and supervise its improvement. A second successful evaluation by the Advisory Committee is required not sooner than 4 months and not later than 6 months after the first evaluation to get a Pass. A grade of "HH" is assigned until the second meeting. If the presentation is satisfactory, then the grade of "HH" will be changed to a PASS. In case of a second fail, the student will receive a grade of FAIL. **It is the student's responsibility to electronically submit the completed second evaluation form to the Student Affairs Administrator by emailing grad.microimm@mcgill.ca within a week of the meeting.**

IMPORTANT NOTE: Students unable to meet with their Advisory Committee in the semester in which they register for MIMM 611 must drop the course within the course change (drop/add) period. If the student misses the course change deadline, he/she must withdraw from the course and pay the associated fees. Failure to withdraw will result in a grade of "J" (incomplete/failure), which counts as "0" in GPA calculations, unless circumstances have been discussed ahead of time with the course coordinator. In all cases, students should register for the courses in the following semester.

MIMM 612 Section 002
Graduate Seminar 2
Course Coordinator: Dr. Ciro Piccirillo (gpd.microimm@mcgill.ca)

Candidates who have entered the Ph.D. program with a M.Sc. degree must present a scientific seminar during their second year in residence and register for MIMM 612 Section 002 for the term in which they will be presenting their seminar.

This seminar is not held publicly but presented and evaluated in the context of the second Ph.D. Advisory Committee meeting.

The student must prepare a brief outline, no longer than 8 double-spaced pages (including references and figures) describing the student's progress made towards the research objectives during the past year. The outline will be submitted to the committee members **at least one week prior to the meeting**.

This seminar, the student summarizes the relevant background of the research project, states the hypothesis being tested, and provides the experimental work to date and the future objectives. The presentation should last 30 minutes and is followed by a question period. The seminar is evaluated on a Pass or Fail basis by the members of the Advisory Committee, according to the outcome of the 1st Advisory Committee Meeting (Satisfactory or non-Satisfactory).

In case of a Fail, the supervisor should review the weaknesses of the presentation with the student and supervise its improvement. A second successful evaluation by the Advisory Committee is required not sooner than 4 months and not later than 6 months after the first evaluation to get a Pass. A grade of "HH" is assigned until the second meeting. If the presentation is satisfactory, then the grade of "HH" will be changed to a PASS. In case of a second fail, the student will receive a grade of FAIL. **It is the student's responsibility to electronically submit the completed second evaluation form to the Student Affairs Administrator by emailing grad.microimm@mcgill.ca within a week of the meeting.**

IMPORTANT NOTE: Students who are unable to present their scientific seminar in the semester in which they have registered for MIMM 612 must drop the course within the course change (drop/add) period. Students that miss the course change deadline must withdraw from the course and pay the associated fees. Failure to withdraw from the course will result in a grade of "J" (incomplete/failure), which counts as "0" in GPA calculations, unless circumstances have been discussed ahead of time with the course coordinator. In all cases, students should register for the course in the following semester.

MIMM 713
Graduate Seminar 3
Course Coordinator: Dr. Martin Olivier (martin.olivier@mcgill.ca)

All candidates for the Ph.D. degree (including those who have entered the Ph.D. program through an internal transfer from the MIMM M.Sc. program) must present a scientific seminar during their final year in the program. Students should register for MIMM 713 for the term in which they will be presenting their final scientific seminar.

This seminar should be a comprehensive summary of the results obtained by the student during their Ph.D. research project.

The seminar is public and held as part of the MIMM Graduate Student Seminar Series organized by the MIMM Department. **Students should contact the Student Affairs Administrator at grad.microimm@mcgill.ca one term in advance to schedule their seminar.**

Students must submit an abstract of their presentation to the Student Affairs Administrator, **one week prior to the date of the seminar**. Students are required to follow the Graduate Student Seminar Guidelines to ensure the successful delivery of their public seminars.

Seminar attendance is mandatory for supervisors whose students are presenting. Supervisors who cannot attend must find a McGill academic staff member as a replacement.

