

# McGill

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Faculty of Arts

## **DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE**

Information Handbook  
Master of Arts Programs

**2025-2026**

Department website address: <http://www.mcgill.ca/politicalscience>

*Last Update August 2025*

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## 1. KEY INFORMATION

Students in the M.A. program are normally enrolled in the Thesis Program, generally recognized as among the most demanding and rewarding in Canada. In addition to its traditional M.A. programs, the department also offers M.A. options in Development Studies and Gender and Women's Studies. Interested students must apply and be accepted to both the political science M.A. program and to the option program. Options require specialized coursework. Upon completion, students receive an M.A. degree in Political Science with a specialization in the chosen option noted on their transcripts.

This Handbook is intended to *supplement* the extensive information provided by the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (GPS) about university policies, procedures, and services. Please spend some time perusing the information on the [Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies website](#).

*Key pages include:*

[Resources for New Students](#) (ID Card, [Registration](#), [Orientation](#), [Policies](#), etc.)

[General information](#), [Regulations](#) and [Research Guidelines \(the Red Book\)](#)

[Student Services](#) (Academic, Health, International, Resources, Rights & Responsibilities)

[Student Housing](#)

[McGill Academic Calendars](#)

[Graduate Funding at McGill](#)

[Key Dates](#)

[Scholarships and Student Aid Office](#)

## 2. PEOPLE

### Supervisor

The Graduate Program Director assigns an academic supervisor to each M.A. student upon entry into the program. If a student's research interests are at the intersection of two different fields of expertise, it is possible to arrange for supervision to be shared between two co-supervisors. Students should make an appointment with their supervisor early in each term to discuss their academic progress and plans. The supervisor's primary role is to guide the student in preparing the M.A. thesis.

Upon mutual agreement of the student and prospective new supervisor, the student may change supervisors at any time. To do this, BOTH the student and the new supervisor must inform the Graduate Program Director and the Graduate Coordinator of the switch in writing (email is acceptable).

### Associate Graduate Program Director

Professor Christa Scholtz (until November 1, 2025)

Email: [christa.scholtz@mcgill.ca](mailto:christa.scholtz@mcgill.ca); Office: Ferrier Building, Room 424

Professor Kelly Gordon (on leave until November 1, 2025)

Email: [kelly.gordon2@mcgill.ca](mailto:kelly.gordon2@mcgill.ca); Office: Leacock Building, Room 529

The AGPD is the primary faculty contact for MA students. The AGPD can advise you on any aspect of the MA degree. The AGPD is also responsible for fellowships, teaching assistantships and teaching-related issues.

### Graduate Program Director

Professor Yves Winter

Email: [yves.winter@mcgill.ca](mailto:yves.winter@mcgill.ca); Office: Ferrier Building, Room 418

The GPD oversees the graduate programs and is the primary faculty contact for PhD students. The GPD can advise you on any aspect of the MA program, especially on questions concerning supervisor relations, fast-tracking, funding, and leaves. Students should inform the GPD of any special circumstances that may affect their progress in the program.

### Area Manager: Student Affairs

Jessica Ward

Email: [jessica.ward2@mcgill.ca](mailto:jessica.ward2@mcgill.ca); Office: Leacock Building, Room 413 (inside LEA 414)

The Student Affairs Manager can advise you on program requirements, teaching assistantships, applications for financial aid, and other such matters.

### Graduate Program Coordinator

Milton Magill

Email: [graduate.polisci@mcgill.ca](mailto:graduate.polisci@mcgill.ca); Office: Leacock Building, Room 414

The Graduate Coordinator provides information regarding admission, student records, thesis proposals, submission of theses, graduation procedures, and various other program requirements.

### Finance Team

Daniela Caucci (Area Manager)

Email: [daniela.caucci@mcgill.ca](mailto:daniela.caucci@mcgill.ca); Office: Leacock Building, Room 432

Navindra Singh (Research Finance Administrator)

Email: [navindra.singh@mcgill.ca](mailto:navindra.singh@mcgill.ca); Office: Leacock Building, Room 427

The Finance Team processes RAShip payments and casual payments. In addition, any financial documents (e.g., expense reports) to be signed by the Chair need to be submitted to the Finance Team.

**Field Coordinators (2025-2026)**

Canadian Politics	Professor Eric Bélanger
Comparative Politics	Professor Dietlind Stolle
International Relations	Professor TV Paul
Political Theory	Professor Catherine Lu
Methods stream	Professors Elissa Berwick and Tania Islas Weinstein

The Field Coordinators can advise you on course selection and career opportunities in their subfields.

**Political Science Liaison Librarian**

Hye-jin Juhn  
Humanities and Social Sciences Library  
Phone: 514-396-2065, Email: [hyejin.juhn@mcgill.ca](mailto:hyejin.juhn@mcgill.ca)

The Liaison Librarian can advise you on any aspect of library research or acquisitions at McGill. Please see Appendix 1 for more information.

**McGill Graduate Association of Political Science Students (MGAPPS)**

MGAPPS promotes academic welfare and enhances the cultural, environmental, and social conditions of graduate students in the Department.  
See <http://www.mcgill.ca/politicalscience/grad/mgapss/>

**IMPORTANT NOTE ON DEPARTMENTAL COMMUNICATIONS AND E-MAIL**

University policy requires that all students use their assigned McGill uniform email address for correspondence. Students are responsible for any official communication sent by the Department or University officials to that address.

For more information, please see [Policy on Email Communication](#)

Note that your student email address has the format of yourname@mail.mcgill.ca. Students who work as TAs or RAs will also be assigned a yourname@mcgill.ca email address. These two addresses are separate, but some electronic systems (e.g. myCourses) may default to the mcgill.ca address.

You will automatically be subscribed with your McGill email address to the Departmental listserv POLIGRAD. The Department regularly distributes important notices on deadlines, policies, grants, meetings, and such via this listserv.

**GRADUATE LOUNGE**

The department's graduate lounge is located in Leacock 515. This is a closed space reserved for Graduate students' use. It includes sofas, study tables, a whiteboard, and a kitchen (mini fridge, microwave, coffee maker, etc.). If you do not already have access, please see the Administrative Officer for card access to the lounge. You should also see the Administrative Office if you require a lock for one of the lockers.

### **3. M.A. PROGRAM INFORMATION**

#### **REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE**

Students normally complete the M.A. degree requirements through the Thesis Program (described below). In exceptional cases, students may pursue the Non-Thesis Program (described below).

Please note that choosing the Non-Thesis M.A. results in significantly higher tuition costs for international students due to Quebec government categorizations of fees for Thesis (research) and Non-Thesis (professional) MA degrees.