The Ph.D. student who receives the highest mark during the academic year and has fulfilled all recommended program requirements will receive the Wilfred Yaphe Award. This award has been established in the memory of Dr. Wilfred Yaphe, professor in the Department of Microbiology and Immunology at McGill University from 1966 to May 1986. The estimated amount of the award is $300.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Students who are unable to present their scientific seminar in the semester in which they have registered for MIMM 713 must drop the course within the course change (drop/add) period. Students that miss the course change deadline must withdraw from the course and pay the associated fees. Failure to withdraw from the course will result in a grade of "J" (incomplete/failure), which counts as "0" in GPA calculations, unless circumstances have been discussed ahead of time with the course coordinator. In all cases, students should register for the course in the following semester.

MIMM Graduate Student Seminars Guidelines

IMPORTANT NOTE: The schedule for the MIMM Graduate Student Seminars for the academic year will be distributed to all students by the second week of August. Students are to communicate any inquiries regarding the schedule or their presentation to the Student Affairs Administrator via email at grad.microimm@mcgill.ca. The finalized schedule will be made available to students and faculty by the first week of September and will also be posted on the MIMM website.

Abstract

Students submit an abstract of their presentation to the course coordinator, **one week prior to the date of the presentation.** Failure to submit the abstract on time will result in a 5% deduction from the student's final mark. The abstract of the presentation will be circulated to all graduate students and professors by the course coordinator.

Presentation

All Final M.Sc. students, students in the M.Sc. program wishing to switch to the Ph.D. program, and all final Ph.D. students must present a seminar that is a comprehensive summary of their research project. This seminar is held publicly and should be 30-35 minutes in duration. Students are expected to present the relevant background information needed to introduce their research topic, the objective(s) and rationale of their research project, the specific hypothesis tested, the results obtained, and the conclusions they have reached from their research studies.

Each presentation is followed by a 5-10-minute question period led by the Student Chair (refer to Student Chair Responsibilities below).

Evaluation

The seminar presentations are evaluated by a Grading Panel composed of 3 to 4 faculty members, according to the criteria indicated on the Seminar Evaluation Form. The supervisors do not participate in the evaluation of their own students. The average of the Grading Panel marks counts for 100% of the final grade. **It is suggested but not mandatory to have the student notify their Advisory Committee Members of their presentation.**

The M.Sc. or Ph.D. student who receives the highest mark during the academic year and has fulfilled all recommended program requirements will receive the Wilfred Yaphe Award. In case of a tie, the awardee will be determined by the Grading Panel instead of the final grade.

Attendance of the Graduate Student Seminars, in both Fall and Winter terms, is **mandatory for all graduate students** in the Department. Half a letter grade will be deducted from a student's final mark if more than one seminar day per term is missed (Example: A becomes A-; A- becomes B+; etc.). The seminars schedule is sent to the registered students by the course coordinator and posted on the Department's website.

Speaker Responsibilities

It is strongly recommended that the speakers come prior to their seminar for a run-through of their presentation, to ensure an efficient transition between speakers (if the seminar is scheduled in person).

Student Chair Responsibilities

The Student Chair ensures that a laser pointer and a microphone (available at the Administrative Office) are available to the speaker.

The Student Chair introduces the speaker by providing the following information if preferred by the presenter:

- The student's background
- The student's status in the program (M.Sc. or Ph.D.)
- The supervisor's name, research field and laboratory location
- The nature of the seminar (M.Sc. final or switch seminar)

The Student Chair is responsible for leading and facilitating the question period if preferred by the presenter. They should ask the first question and, afterward, invite questions from the audience starting with students and then with professors. The Chair is also responsible for closing the discussion on time.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Starting in Fall 2023, peer evaluation during seminars will no longer be required.

Attending Student Responsibilities

IMPORTANT NOTE: Starting in Fall 2023, students must complete an online attendance form to confirm their presence at each seminar. To access this form, students will receive a QR code from the seminar facilitator after the final presentation of the day at each seminar. The form also contains a section where students must provide a brief summary of the main insights gained from attending the seminar.

Given the substantial amount of effort needed to create and present a seminar, it is imperative that the audience listens to each speaker attentively. Students attending the seminars should refrain from using any device (e.g., cell phone, laptop) that could distract their peers from concentrating on the presentation.

Current Topics – Scientific Seminars

IMPORTANT NOTE: Attendance at an Orientation Session and to a Career Day can account for attendance to a Current Topics – Scientific Seminar.

Graduate students in Microbiology and Immunology are required to attend ten (10) Current Topic - Scientific Seminars each semester. **Students have the flexibility to attend a variety of scientific seminars.** The following options can be used to count towards the scientific seminar requirements:

- **Emerging Topics in Health (EToH) Seminar Series**: These are seminars organized by multiple units of McGill University. Attending these seminars counts towards your requirement.
- **External Seminars**: You may also attend external seminars, which are any life sciences-related seminars held at McGill University or its affiliated centers, such as MUHC (McGill University Health Centre), LDI (Lady Davis Institute), and IRCM (Institut de recherches cliniques de Montréal).
- **Seminars from External Recognized Academic Institutes**: Another option is to attend seminars presented by principal investigators from recognized academic institutes outside of McGill University.
- **Online Platforms (GDP approval only)**: We understand that attendance at physical seminars may not always be possible. Therefore, we accept seminars attended via any online platform. To obtain approval, please email ciro.piccirillo@mcgill.ca and gpd.microimm@mcgill.ca and cc grad.microimm@mcgill.ca.
- **EDI/Ethics/Professional Development Workshops (GDP approval only)**: Attendance at Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI), Ethics or various Professional development workshops will also be considered as part of your seminar attendance requirement. To obtain approval, please email ciro.piccirillo@mcgill.ca and gpd.microimm@mcgill.ca and cc grad.microimm@mcgill.ca.
- It is important to note that students can count up to two (2) seminars out of the required ten from fields outside of life sciences. This allows students to explore topics beyond their primary area of study and broaden their knowledge.

To record attendance at these seminars, students should follow these guidelines:

- After attending each seminar, students must complete the **Current Topics - Scientific Seminar Attendance Form**, which can be accessed **online** at https://forms.office.com/r/v7ijJrBYCD. If you happen to overlook documenting a seminar during the academic year, we kindly request your prompt completion of the form. The form contains a section where students must offer a brief summary of the main insights gained from attending the seminar.
- Additionally, students are required to verify their attendance at these seminars by filling out the standard **Seminar Attendance Form** (Word document), which is available on the MIMM Department website at the conclusion of each term.
- **Students are to submit a PDF copy of the form via email to grad.microimm@mcgill.ca by the following deadlines. This action enables the department to cross-reference attendance records at the end of each semester:**
    - **Fall 2023 Semester | submission deadline is December 15, 2023**
    - **Winter 2024 Semester | submission deadline is April 12, 2024**

Reading and Conference 1, 2, 3

Students must complete three (3) Reading and Conference courses. These courses can be any life science related course at the 500 level or higher held at McGill University. **Prior to course registration**, the student should provide the course outline, a short justification to attend the selected course and the supervisor endorsement to the Graduate Program Director (gpd.microimm@mcgill.ca) for approval.

The Department of Microbiology and Immunology offers three Reading and Conference courses:

- **Microbiology/Immunology Journal Club (MIMM 616, Fall term)** which examines work published by invited speakers from the Infection and Immunity Seminar Series.
  Course Coordinator: Prof. S. Fournier (sylvie.fournier@mcgill.ca)

- **Immunopathogenesis of Human Diseases (MIMM 607, Winter Term),** which addresses the critical role of immune-regulatory mechanisms (cellular/molecular) for maintaining the balance between immune-protective and immune-driven pathology as well as its potential consequences on systemic pathology.
  Course Coordinator: Prof. M. Divangahi (maziar.divangahi@mcgill.ca)

- **The Human Microbiome (MIMM 617, Winter term), t**his graduate-level course is aimed towards students that have a strong background in microbiology and immunology interested in understanding how the microbiota and microbiome can influence several human physiological processes. How the human microbiome establishes itelf, is maintained, and can alter human health will be explored and discussed. Students will also be exposed to the state-of-the-art approaches to the study of the human microbiome.
  Course Coordinator: Prof. Corinne Maurice (corinne.maurice@mcgill.ca)

- It is recommended that all Graduate Students take a Statistics course as part of their Reading and Conference requirements. A few options are: **BINF 531, EXMD 634, BIOL 598, & EPIB 507.**

- Some other Reading & Conference courses frequently taken by MIMM graduate students include: **BIOC 600, BTEC 555, EPIB 615, EXMD 509, EXMD 609, EXMD 610, EXMD 615, EXMD 632, EXMD 642, NEUR 502, NEUR 550, NEUR 602, PPHS 511.**

- Descriptions of the Reading & Conference courses mentioned above can be found on this link: **http://mcgill.ca/microimm/graduate/graduate-students**

MIMM 701
Comprehensive Examination
Course Coordinator: Prof. B. Cousineau (benoit.cousineau@mcgill.ca)

Ph.D. candidates entering the program with a M.Sc. degree must take their comprehensive examination within 2 years of their initial registration as a graduate student in the Department.