Students must inform the Graduate Program Director and the Graduate Coordinator if they choose the Non-Thesis program and ensure that all requirements for the program are followed. Until completion of their course work, students may switch from one program (Thesis to Non-Thesis or vice versa) to the other.

#### **THIS SWITCH CAN ONLY BE DONE ONCE AND AFTER THE GRADUATE PROGRAM DIRECTOR APPROVES AND A WRITTEN REQUEST HAS BEEN SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE COORDINATOR.**

Switching programs must be completed prior to the final semester in the program; you cannot make a change in your last semester.

Students should select a field of concentration within the discipline (i.e., Canadian Politics, Comparative Politics, International Relations, Methods, or Political Theory). Students are strongly encouraged to plan their courses as an integrated program building towards their research thesis. In addition, for interested students the Department offers several Options to complement our existing programs:

#### **M.A. Thesis and Non-Thesis Options in Development Studies**

The Development Studies Option (DSO) is a cross-disciplinary option offered within existing M.A programs in the departments of Geography, History, Political Science, Anthropology, Economics, and Sociology. It is open to Masters students specializing in development studies. Students enter through one of the participating departments and must meet the M.A. requirements of that unit. Students take an interdisciplinary seminar (INTD 657) that introduces them to the study of development and a variety of graduate level courses on international development issues. For more information on the requirements for the DSO, see below.

#### **M.A. Non-Thesis Option in Gender and Women's Studies**

The Graduate Option in Gender and Women's Studies (GWS) provides graduate students with a cross-disciplinary specialization in feminist, women's, and gender studies. This Option is open to graduate students at McGill University enrolled in the Department of Political Science. During the application process, prospective students can specify their interest in the Graduate Option through Slate. There are no prerequisites to enter into the Option. However, previous coursework in gender and women's studies

provides an ideal foundation for more in-depth study of and research in feminist scholarship. Student supervision in the Option is undertaken by one's departmental supervisor who oversees student work, including choice of thesis, dissertation, or project topic. A student's thesis or MA non-thesis project must be on a topic that significantly engages with issues of gender and/or women and/or feminism. For more information about GWS, visit the [IGSF website](#).

#### 4. PROGRAM AND COURSE REGISTRATION

All graduate students must register for courses using MINERVA at [Login to Minerva](#). Students must register for the Registration Confirmation Course in **both** the Fall 2025 (202509) and Winter 2026 (202601) terms by the [registration deadline dates](#) to avoid a **Late Registration Fee**.

Returning Students: May 28, 2025 to August 14, 2025

New Students: July 8, 2025 to August 14, 2025

Fall 2025 (202509)	>	REGN RCGR	>	CRN # 268
Winter 2026 (202601)	>	REGN RCGR	>	CRN # 173

Registration is not valid until the Registration Confirmation courses “REGN RCGR” are on your record. Courses may then be added until the end of the course change period without penalty. An up-to-date class schedule can be viewed through your MINERVA portal.

All incoming graduate students must meet with the Graduate Program Director or the Associate Program Director before classes begin to discuss course selection and other aspects of their program. Students will be contacted by the Graduate Coordinator to arrange an appointment. Advising with the GPD and AGPD for students starting in the fall term will take place during the first week of September. Classes begin on Wednesday, August 27, 2025.

A complete listing of our courses may be found in the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies calendar as well as on our [Courses and Syllabi website](#).

Courses at the 500 and 600 level count as graduate courses. In the Department, M.A. students typically take only 600-level courses. Although 500-level courses may be taken for graduate credit, they are primarily designed as undergraduate honours seminars. If you are interested in a particular 500-level course, please contact the instructor to discuss enrollment. The POLI 700 course is for PhD students only. Students should take no more than three (3) three-credit substantive courses per semester. The department recommends that students with a full TAsip consider taking just two such courses per semester, especially during their first semester in the program.

Students typically complete the M.A. program in either three or four semesters, not including summers. Please see Appendix 2 for sample three- and four-semester completion schedules.

#### **ADD/DROP**

Students who wish to change a course after registration must consult with the GPD. Changes must be made by **Tuesday, September 9, 2025** for Fall term courses and **Tuesday, January 20, 2026** for Winter term courses. Any courses dropped during the Course Change (Add/Drop) Period will be deleted from your record. After the Course Change (Add/Drop) Period there is a period of time during each semester when you may still withdraw; however, a “W” will appear on your record to indicate that you have withdrawn from the course. Ceasing to attend class does not constitute an official withdrawal. Informing the professor that you will no longer be attending the class, although a matter of courtesy, does not constitute a withdrawal.

The following documents must be submitted to the Graduate Program Coordinator to register late or withdraw from a course after the add/drop deadline:

- \* Email/Letter of support from the Professor teaching the course
- \* Email/Letter of support from the Graduate Program Director
- \* An email/letter from the student justifying his/her late withdrawal
- \* Supporting documents if withdrawal request is related to medical reasons
- \* The student must complete the [registration/course change form](#) to request a late add/withdrawal.
- \* **DO NOT COMPLETE THE REGISTRATION/COURSE FORM UNTIL YOU HAVE COLLECTED THE OTHER DOCUMENTS GIVING YOU PERMISSION TO MAKE THE CHANGE**
- \* A late course change fee will be assessed to the student's account

## MYPROGRESS

Students can track their progress toward completing their program requirements in [MyProgress](#). When students in the M.A. Thesis program submit their thesis, they are required to attach a copy of their MyProgress worksheet as a required document.

## 5. FAST-TRACKING

Exceptional M.A. students who plan to pursue a Ph.D. at McGill and who have been nominated by a McGill faculty member in political science may be fast-tracked into the Ph.D. program. Fast-tracking should enable a good match between the applicant and the department, since the applicant will already have found a supervisor and be interested in continuing their research in our department. In general, the expectation is that no more than 1 or 2 students are fast-tracked each year. Only first-year MA students are eligible for fast-tracking.

### Procedure

Deadline: For 1<sup>st</sup> year MA students: March 15, 2026.

1. Professor nominates student by the deadline with a letter.
2. Student provides 1-page research statement by the deadline.
3. Graduate committee evaluates file.
4. Student is informed of the status of the application by the end of March.
5. If accepted, student must then fill in a full application, which is pro forma.
6. Student is then accepted formally by the Office of Graduate and Post-Doctoral Studies.

All courses taken by MA students who are fast-tracked are credited to the PhD program; please note that the grades remain within the degree they were completed in, only the course credits completed during the MA program will be credited towards the PhD program. Fast-tracked students are automatically moved to PhD2.