The comprehensive examination includes the submission of a written research proposal, an oral presentation of the research accomplishments to date and an oral testing on the understanding of the research area and of relevant scientific areas related to the student's research project. Students are expected to demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of their research area and a good understanding of relevant scientific areas related to their research project.

Students must register for MIMM 701 in the semester in which they plan to have the comprehensive examination. Late withdrawal fees will be incurred if the examination is not taken during the term of registration.

Exam Organization

1. Student and supervisor must select an examination committee. The committee must be composed of:
   - One member of the MIMM Graduate Program Committee or approved delegate (contact Dr. Cousineau for the list) to serve as chairperson of the examination (Committee members). Email grad.microimm@mcgill.ca to obtain an updated list of the committee members.
   - One other departmental member (Faculty member or Associate member)
   - One member external to the department
   - The supervisor
   - The co-supervisor (if applicable)
   - Note that members of the students' advisory committee are not eligible, with the exception of their supervisor (or co-supervisor). Under exceptional circumstances, following the pre-approval of the course coordinator, a member may attend the exam by any online platform.
2. Committee selection MUST be submitted to the Course Coordinator for approval, using the Comprehensive Examination Committee Nomination Form.

3. Upon approval of the committee selection by the course coordinator and the Graduate Program Committee, the student and supervisor are responsible for contacting the exam committee members, scheduling the exam, and book a room. The exam may be held during any time of the year (Fall / Winter /Summer).

   Please inform the committee members to allow 3 hours for the exam.

   The exam can be held anywhere at McGill or if requested and approved via any online platform. Room bookings at the Lyman Duff building can be made through the MIMM Office (info.microimm@mcgill.ca).

4. Exam details (final committee membership, date, time, location) must be submitted to the course coordinator, a minimum of 30 days prior to the exam. It is suggested that the student/supervisor arrange and seek approval of the exam members well in advance of the 30-day deadline to ensure availability of the committee members.

Exam Components

The comprehensive examination includes:

- Submission of a written research proposal.
- An oral presentation of the research project and experimental progress to date.
- A period of questioning aimed at evaluating the student's understanding of the research area and relevant scientific areas related to the student's research project.

Exam Details

Duration: Oral presentation: 20 min; questioning period: 100-120 minutes. The examination should not exceed 3 hours including committee discussions prior to the start of the exam and the evaluation and feedback period following the exam.

Written Proposal: The written proposal should include an Abstract of 250 words or less, an Introduction section, which describes the nature of the research question and the hypothesis to be investigated, a Preliminary Results section that describes the experimental progress to date, and a Future Direction section. The written proposal should be typed double-spaced using a 12-point Times font and not exceeding 10 pages. Figures, figure legends and references are presented on additional pages. Students are required to include an abridged and clear description of the methods used in the figure legends.

The written proposal must be submitted to the exam committee members and the course coordinator *two weeks* prior to the oral presentation.

Oral Presentation: The oral presentation should be an overview of the students work to date, reporting the general significance and relevance and highlighting key experimental data, finished with brief conclusion and future work. The oral presentation should not exceed 20 minutes.

Questioning Period: The students are tested in-depth by the members of the comprehensive examination committee on their understanding of their research area and on relevant scientific areas related to their research project.

Typically, the first round of questions is related more specifically to the project and the second round of questions is meant to test the boundaries of the student's knowledge (general knowledge relative to the student's research area). The Supervisor may participate in the question period. The question period should not exceed 120 minutes.

Exam Grading

The examination committee decides whether the student passed or failed by consensus or, if a disagreement occurs, by majority vote. The Supervisor/Co-supervisor does not participate in this discussion.