## 6. M.A. THESIS PROGRAM

Thesis Program students must successfully complete six substantive, approved three-credit graduate courses (18 credits) plus a Thesis. In addition, they must register for three research preparation courses during the program (27 credits, listed below). These research preparation courses *are not formal courses*: there are no meetings or assignments beyond writing your thesis proposal and thesis.

The Thesis is the culmination of the M.A. Thesis Program and prepares students for further research in political science. All students must complete a Thesis Proposal and Thesis under the guidance of their departmental supervisor in order to graduate. *Please see Appendix 3 for Thesis Proposal and Thesis submission procedures, guidelines, and deadlines.*

The six substantive courses must all be at the 500 or 600 level. In selecting courses, please keep the following in mind:

- 1) At least four of the six must be regularly scheduled courses (i.e., not reading or internship courses) at the 500 or 600 level in Political Science. Please note that the department does not offer regularly scheduled courses in the summer.
- 2) Students must complete at least two courses in their field of concentration.
- 3) Students must take a graduate-level Empirical Methods course (normally POLI 612) OR a political theory course (e.g., POLI 561, 613, or 617), and preferably both.
- 4) Students must complete at least one course outside their field of concentration (not including the course taken to fulfill requirement #3 above).

With the approval of the Graduate Program Director, students may take one reading course (POLI 690), as long as they find a faculty member willing to direct it.

Under special circumstances, students may be permitted to take one course from another department or another university, subject to the permission of the Graduate Program Director.

The following required Research Preparation Courses must be added to your record during the program:

POLI 694 Research Preparation 1	(3 credits)
POLI 697 M.A. Thesis Proposal	(12 credits)
POLI 698 Master's Thesis	(12 credits)

These courses do not meet and are not graded. Please register for POLI 694 in your first semester and register for POLI 697 and 698 in the semesters you intend to complete your thesis proposal and thesis, respectively. Each of these courses must be reflected once *and only once* on your transcript by the time you graduate.

### **Political Science MA Thesis Program - Option in Development Studies**

Students in MA Thesis Program — Option in Development Studies take the same number of credits as students in the regular MA Thesis Program. As part of their six substantive three-credit courses, they take:

- (1) INTD 657, the core development studies seminar (must be taken in the first semester of the program)
- (2) Two political science graduate courses (6 credits) that are development-related. Courses that count toward development are those focused on the comparative politics or international relations of development, or on questions in political theory related to development. Where it is unclear if a course focuses on development, the director of ISID will advise.

Students in MA Thesis Program — Option in Development Studies must also write a thesis that is centrally focused on a topic in development studies. The topic will be chosen and approved in consultation with the supervisor.

## 7. M.A. NON-THESIS PROGRAM

(45 CREDITS)

Non-thesis students must successfully complete seven substantive, approved three-credit graduate courses (21 credits) plus a Research Essay. In addition, they must register for six research preparation courses during their first three semesters in the program (24 credits, listed below). These research preparation courses *are not formal courses*: there are no meetings or assignments beyond writing your research essay proposal and research essay. The non-thesis program is a professional, rather than a research program: there is less emphasis on training students for a research career in political science and students in this program are not eligible for some sources of provincial research funding. The tuition rates for the non-thesis program are also higher than for the thesis program.

The Research Essay is the culmination of the M.A. Non-Thesis Program. All students must complete a Research Essay Proposal and Research Essay under the guidance of their departmental supervisor in order to graduate. *Please see Appendix 4 for Research Proposal and Research Essay submission procedures, guidelines, and deadlines.*

The seven substantive courses must all be at the 500 or 600 level. In selecting courses, please keep the following in mind:

- 1) At least four of the seven must be regularly scheduled courses (i.e., not reading or internship courses) at the 500 or 600 level in Political Science. Please note that the department does not offer regularly scheduled courses in the summer.
- 2) Students must complete at least three courses in their field of concentration.
- 3) Students must take a graduate-level Empirical Methods course (normally POLI 612) OR a political theory course (e.g., POLI 561, 613, or 617), and preferably both.
- 4) Students must complete at least two courses outside their field of concentration (not including the course taken to fulfill requirement #3 above).

With the approval of the Graduate Program Director, students may take one reading course (POLI 690), as long as they find a faculty member willing to direct it. Under special circumstances, students may be permitted to take up to two courses from another department or another university, subject to the permission of the Graduate Program Director.

Students must also register for the following required Research Preparation Courses during the first three terms of residence:

POLI 691 Bibliographic Methods	(6 credits)
POLI 693 M.A. Research Proposal	(3 credits)
POLI 694 Research Preparation I	(3 credits)
POLI 695 Research Preparation II	(3 credits)
POLI 696 Research Preparation III	(3 credits)
POLI 699 M.A. Research Essay	(6 credits)

These courses do not meet and (with the exception of POLI 699) are not graded. Please, register for POLI 691 in your first semester and for POLI 694, 695, 696, 693, and 699 in subsequent semesters such that you will always be registered for a minimum of twelve total credits during your first three terms (to maintain full-time status) and will have all of the courses reflected once *and only once* on your transcript by the time you graduate.

### **MA Non-Thesis Program — Option in Development Studies**

In addition to the above, the requirements for the MA Non-Thesis Program — Option in Development Studies are as follows:

- (1) INTD 657, the core development studies seminar (must be taken in the first semester of the program)
- (2) For students in the MA Non-Thesis Program, completion of 9 credits of development-related courses in political science. Courses that count toward development are those focused on the comparative politics or international relations of development, or on questions in political theory related to development. Where it is unclear if a course focuses on development, the director of ISID will advise accordingly.
- (3) A MRE that is centrally focused on a topic in development studies. The topic will be chosen and approved in consultation with the supervisor.

## 8. OTHER GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

### READING COURSE IN POLITICAL SCIENCE (POLI 690)

Graduate students are normally allowed to take only one reading course. Only under exceptional circumstances, and with the approval of the Graduate Committee, can two reading courses be permitted; such permission is rarely given.

A minimum two-page outline and bibliography must be submitted to the faculty member supervising the reading course. This outline should describe the reading, written work, and meeting schedule for the course. There should be regular and frequent interaction between supervisor and student.

The outline must be approved by the supervisor in writing before the student can formally register for the course. The **completed** approval form should be returned to the Graduate Coordinator no later than the add/drop deadline for the semester in which the student plans to take the reading course. The Graduate Director and supervisor both need to sign the form. It is available on our [Documents and Forms section](#) of our webpage.