If the student has passed, each committee member evaluates the student independently and the final grade is an average of the three evaluations.

- Each committee member assigns a grade to each component of the exam (research proposal, oral presentation, questioning period). These grades are recorded on their individual grading sheets. The Supervisor/Co-supervisor does not grade the student.

- The final grade is assigned by the average of the marks given by each committee member. The average of the marks for the written proposal and the oral presentation each accounts for 25% of the final grade. The average of the marks for the questioning period accounts for 50% of the final grade. No change of grade is permitted after the examination committee has made a decision.

If the student fails the comprehensive examination, the student receives a grade of "incomplete" (HH). In the case of an incomplete grade, the student is required to repeat the comprehensive examination within 6 months of the date of the first examination.

In case of a fail, a written report of the comprehensive examination and subsequent deliberations of the examination committee is prepared by the committee Chair and provided to the course coordinator, the student and the supervisor(s).

In the event that the student fails the second comprehensive examination, a grade of Fail (F) is assigned, and the student is required to withdraw from the graduate program.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Students who are unable to present their scientific seminar in the semester in which they have registered for MIMM 701 must drop the course within the course change (drop/add) period. Students that miss the course change deadline must withdraw from the course and pay the associated fees. Failure to withdraw from the course will result in a grade of "J" (incomplete/failure), which counts as "0" in GPA calculations, unless circumstances have been discussed ahead of time with the course coordinator. In all cases, students should register for the course in the following semester.

Academic Integrity

McGill University places a high importance on academic integrity. It is imperative that all students grasp the significance and repercussions associated with actions like cheating, plagiarism, and other academic violations as outlined in the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures. For further details, please visit: www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/.

We strongly advise students to refer to the online resource guide called "FairPlay: A Guide to Academic Integrity." This guide provides a comprehensive explanation of what constitutes an academic offense and is designed to assist students in avoiding cheating, plagiarism, and other activities that could result in consequences such as censure, failure, or expulsion from the University. For additional details, please visit: http://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/students/test

MIMM Department students must prioritize upholding the department's reputation and integrity by adhering to the highest standards of academic integrity and ethical conduct. Here are some examples of violations as they relate to student conduct within the MIMM Department:

- This website provides information that clarifies signing in for a classmate who is unable to attend a course as a violation of the University Integrity Code. **It is important to note that numerous courses in the MIMM graduate program utilize sign-in/online form(s) as part of their evaluation process**.

- This website also emphasizes that simply "copying and pasting" a reference text while making only minimal changes to the original words is regarded as a breach of the University Integrity Code. **It is worth noting that a substantial number of courses in the MIMM graduate program depend on written reports**.

- Any instance of dishonest academic conduct reported to the Graduate Program Committee will be promptly referred to the disciplinary office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies as well as the Faculty of Medicine.

- Students under suspicion of engaging in dishonest academic conduct will be disqualified from eligibility for departmental awards and fellowships.

Thesis Preparation

IMPORTANT NOTE: Please note that when the term "Unit" is used on the GPS website, it could refer to any member of the Department including PIs, students, administrative staff, etc. Therefore, students and supervisors must verify what the Department's policy is.

The general requirements for the content of the thesis can be found at http://www.mcgill.ca/gps/thesis/guidelines/general-requirements

A thesis for the Doctoral degree must constitute original scholarship and must be a distinct contribution to knowledge. It must show familiarity with previous work in the field and must demonstrate ability to plan and carry out research, organize results, and defend the approach and conclusions in a scholarly manner. The research presented must meet current standards of the discipline; as well, the thesis must clearly demonstrate how the research advances knowledge in the field. Finally, the thesis must be written in compliance with norms for academic and scholarly expression and for publication in the public domain.

The various components of a thesis are described at http://www.mcgill.ca/gps/thesis/guidelines/preparation

The Department offers a thesis information session once a year.

Thesis Submission

A thesis may be submitted at any time. However, for each of the three annual dates for conferring degrees, there are deadlines for initial submission and for deposition of the final, corrected version of the thesis. For specific dates of initial and final submission, please consult the deadline page of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies http://www.mcgill.ca/gps/thesis/deadlines.

Thesis Examination

A Doctoral thesis must be evaluated by two examiners - one internal and one external.

External Examiner

The Doctoral external examiner must be a scholar of established reputation and competence in the field of thesis research. They must be from outside the University, hold a doctorate or equivalent and have no other conflict of interest (see conflict of interest checklist). **The external examiner does not usually attend the final oral thesis defense.**

For procedures on nominating and securing an external thesis examiner, consult the GPS website at http://www.mcgill.ca/gps/thesis/thesis-guidelines/examination/thesis-examiners

Internal Examiner

The Internal Examiner is expected to be knowledgeable in the area and topic of the thesis, though not necessarily to the same extent as the external examiner. The internal examiner also ensures that the written thesis meets the standards of McGill University.

The internal examiner is usually a McGill faculty member (but not the supervisor) affiliated with the department, but they may also be nominated from other departments at McGill. The internal examiner must not be in conflict of interest according to McGill's conflict of interest regulations. **The internal examiner must attend the final oral thesis defense.**

The supervisor (in consultation with the student) will choose whom to approach to be the external and internal examiners.

Prior to the submission of the Nomination of Examiners and Thesis Submission Form, the supervisor must confirm with the examiners that they are willing to serve within the required timeline.

Please review the Thesis guidelines website for updates prior to thesis submission.

Initial Thesis Submission

- Make sure to review the Thesis guidelines website for updates prior to thesis submission: http://www.mcgill.ca/gps/thesis/thesis-guidelines/initial-submission
- Theses must be submitted via the myThesis application: https://mythesis.mcgill.ca/tem/#
- Students should provide a PDF copy to each Supervisor and/or Co-supervisor. Should an external examiner require a hardcopy, the examiner should contact GPS directly.

Thesis Oral Defence

Procedure for setting up a doctoral oral defence committee:

1. When the thesis is initially submitted to Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, an **Oral Defence Form** is sent to the Student Affairs Administrator who forwards the form to the student within two business days.
2. On this form, the student and supervisor select a Doctoral Oral Defence Committee.

   Members of the Doctoral Oral Defence Committee must hold a doctorate or equivalent. The committee is designed to ensure the majority of members have not been closely involved with the thesis. The committee consists of five voting members. However, if three members are closely involved with the thesis, a seven-member committee will be required. For details on committee composition, visit https://www.mcgill.ca/gps/thesis/thesis-guidelines/oral-defence

Five-Member Committee

- The chair of the department or delegate (who must not have been closely involved in the thesis research)
- Supervisor
- Internal Examiner
- Internal Member (or Co-Supervisor as appropriate)
- External Member to the department (who has not been involved in the thesis research).

Seven-Member Committee

- The chair of the department or delegate (who must not have been closely involved in the thesis research)

- Supervisor
- Internal Examiner
- Internal Member (or Co-Supervisor as appropriate)
- Internal Member
- Two External Members to the department (who have not been involved in the thesis research).

3. **The supervisor** (**not the student**) should contact the proposed internal examiner, external member, and internal member(s) of the Doctoral Oral Defence Committee asking their willingness to serve and general availability. **The earliest possible date that the Oral Defence may be scheduled is two months after reception of the Oral Defence Form.**

4. The **Supervisor** will provide this information and their contact information (email address) to the Student Affairs Administrator within a week of the date of reception of the Oral Defence Form.

5. The **Student Affairs Administrator** will then contact the proposed Doctoral Oral Defence Committee members, as well as the student and supervisor, to schedule the Oral Defence (date and time).

6. The **Student Affairs Administrator** will send a list of possible dates and times to the Supervisor and the Student within 2 weeks of receiving the list of committee members.

7. The **Supervisor and the Student** will finalize the date, book a room* and submit the duly completed Oral Defence form to the MIMM Associate Chair (Education) and will copy the Student Affairs Administrator within one week of the date of the reception of the poll's results. **The completed Oral Defence Form must be returned to the Student Affairs Administrator at least 4 weeks and two days prior to the defense**.

   ** Oral defences can take place in the Duff building or at other McGill sites. If the oral defence takes place in another location outside of the Duff, the **student** will be responsible for booking the room. If the Oral Defence takes place in the Duff, **the Student Affairs Administrator** will be responsible for booking room 507/509. Note that location and time must be secured before the student submits the duly completed "Oral Defence Form" to the MIMM Associate Chair (Education).*

8. The **Associate Chair (Education)** will approve the committee selection and sign the form and the **Student Affairs Administrator** will submit the signed Oral Defence Form to the Thesis Office within two business days but no later than 4 weeks prior to the defense.