### INTERNSHIP IN POLITICAL SCIENCE (POLI 599)

An internship must consist of at least 150 hours of work over a period of 12 weeks, plus a major research project based on the internship. The major project will ordinarily consist of a research paper plus a substantial written record of the work conducted during the internship. This latter element may variously consist of a work diary; copies of memoranda, correspondence, and/or papers produced; and/or a shorter paper describing and evaluating the work experience gained during the internship.

Students must submit an Application for Internship to the department well in advance of the proposed term of internship. The request must be endorsed by the faculty member who has agreed to supervise the internship and approved by the GPD. The Application for Internship is available on our [Documents and Forms section](#) of our webpage.

The application must include:

- a) An outline of the proposed internship, including a discussion of "learning goals", "specific activities", and "means of evaluation".
- b) A description of the organization with which the student will be working, including the name of the supervisor within the organization to whom the student will be accountable and a letter indicating the willingness of the responsible person and sponsoring agency to assume the task of supervision (including assessing the work completed). Sponsoring organizations might include international organizations, government agencies, private sector businesses, NGOs, etc. as appropriate.
- c) A proposal for an associated research project to be supervised by an appropriate faculty member in the department. The associated research project would involve a lengthy research paper, equivalent to that produced in an independent reading course, and researched during the internship.

A grade for the internship will be assigned based on the quality of the research paper (approximately 50%, and graded by a member of the department), the quality of the written work materials (approximately 25%, also graded by a member of the department); and a performance assessment (approximately 25%, provided by the supervisor at the organization hosting the internship).

## **COURSES AT ANOTHER UNIVERSITY**

With the permission of the Graduate Program Director, students may take courses at other universities for credit toward their McGill degree. Students taking courses at another university must obtain a minimum grade of B- (65%) if the course is to be credited towards their McGill degree. Students wishing to take courses at other universities in Quebec must do so through [Inter-University Transfer](#).

Permission to take a course at a university outside of Quebec must be obtained before the beginning of the session in which the student intends to take the course. To gain approval from the Department, the student must provide the GPD with course descriptions and if available, course outlines for the courses the student wishes to take. As with courses taken via the IUT route, marks earned at the host university will not appear on McGill transcripts or be included in McGill grade point averages. However, the McGill transcript will indicate the number of transfer credits being counted toward the student's degree.

For further information and regulations, see the [General information](#), [Regulations](#) and [Research Guidelines \(the Red Book\)](#)

## **ENGLISH AND FRENCH LANGUAGE COURSES**

According to the GPS policy, language courses will be flagged as extra to the program and students will be assessed fees accordingly. Please contact the appropriate Centre/Department for further information about course offerings and placement tests.

Although the grades and credits received in these language courses will not count towards the program CGPA, they will be recorded on the student's transcript and cannot be removed. Before committing to a language course not required by their program, graduate students are strongly advised to consult their supervisor in order to determine whether adding in this way to their workload is appropriate.

Documents needed to register for a language course:

- \* A Letter (or email) of approval from the Graduate Program Director
- \* A letter from the Graduate Program Coordinator to give to the respective department offering the language course. E.g. The French department will need this letter to grant a permit override for registration
- \* Student needs to complete the "[Request for Registration/Course Changes](#)" form.

## **DEPARTMENTAL STANDARDS**

The Department expects students to maintain both a satisfactory level and a satisfactory rate of performance while they are enrolled in the program. Students are expected to pass all their courses with a B- (65-69%) grade or better. Grades below 65% are failures.

In case of failure in one or more courses, the Department may recommend that the student withdraw from the program (see [Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies regulations](#)).

The Department also expects students to complete their requirements within a reasonable period of time. GPS enforces a maximum limit of three years for completing M.A. programs. Students not making satisfactory progress toward the completion of their degree may be asked to withdraw.

## **ILLNESS AND LEAVES OF ABSENCE**

If, due to illness, you have missed assignments or mid-term examinations, see your professor and try to make alternative arrangements. You must be prepared to provide confirmation of illness. If you have fallen too far behind, see the Graduate Program Director, bringing with you your medical documentation. We may be able to withdraw you from the course (even after the withdrawal deadline).

Students must register each semester until they have received their degree. If students need to interrupt their studies for a semester or more, they may be eligible to request a leave of absence (see [Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies regulations](#)).

## **EXTENSIONS (K GRADES)**

In special circumstances, a student may be permitted an extension beyond the normal deadline for submission of work in a course. A grade of K is submitted and a new deadline for completion of course work is assigned. Both student and professor must sign the appropriate form and deposit it with the Graduate Program Coordinator. The deadline is normally no more than one month and cannot be later than four months after the end of the course.

Deadlines will be commensurate with genuine need in each case and will not simply allow the maximum time established. For first term courses the deadline should not be beyond February 1st and for second term courses not beyond June 1st. The grade of K becomes a KF (failure) if the work is not submitted on time. Only in exceptional circumstances will students be permitted to take more than one K in a given term. Students who find themselves in such circumstances must petition the GPD by December 1 for fall-term courses and April 15 for winter-term courses for permission to take more than one K in a given term. Exceptions will only be made in the case of documented illness or serious family difficulties. Only in truly extraordinary circumstances is it possible to obtain a further extension (KE). After that there are no further extensions.

Students are strongly urged to avoid requesting Ks in their course work unless there are compelling reasons to do so. The need to clear Ks will interfere with subsequent course work and a record of Ks will handicap students in applying for financial assistance from the University and from outside agencies. The K form can be obtained from the Graduate Program Coordinator.

## 9. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

All eligible graduate students are expected to apply for financial aid from funding agencies external to McGill. As internal funds available are severely limited, many academically strong students are unable to receive financial aid from the University or the department. There are three major sources of funds:

### Fellowships, Scholarships and Loans

- ✓ The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) is an excellent source of fellowships for Canadian citizens and permanent residents. The deadline for applications for the Canada Graduate Scholarships (Master's Program) is usually in November/early December. Application forms and descriptive booklets are available on the web at <http://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/>
- ✓ The Government of Quebec also awards many fellowships and bursaries through the Fonds de recherche du Québec. International students enrolled in a Quebec university are eligible to apply. Application forms are available on the web at <https://frq.gouv.qc.ca/en/>
- ✓ Students should also consult the [Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies funding website](#). In addition, the [Fellowships Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies](#) lists various awards.
- ✓ Students ineligible for the SSHRC or the FRQ fellowships should aim to apply for other external fellowship. The Associate Graduate Program Director can provide more Information about other awards.
- ✓ Students should consult with their faculty supervisor in formulating research proposals for fellowship applications.
- ✓ NOTE: First-year M.A. students awarded an FRQ or SSHRC fellowship should be registered in the thesis option to be considered full-time during the summer term. Non-thesis option students are not considered full-time in the summer unless they register and pay summer term fees.

### Teaching Assistantships

The Department annually hires a number of graduate students as teaching assistants. The Student Affairs Manager will post lists of available positions in the Fall and Winter. Deadlines for department posting for T.A. positions are typically April 30 for Fall term positions and October 15 for Winter term positions. Applications should be submitted to the Student Affairs Manager.

As of June 1998, a Collective Agreement was formally signed between McGill University and A.G.S.E.M. (Association of Graduate Students Employed by McGill). The purpose of this agreement is to establish and maintain an orderly collective bargaining relationship between the University and its employees represented by the Union, to ensure the effective, prompt and equitable settlement of disputes, and to set forth an Agreement covering rates of pay and other working conditions. For detailed information contained in the Collective Agreement, contact the Association of Graduate Students Employed at McGill (A.G.S.E.M.), TEL: (514) 398-2582; email: [mail@agsem-aedem.ca](mailto:mail@agsem-aedem.ca). For details of the Collective Agreement between McGill University and A.G.S.E.M., consult the [A.G.S.E.M. website](#).

A full TAship is 180 hours per term. In general, students are limited to one full TAship per term. Exceptions to this rule require GPD/AGPD approval. They may be granted in situations where TAs are offered more than 180 hours in a single course. The department does not generally allow students to hold multiple TAships in different courses (including courses in other departments/units) if the total hours exceed 180 hours per term.

## Research Assistantships

Professors often hire assistants from their own research budgets. This is done on an individual basis. If you are interested in a research assistantship with a professor, please contact them directly.

## Travel Funding

The University Graduate Mobility Awards (to support travel abroad for research stay at a lab, field work, archival research, and participation in a formal bilateral exchange/research partnership).

[The Graduate Mobility Award](#) is disbursed by Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. The Graduate Mobility Award pays up to CAD 1,500 per month for up to 8 months of research abroad.

These awards are typically approved on a rolling basis, but in past years, there have also been calls for application. Watch your email for announcements. Applications are competitive. Funding amounts vary from a few hundred to several thousand dollars.

The McGill Post-Graduate Student Society (PGSS) also has the [PGSS' Travel Awards Program](#) which provides funding to graduate student members attending conferences or competitions as part of their graduate studies.

## Funding from the Conference Organization

If travelling to a conference, students should also try to obtain travel funds provided by the organization sponsoring the conference. For example, members of the Canadian Political Science Association are eligible for travel grants. The American Political Science Association should also be approached when presenting a paper at the annual meeting.

## Financial Aid for International Students

A limited number of international students from other countries that have signed a tuition fee agreement with Quebec may be exempted from the higher rate of tuition fees normally required of students from foreign countries. The following countries have signed such agreements with Quebec: Algeria, Belgium, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, China, Columbia, Congo, Costa Rica, Djibouti, Ecuador, France, Gabon, Germany, Greenland, Guinea, Haiti, Honduras, India, Israel, Italy, Ivory Coast, Korea, Lebanon, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Niger, Peru, Rwanda, Senegal, Spain (Catalogne), Togo, Tunisia, and Vietnam. Students must apply to the government authorities (usually the Ministry of Education) of their home country at the time they apply for admission to the selected Quebec University. The foreign government authorities make the official recommendation of students to be exempted from higher fees. Signatory countries change from time to time, and students are advised to check the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS) website. There are also certain other exempt categories and further information is available at [International Fee Exemptions](#).

For further information on sources of funding, please consult the Graduate Fellowships and Awards brochure published by the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. See also [Student Aid Office](#), Brown Student Services Building, 3600 McTavish.

## APPENDIX 1: LIBRARY SERVICES FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

### Your liaison librarian

Hye-jin Juhn, liaison librarian for the Political Science department, is your communication link to the library. She offers individual consultations with graduate students to:

- Recommend online databases and current awareness tools such as journal alert services, citation analysis utilities, and citation management software
- Discuss research strategies
- Locate hard-to-find materials
- Answer questions about McGill's library services

Ask a question or set up an appointment by email ([hyejin.juhn@mcgill.ca](mailto:hyejin.juhn@mcgill.ca)), phone (514.398.2065), or in person at her office hours (times to be announced in the fall).

### Library collections

The library provides an extensive collection of over 6 million items: e-journals, online databases, government documents, print and online books, newspapers, data, DVDs, and more. Materials can be searched through the [library catalogue](#) and [article databases](#).

*When McGill doesn't have what you're looking for*

- We can buy it for you. Fill out an online form to suggest a purchase: <https://www.mcgill.ca/libraries/contact-us/suggest>
- The library's Interlibrary Loans service will locate and borrow the materials you need: <http://www.mcgill.ca/library/services/otherloans/interlibrary>
- Graduate students are also entitled to borrow materials from other universities in Canada by obtaining a PBUQ card: <https://www.mcgill.ca/libraries/using-libraries/otherloans/crepuq>

### Sharing knowledge

The library stores, preserves, and promotes the scholarship of McGill faculty and students through a digital repository called **eScholarship@McGill**: <http://www.mcgill.ca/library/find/escholarship>. Deposit your research publications or thesis in this open access repository to ensure the scholarly output is made available to researchers and peers all over the world.

### Facilities

McGill's thirteen branch libraries provide computer labs and printing facilities, quiet study areas, and group meeting rooms. In addition, graduate students who are writing theses and do not have office space may apply for small offices or desks the library.

### Software

[McGill's software licensing website](#) provides you with free access to software such as Trend Micro antivirus software, the citation management tool EndNote, and SPSS.

### Support for your teaching

As a TA or course lecturer, you can refer your students to Sandy for research help. She can also create online resource guides, bibliographies, and links to subscription-based articles and books from your syllabi or myCourses pages. Assistance is also provided with placing items on reserve in the library. Finally, she can provide tailored workshops and presentations for your courses to assist students in conducting research, evaluating information, and avoiding plagiarism.

## APPENDIX 2: COMPLETION TIMETABLES

### M.A. Thesis Program

#### Sample Four-Term Completion Timeline (Term of Graduation Fall Year Two)

YEAR ONE			YEAR TWO	
Fall	Winter	Summer	Fall	Winter
<p><i>Regular Courses:</i> POLI 6xx (3 credits) POLI 612 or Theory course (3 credits)</p> <p><i>Research Prep Course:</i> POLI 694 (3 credits)</p>	<p><i>Regular Courses:</i> POLI 6xx (3 credits) POLI 6xx (3 credits)</p> <p><i>Research Prep Course:</i> POLI 697 (12 credits)</p> <p><i>Prepare and submit M.A. Thesis Proposal</i></p>	<p>Draft M.A. Thesis</p>	<p><i>Regular Courses:</i> POLI 6xx (3 credits) POLI 6xx (3 credits)</p> <p><i>Research Prep Course:</i> POLI 698 (12 credits)</p> <p><i>Submit M.A. Thesis by mid- October</i></p> <p><b>Term of Graduation</b></p>	<p><b>M.A. Awarded at February Granting of Degrees</b></p> <p>(If thesis is evaluated and revised in a timely manner)</p>

**M.A. Thesis Program**

**Sample Five-Term Completion Timeline (Term of Graduation Winter Year Two)**

YEAR ONE			YEAR TWO	
Fall	Winter	Summer	Fall	Winter
<i>Regular Courses:</i> POLI 6xx (3 credits) POLI 612 or Theory course (3 credits)  <i>Research Prep Course:</i> POLI 694 (3 credits)	<i>Regular Courses:</i> POLI 6xx (3 credits) POLI 6xx (3 credits)	Draft M.A. Thesis Proposal	<i>Regular Courses:</i> POLI 6xx (3 credits) POLI 6xx (3 credits)  <i>Research Prep Course:</i> POLI 697 (12 credits)  Prepare and submit M.A. Thesis Proposal	Submit M.A. Thesis by mid-February  <i>Research Prep Course:</i> POLI 698 (12 credits)  <b>Term of Graduation</b>  <b>M.A. Awarded at                      June Convocation</b>

## APPENDIX 3: M.A. THESIS REQUIREMENTS

(POLI 697 and 698)

The Thesis Proposal must be approved in writing, first by the Thesis Supervisor *before submission* and then by a second reader appointed by the GPD. The Thesis Supervisor must be a full-time faculty member of the Department.

**All M.A. thesis research involving human subjects must receive ethics certification from McGill's REB-1.** While certification is not required for submission of the proposal, *certification must be received before any research may be conducted.*

Refer to web site [Research Involving Humans webpage](#) for further information and for submission deadlines.

The Thesis itself must be passed by both an Internal Examiner (typically the supervisor) and an External Examiner. The External Examiner is appointed by the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

### 1. M.A. THESIS GUIDELINES (POLI 698)

The purpose of an M.A. thesis is to demonstrate that the student can design and execute with competence a major piece of research with some originality to it. The scope of an M.A. thesis should be comparable to a full-length article in a scholarly journal. It should deal with a well-defined problem with sufficient review of previous work. It should attempt to build on existing literature either theoretically or empirically, either by original analysis of existing data sources or by introducing some primary source material.

Students are permitted to expand and adapt a seminar paper into a thesis. Students who plan to revise a seminar paper as a thesis should explicitly outline this in the thesis proposal.

The length might vary with the nature of the topic. A thesis that contains quantitative data analysis might be well developed in 8,000-12,000 words (~30-50 pages), while an institutional or historical study might be longer, up to 15,000 words. Requests to exceed 60 double-spaced pages (excluding bibliography) must be approved by the Graduate Program Director.

All theses should be double-spaced.

The Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies Office maintains [Thesis Guidelines](#) on their website. All students in the M.A. thesis program should familiarize themselves with the procedures for preparing and submitting the thesis.

### 2. M.A. THESIS PROPOSAL FORMAT

The thesis proposal must outline the problem to be studied and the mode of investigation. The proposal should be no longer than 15 double-spaced typed pages, excluding the bibliography. To facilitate evaluation of thesis proposals, students are normally expected to follow the format given below:

#### I. Introduction

- a. The problem or topic to be investigated; The precise focus of the study; The relationships or

generalizations to be tested or explored.

- b. The status of earlier and current scholarship on the subject; The proposed contribution of the thesis to knowledge.

**II. Methodology**

- a. Concepts, approaches, and conceptual frameworks
- b. Methods – e.g., case selection, surveys, interviewing, statistical methods, etc.

**III. Plan of work; accessibility of resources; probable time; travel.**

**IV. Tentative outline of the proposed thesis**

**V. Brief bibliography**

Students are permitted to expand and adapt a seminar paper into a thesis. Students who plan to revise a seminar paper as a thesis should explicitly outline this in the thesis proposal.

### **3. M.A. THESIS PROPOSAL GUIDELINES (POLI697)**

#### **Proposal Submission and Evaluation Procedures:**

- 1) Before submission, the thesis supervisor must approve the proposal. The student should give the supervisor a complete draft of the proposal far enough in advance for the supervisor to provide comments and for the student to revise the proposal based on those comments.
- 2) Once the supervisor approves the proposal, the student submit a PDF version to the Graduate Coordinator by email ([graduate.polisci@mcgill.ca](mailto:graduate.polisci@mcgill.ca)).
- 3) The Graduate Coordinator will contact the thesis supervisor to confirm approval and to solicit nomination of two potential readers for the proposal. Readers are typically tenure-track faculty or faculty lecturers in the subfield. Supervisors may, however, nominate readers outside the Department, if the subject matter of the thesis warrants it.
- 4) The Graduate Program Director appoints a two-member Thesis Committee to review the proposal. This Thesis Committee normally consists of the supervisor, plus a second reader.
- 5) The Graduate Coordinator distributes the proposal to the Committee for comments and the GPD relays to the student and supervisor any suggestions the Committee offers concerning the proposed research. On the Committee's recommendation, the GPD may ask the student to revise the proposal before approval.

### **4. THESIS SUBMISSION PROCEDURE**

Students submit their thesis on MyThesis, McGill's thesis examination management system. Please note that GPS distinguishes between "Initial Thesis" and "Final Thesis."

The initial thesis is the version that is reviewed and marked by the external examiner. The final thesis

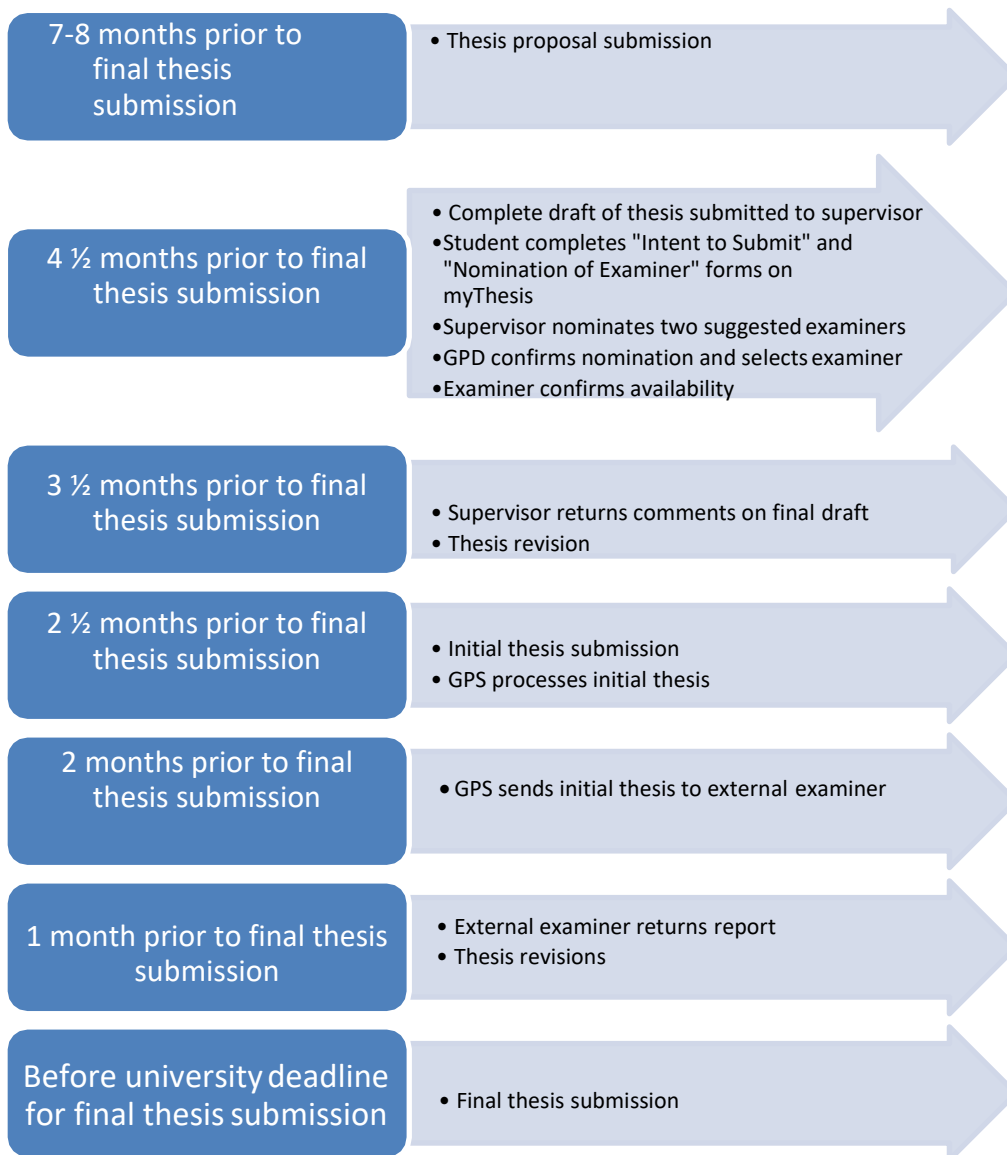
is the revised version that will be deposited in [eScholarship@McGill](mailto:eScholarship@McGill), the digital repository, which collects, preserves, and showcases the publications, scholarly works, and theses of McGill University faculty members, researchers, and students.

Students are required to flag their intent to submit at least 6 to 8 weeks prior to the Initial Thesis submission. See the timeline below for details.

MyThesis submission steps: <https://www.mcgill.ca/gps/thesis/thesis-guidelines/initial-submission>  
FAQs: <https://www.mcgill.ca/gps/thesis/thesis-guidelines/initial-submission/mythesis-faq>

## 5. TIMELINE FOR M.A. THESIS PROPOSAL AND THESIS SUBMISSION, 2025-2026

### Recommended timeline for MA thesis proposal and thesis submission.



**Deadlines:** There are 3 University deadlines for final thesis submission:

Apr 15: June graduation

Aug 15: October graduation

Dec 15: February graduation

\*Please submit your initial thesis well in advance of the final electronic thesis deadline. Examiners are given 4-6 weeks to grade the initial thesis but delays sometimes occur.

## 5. REGISTRATION STATUS

Students who submit their initial and final theses in the same term will have the registration status of "Additional Session" for that term. Students who submit their initial theses and their final theses in separate terms will have the registration status of "Additional Session" for the first term and "Thesis Evaluation" for the second term.

Tuition fees differ by registration status. See the [Fee Calculator](#).

The deadline for initial submission will affect students' enrolment status and tuition, but not affect the final submission time and graduation. The final submission deadline will directly affect the time of graduation.

Initial and Final Thesis Submission in different terms					
Thesis Proposal Submission	Initial Thesis Submission	Final Thesis Submission	Additional Session	Thesis Evaluation	Graduation
5 months prior to initial thesis submission	Apr 16 – <b>Aug 15</b>	Aug 16 – <b>Dec 15</b>	Summer	Fall	February
5 months prior to initial thesis submission	Aug 16 – <b>Dec 15</b>	Dec 16 – <b>Apr 15</b>	Fall	Winter	June
5 months prior to initial thesis submission	Dec 16 – <b>Apr 15</b>	Apr 16 – <b>Aug 15</b>	Winter	Summer	October

<b>Initial and Final Thesis Submission in the same term</b>					
Thesis Proposal Submission	Initial Thesis Submission	Final Thesis Submission	Additional Session	Thesis Evaluation	Graduation
5 months prior to initial thesis submission	Apr 16 – <b>Aug 15</b>	Apr 16 – <b>Aug 15</b>	Summer	None	October
5 months prior to initial thesis submission	Aug 16 – <b>Dec 15</b>	Aug 16 – <b>Dec 15</b>	Fall	None	February
5 months prior to initial thesis submission	Dec 16 – <b>Apr 15</b>	Dec 16 – <b>Apr 15</b>	Winter	None	June

Should the deadline date fall on a weekend or a holiday, the effective deadline date will be the previous working day.

For example, students planning to graduate in October have two options:

1. Initial and Final Thesis Submission in different terms: students submit the initial thesis in Winter by April 15, submit final thesis in Summer by August 15, and graduate in Summer (October convocation). They will be registered as “additional session” for the Winter term, and “thesis evaluation” for the Summer term.
2. Initial and Final Thesis Submission in the same term: student submit their initial thesis in early Summer, submit final thesis in late Summer by August 15, and graduate in Summer (October convocation). They will be registered as “additional session” for the Summer term.

Students should always register for the term following their planned final thesis deadline (in case of a failure or missed final thesis deadline).

## APPENDIX 4: M.A. RESEARCH ESSAY REQUIREMENTS

FOR NON-THESIS MA PROGRAM (POLI 693 and 699)

Please note that choosing the Non-Thesis M.A. results in significantly higher tuition costs for international students, due to Quebec government categorizations of fees for Thesis (research) and Non-Thesis (professional) MA degrees.

To choose the Non-Thesis option, you must consult with the GPD.

The MRE will normally be based on a paper written for a graduate seminar or an independent reading course. The Essay should focus on a clearly defined research problem, in the process demonstrating familiarity with relevant scholarly work and the ability to carry out research and organize the results. The Essay should be about 8,000-12,000 words (~30-50 double-spaced pages) in length. Under no circumstances will an Essay be accepted that is longer than 60 double-spaced pages, excluding bibliography.

All MREs should be double-spaced.

The Research Essay Supervisor must be a full-time faculty member of the Department. The supervisor is usually the faculty member for whom the student wrote the seminar paper upon which the Research Essay is to be based. Once a student and supervisor have agreed to work with each other, both must confirm this agreement with the Graduate Coordinator and Graduate Program Director in writing (e-mail is acceptable).

**All M.A. research involving human subjects must receive ethics certification from McGill's REB-1.** While certification is not required for submission of the proposal, *certification must be received before any research may be conducted.*

Refer to web site [Research Involving Humans webpage](#) for further information and for submission deadlines.

### 1. DEADLINES FOR M.A. RESEARCH ESSAY PROPOSAL AND FINAL SUBMISSION, 2025-2026

Expected Term of Graduation	Submission of Research Essay Proposal to Department	Submission of Final Research Essay to the Department
Fall 2025 (February 2026 Granting of degrees)	October 15, 2025	January 7, 2026
Winter 2026 (Spring 2026 Convocation)	January 28, 2026	April 4, 2026
Summer 2026 (Fall 2026 Convocation)	May 30, 2026	August 26, 2026

The student is responsible for submitting the Non-Thesis Application for Graduation form (available on Minerva) well in advance of the deadline. Deadlines vary, depending on graduation dates, and can be found in here: <http://www.mcgill.ca/students/graduation/applying>

## 2. M.A. RESEARCH ESSAY PROPOSAL GUIDELINES (POLI693)

If the Research Essay is to be based on a paper written for a graduate seminar or for an independent reading course, the proposal will comprise the original paper plus a one-page statement of intent outlining the proposed revisions. A more elaborate research proposal (approximately five pages) is required when a seminar paper does not serve as the basis for the M.A. Research Essay.

- 1) Before submission, the thesis supervisor must approve the proposal. The student should give the supervisor a complete draft of the proposal far enough in advance for the supervisor to provide comments and for the student to revise the proposal based on those comments.
- 2) Once the supervisor approves the proposal, the student submit a PDF version to the Graduate Coordinator by email ([graduate.polisci@mcgill.ca](mailto:graduate.polisci@mcgill.ca)).
- 3) The Graduate Coordinator will contact the thesis supervisor to confirm approval and to solicit nomination of two potential readers for the proposal. Readers are typically tenure-track faculty or faculty lecturers in the subfield. Supervisors may, however, nominate readers outside the Department, if the subject matter of the thesis warrants it.
- 4) The Graduate Program Director appoints a two-member Thesis Committee to review the proposal. This Thesis Committee normally consists of the supervisor, plus a second reader.
- 5) The Graduate Coordinator distributes the proposal to the Committee for comments and the GPD relays to the student and supervisor any suggestions the Committee offers concerning the proposed research. On the Committee's recommendation, the GPD may ask the student to revise the proposal before approval.

## 3. M.A. RESEARCH ESSAY GUIDELINES (POLI 699)

Please have your supervisor send their approval along with two suggested examiner names to Graduate Program Coordinator on the day of your submission.

The student sends **an electronic copy** to the Graduate Coordinator by the appropriate deadline (see page 25).

The Essay will then be evaluated by the supervisor and by a second faculty member to be nominated by the GPD from among two names recommended by the supervisor.

Both faculty members submit a written evaluation and a grade to the Graduate Coordinator. The grades received from each faculty member will be recorded individually; however, as the University requires a single grade to be reported, the grades will be averaged and this grade will then be submitted to the Faculty as the final grade for the M.A. Research Essay (POLI 699).

Evaluators who assign a failing grade (below B-) must specify in writing what revisions are necessary for a passing grade. In this case, the student may either:

- a) Resubmit the revised essay to the original evaluators within two months of the initial

evaluation, at which point the revised essay must receive a passing grade from both evaluators; or

b) Request that the original, unrevised research essay be submitted to two new evaluators by the GPD. The research essay must receive a passing grade from both. If it does not, the student must then revise and resubmit to the original evaluators in accordance with option A above.

## **APPENDIX 5: RESEARCH ETHICS BOARD**

MCGILL UNIVERSITY  
RESEARCH ETHICS  
BOARD-I  
ETHICAL APPROVAL OF RESEARCH INVOLVING  
HUMANS

The University Research Ethics Board-I (REB-I) serves the following areas: Anthropology, Biology, CDAS, Economics, Geography, Political Science, School of the Environment, Sociology and the Faculty of Management. For information contact Ethics Officer Lynda McNeil at 398-6831.

What Needs to be Reviewed? All research conducted by University-affiliated professors, students or staff that involves human subjects requires review and approval by the REB. This includes all funded (by granting agencies or contracts) and non-funded research, and graduate and undergraduate research and course projects. All approvals must be renewed on an annual basis.

Procedures: All applications should consist of the research proposal, the Research Ethics Protocol form and all other required documentation (e.g., consent forms, information sheets, questionnaires, approvals from other organizations). For all REB reviews, seven (7) copies plus the original of the required documents must be submitted to the REB office to the attention of Lynda McNeil, Research Grants Office, James Administration Bldg., Rm 429.

Refer to web site [Research Involving Humans webpage](#) for further information and for submission deadlines.

Graduate research proposals, undergraduate honours/independent studies proposals - Forward to the REB office with a copy of a letter from the department acknowledging successful academic review within the department.

Course projects - Research projects conducted by undergraduate or graduate students as part of a course requirement may have these projects reviewed and approved by the chair at the departmental level. A copy of the signed Certificate of Ethical Acceptability by the departmental chair must be forwarded to the REB office. Projects involving minors or other vulnerable populations, or that involve more than minimal risk to the research subject, must be reviewed by the REB. Departmental review should not be used for students who are conducting research that is part of a faculty member's own research program. This research must be reviewed by the REB.

Renewal of Approval - To renew an on-going, previously approved project you must submit a brief report of progress to date and indicate if there have been any changes made. Attach details of the proposed changes along with any new documents (e.g., revised consent forms). The title of the project must still be the same.