9. The **student** will provide the Student Affairs Administrator with an electronic copy of the thesis, as well as their CV and Abstract at least 4 weeks prior to the defense. The **Student Affairs Administrator** will send electronic copies of the thesis to all the members of the committee within two business days. If hard copies are requested, the Student Affairs Administrator will request a hard copy of the thesis from the student and send it to the member(s).

10. The **Student Affairs Administrator** will prepare a draft Ph.D. Oral Defence Pamphlet and will return it to the Student and the Supervisor for reviewing within one week of the date of reception of the CV and Abstract.

11. The **student** will return the final version of the Ph.D. Oral Defence Pamphlet to the Student Affairs Administrator within one week of the date of reception of the Draft Ph.D. Oral Defence Pamphlet.

12. The **Student Affairs Administrator** will distribute the Ph.D. Oral Defence Pamphlet amongst the MIMM community within two business days.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies will engage a Pro-Dean who will chair the oral defence as a representative of the Dean of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. GPS will inform the department and provide the Pro-Dean with a copy of the thesis, the student's file, and the examiners' reports.

Final Thesis Submission

- Make sure to review the Thesis guidelines website for details and updates prior to final thesis submission: http://www.mcgill.ca/gps/thesis/final-e-thesis
- The final e-thesis submission is mandatory via Minerva. Final e-Thesis submission is required for the final, corrected copy of the thesis to GPS. You can submit your final e- thesis at any time, but a final e-thesis will NOT be considered submitted to GPS until it has been approved online by the supervisor(s).

The following forms are required with the final e-thesis submission:

- McGill Non-Exclusive License MNL (En) ***OR***
  McGill Non-Exclusive des thèses MNL (Fr)

- Library and Archives Canada Theses Non-Exclusive License (En) ***OR***
  Library and Archives Canada license nonexclusive des thèses (Fr)

Departmental Dispute Resolution Procedure

These procedures are intended to assist in the resolution of conflicts between graduate students and their supervisors (or supervisory committees).

It is important to remember that students should always attempt to resolve such conflicts within the department before seeking outside assistance. The confidentiality of the issues raised at each step will be ensured to the greatest extent possible.

If you find yourself in a conflict with your supervisor or supervisory committee, you should follow these steps, in this order:

- Informal discussions with your supervisor. Discuss the matter tactfully with your supervisor – he/she is often unaware of the problem and will usually be happy to help find a satisfactory solution.

- Discussion with the Student Affairs Officer.

- Discussion with the Graduate Program Director.

- Discussion with the Department Chair. The chair should attempt to resolve the conflict, either by providing mediation or making alternative arrangements in consultation with the Graduate Program Committee if necessary for the continued supervision of the student if the student is otherwise performing satisfactorily in the program. If your supervisor is also the Graduate Program Director or Department Chair and you cannot resolve the problem with him/her, then you should skip the corresponding step.

- Informal meeting with the Associate Dean (Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies) or the Ombudsperson. Under these circumstances, an informal meeting outside the department is often all that is required for both sides to reach an agreement. If further steps are warranted, the Associate Dean or Ombudsperson will then advise you to that effect.

Mentorship Program

Graduate students are highly encouraged to contact any member of the Committee at any time throughout the course of their graduate studies to discuss personal, administrative, or academic issues. The list of the members of the Graduate Program Committee is posted on the departmental Graduate Studies website.

Code of Conduct and Mistreatment Reporting

The Department of Microbiology & Immunology and the Faculty of Medicine are committed to building and promoting a respectful and inclusive learning and work environment for teachers and learners. Find below an important link to the Faculty of Medicine Code of Conduct to learn how to report cases of alleged mistreatments.

https://www.mcgill.ca/medicine/about/our-vision-mission-values/code-conduct

FORMS AND GUIDELINES

Forms and guidelines are available on the department website at
https://www.mcgill.ca/microimm/graduate/graduate-students

IMPORTANT NOTE

PLEASE USE THE POSTED VERSIONS OF THE FORMS
PREVIOUS VERSIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED