



Bieler School of Environment (Graduate)
Programs, Courses and University Regulations
2024-2025

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This publication provides guidance to prospects, applicants, students, faculty and staff.

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Note: Throughout this publication, "you" refers to students newly admitted, readmitted or returning to McGill.

Publication Information

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1 Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

1.1 Administrative Officers

Administrative Officers

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1.2 Location

James Administration Building, Room 400
845 Sherbrooke Street West
Montreal QC H3A 0G4
Website: mcgill.ca/gps



Note: For inquiries regarding specific graduate programs, please contact the appropriate department.

1.3 Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies' Mission

The mission of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (GPS) is to promote university-wide academic excellence for graduate and postdoctoral education at McGill. GPS provides leadership and strategic direction across the university in close collaboration with the academic and administrative units, and the graduate and postdoctoral community.

2 Important Dates

For all dates relating to the academic year, consult mcgill.ca/importantdates.

3 Graduate Studies at a Glance

Please refer to [University Regulations & Resources](#) > *Graduate* > : [Graduate Studies at a Glance](#) for a list of all graduate departments and degrees currently being offered.

4 Program Requirements

Refer to [University Regulations & Resources](#) > *Graduate* > *Regulations* > : [Program Requirements](#) for graduate program requirements for the following:

- Master's Degrees
- Doctoral Degrees

- Coursework for Graduate Programs, Diplomas, and Certificates

5 Graduate Admissions and Application Procedures

Please refer to [University Regulations & Resources > Graduate > : Graduate Admissions and Application Procedures](#) for information on:

- Application for admission;
- Admission requirements;
- Application procedures;
- Competency in English; and
- Other information regarding admissions and application procedures for Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

6 Fellowships, Awards, and Assistantships

Please refer to [University Regulations & Resources > Graduate > : Fellowships, Awards, and Assistantships](#) for information and contact information regarding fellowships, awards, and assistantships in Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

7 Postdoctoral Research

Students must inform themselves of University rules and regulations and keep abreast of any changes that may occur. The *Postdoctoral Research* section of this publication contains important details postdoctoral scholars will require during their studies at McGill and should be periodically consulted, along with other sections and related publications.

7.1 Postdocs

Postdocs are recent graduates with a Ph.D. or equivalent (i.e., Medical Specialist Diploma) engaged by a member of the University's academic staff, including Adjunct Professors, to assist them in research.

Postdocs must be appointed by their department and registered with Enrolment Services in order to have access to University facilities (library, computer, etc.).

7.2 Guidelines and Policy for Academic Units on Postdoctoral Education

Every unit hosting postdocs should apply institutional policies and procedures for the provision of postdoctoral education and have established means for informing postdocs of policies, procedures, and privileges (available at mcgill.ca/gps/postdocs), as well as mechanisms for addressing complaints. For their part, postdocs are responsible for informing themselves of such policies, procedures, and privileges.

1. Definition and Status

- Postdoctoral status will be recognized by the University in accordance with Quebec provincial regulations as may be modified from time to time. The eligibility period for postdoctoral status is up to five years from the date when the Ph.D. or equivalent degree was awarded. A *leave of absence* for parental or health reasons may extend the eligibility period. Leaves for other reasons, including vacation, do not impact the eligibility period.
- Some McGill postdocs have dual status as both students and employees (unionized or non-unionized). Consult the [Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies website](#) for definitions of Postdoctoral Fellows, Postdoctoral Scholars, and Postdoctoral Researchers.
- Postdocs must conduct research under the supervision of a McGill professor (including Adjunct Professors), qualified in the discipline in which training is being provided and with the ability to fulfil supervisory responsibilities and act as a mentor for career development. Postdocs are expected to engage primarily in research with minimal teaching or other responsibilities.

2. Registration

- Postdocs must *register* annually with the University through Enrolment Services. Registration will be limited to postdocs who fulfil the definition above, and who meet the eligibility criteria as stipulated on the [Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies website](#).

- ii. Upon registration, postdocs will be eligible for a University identity card issued by Enrolment Services.
- iii. Leaves of absence must comply with the Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies Policies for Vacation, Parental/Familial, and Health Leave (see [section 7.3: Vacation Policy for Graduate Students and Postdocs](#) and [University Regulations & Resources](#) > Graduate > Regulations > Categories of Students > : [Leave of Absence Status](#)).

3. Appointment, Funding, Letter of Agreement

- i. Postdoctoral appointments may not exceed the registration eligibility period as defined above.
- ii. In order to be registered, the postdoc must be assured of financial support other than from personal means during their stay at McGill University. This amount must be equivalent to the minimal stipend requirement set by the University in accordance with guidelines issued by federal and provincial research granting agencies or the collective agreement, as applicable. Funding during parental leave is subject to the conditions of the funding agency or the collective agreement, as applicable.
- iii. Postdocs require a [Letter of Agreement for Postdoctoral Education](#) signed by the postdoc, the supervisor, and the department/unit head or delegate.
- iv. Postdocs with full responsibility for teaching a course should be compensated over and above their postdoctoral funding as course lecturers. This applies to all postdocs, except those for whom teaching is part of the award.
- v. The amount of research, teaching, or other tasks that postdocs engage in over and above postdoctoral activities should conform to the regulations for postdocs specified by the Canadian research council of their discipline or the collective agreement. This applies to all postdocs, including those whose funding does not come from the Canadian research councils.

4. Privileges

- i. Postdocs have the same pertinent rights as the ones granted to McGill students under [mcgill.ca/students/srr](#), and those granted by the policies listed at [mcgill.ca/secretariat/policies-and-regulations](#).
- ii. Postdocs have full graduate student borrowing privileges in McGill libraries through their identity card.
- iii. As a general rule, postdocs may take courses for credit as Special Students following the admissions procedures outlined at [mcgill.ca/gradapplicants/apply/prepare/visiting](#). [Tuition and other charges](#) will apply.
- iv. Postdocs may be listed in the McGill directory.
- v. Access to sports facilities may be purchased on a monthly basis through McGill Athletics and Recreation.
- vi. Postdoctoral Fellows and Scholars are mandatory members of the Post-Graduate Students' Society (PGSS) and an annual association fee is automatically charged.
- vii. Postdocs are permitted membership in the Faculty Club; an annual fee will be charged for this membership.
- viii. Postdocs are encouraged to participate in Professional Development Workshops provided by Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, and Teaching and Learning services. These sessions are usually free of charge.
- ix. Postdocs have access to the services provided by the Ombudsperson.
- x. Postdocs may enrol as part-time students in the second language written and spoken English/French courses offered by the School of Continuing Studies/French Language Centre. Postdocs will be charged tuition for these courses. International Postdocs may be required to obtain a CAQ and a Study Permit.
- xi. Access to student services is granted to non-unionized postdocs, who are charged the Student Services fee in the Fall and Winter terms, through their student fee accounts.

5. Responsibilities

- i. Postdocs are subject to the responsibilities outlined at [mcgill.ca/students/srr](#) and must abide by the policies listed at [mcgill.ca/secretariat/policies-and-regulations](#).
- ii. Each academic unit hosting postdocs should clearly identify postdocs' needs and the means by which they will be met by the unit.
- iii. Each academic unit should assess the availability of research supervision facilities, office space, and research funding before recruiting postdocs.
- iv. Some examples of the responsibilities of the academic unit are:
 - to verify the postdoc's eligibility period for registration;
 - to provide postdocs with departmental policy and procedures that pertain to them;
 - to facilitate the registration and appointment of postdocs;
 - to assign departmental personnel the responsibility for postdoctoral affairs in the unit;
 - to oversee and sign off on the Letter of Agreement for Postdoctoral Education;
 - to ensure that each postdoc has a supervisor, lab and/or office space, access to research operating costs and necessary equipment;
 - to include postdocs in departmental career and placement opportunities; and
 - to refer postdocs to the appropriate University policies and personnel for the resolution of conflict that may arise between a postdoc and a supervisor.
- v. Some examples of the responsibilities of the supervisor are:
 - to uphold and transmit to their postdocs the highest professional standards of research and/or scholarship;
 - to provide research guidance;
 - to meet regularly with their postdocs;
 - to provide feedback on research submitted by the postdocs;

- to clarify expectations regarding intellectual property rights in accordance with the University's policy;
- to provide mentorship for career development; and
- to prepare, sign, and adhere to a Letter of Agreement for Postdoctoral Education.

vi. Some examples of the responsibilities of postdocs are:

- to inform themselves of and adhere to the University's policies and/or regulations for postdocs as outlined at mcgill.ca/gps/postdocs and mcgill.ca/students/srr, and the Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies *University Regulations and Resources*;
- to submit a complete file for registration to Enrolment Services;
- to sign and adhere to their Letter of Agreement for Postdoctoral Education;
- to communicate regularly with their supervisor; and
- to inform their supervisor of their absences.

vii. Some examples of the responsibilities of the University are:

- to register postdocs;
- to provide an appeal mechanism in cases of conflict;
- to provide documented policies and procedures to postdocs;
- to provide postdocs with the necessary information on McGill University student services (Postdoctoral Fellows and Scholars) and HR policies and guidelines (Postdoctoral Researchers).

Approved by Senate, April 2000; revised May 2014; February 2020.

7.3 Vacation Policy for Postdocs

Please refer to the : [Vacation Policy for Graduate Students and Postdocs](#).

7.4 Leave of Absence for Health and Parental/Familial Reasons

A leave of absence may be granted for maternity or parental reasons or for health reasons (see *University Regulations & Resources > Graduate > : Leave of Absence Status*).

Such a leave must be requested on a term-by-term basis and may be granted for a period of up to 52 weeks. For a maternity or parental leave, the eligibility period of a maximum of 52 consecutive weeks is determined based on when the child is born; if the leave is interrupted for one or two terms, the eligibility period cannot be extended. Students and Postdocs must make a request for such a leave in writing to their department and submit a medical certificate. The department shall forward the request to Enrolment Services. See the procedure in *University Regulations & Resources > Graduate > : Leave of Absence Status*.

Students who have been granted such a leave will have to register for the term(s) in question and their registration will show as "leave of absence" on their record. No tuition fees will be charged for the duration of the authorized leave. Research supervisors are not obligated to remunerate students and Postdocs on leave. A summary table of various leave policies (paid or unpaid) for students and Postdocs paid from the Federal and Quebec Councils through fellowships or research grants is available at mcgill.ca/gps/funding/getting-paid under "Leave Policies and Form."

7.5 Postdoctoral Research Trainees

Eligibility

If your situation does not conform to the Government of Quebec's definition of a Postdoctoral Fellow, you may be eligible to attend McGill as a Postdoctoral Research Trainee. While at McGill, you can perform research only (you may not register for courses or engage in clinical practice). Medical specialists who will have clinical exposure and require a training card must register through Postgraduate Medical Education of the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences—not Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

The category of Postdoctoral Research Trainee is for:

Category 1: An individual who has completed requirements for the Doctoral degree or medical specialty, but whose degree/certification has not yet been awarded. An individual in this category will subsequently be eligible for registration as a Postdoctoral Fellow.

Category 2: An individual who is not eligible for Postdoctoral Registration according to the Government of Quebec's definition, but is a recipient of an external postdoctoral award from a recognized Canadian funding agency.

Category 3: An individual who holds a professional degree (or equivalent) in a regulated health profession (as defined under CIHR-eligible health profession) and is enrolled in a program of postgraduate medical education at another institution. This individual wishes to conduct the research stage or elective component of their program of study at McGill University under the supervision of a McGill professor. This individual will be engaged in full-time research with well-defined objectives, responsibilities, and methods of reporting. Applications must be accompanied by a letter of permission from the applicant's home institution (signed by the Department Chair, Dean, or equivalent) confirming registration in their program and stating the expected duration of the

research stage. Individuals who are expecting to spend more than one year are encouraged to obtain formal training (Master's or Ph.D.) through application to a relevant graduate program.

Category 4: An individual with a regulated health professional degree (as defined under CIHR-eligible health profession), but not a Ph.D. or equivalent or medical specialty training, but who fulfils criteria for funding on a tri-council operating grant or by a CIHR fellowship (up to maximum of five years post-degree).



Note: Individuals who are not Canadian citizens or permanent residents must inquire about eligibility for a work permit.

General Conditions

- The maximum duration is three years.
- The individual must be engaged in full-time research.
- The individual must provide copies of official transcripts/diplomas.
- The individual must have the approval of a McGill professor to supervise the research and of the Unit.
- The individual must have adequate proficiency in English, but is not required to provide official proof of English competency to Enrolment Services.
- The individual must comply with regulations and procedures governing research ethics and safety and obtain the necessary training.
- The individual will be provided access to McGill libraries, email, and required training in research ethics and safety. Any other University services must be purchased (e.g., access to athletic facilities).
- The individual must arrange for basic health insurance coverage prior to arrival at McGill and may be required to provide proof of coverage.

8 Graduate Studies Guidelines and Policies

Refer to [University Regulations & Resources > Graduate > : Guidelines and Policies](#) for information on the following:

- Guidelines and Regulations for Academic Units on Graduate Student Advising and Supervision
- Policy on Graduate Student Research Progress Tracking
- Ph.D. Comprehensives Policy
- Graduate Studies Reread Policy
- Failure Policy
- Guideline on Hours of Work

9 Graduate Student Services and Information

Graduate students are encouraged to refer to [: Student Services and Information](#) for information on the following topics:

- Service Point
- Student Rights and Responsibilities
- Student Services – Downtown and Macdonald Campuses
- Residential Facilities
- Athletics and Recreation
- Ombudsperson for Students
- Extra-Curricular and Co-Curricular Activities
- Bookstore
- Computer Store
- Day Care

10 Information on Research Policies and Guidelines, Patents, Postdocs, Associates, Trainees

Refer to [University Regulations & Resources](#) > *Graduate* > : [Research Policy and Guidelines](#) for information on the following:

- Regulations on Research Policy
- Regulations Concerning the Investigation of Research Misconduct
- Requirements for Research Involving Human Participants
- Policy on the Study and Care of Animals
- Policy on Intellectual Property
- Regulations Governing Conflicts of Interest
- Safety in Field Work
- Office of Sponsored Research
- Postdocs
- Research Associates

11 Browse Academic Units & Programs

The programs and courses in the following sections have been approved for the 2024–2025 session as listed.

11.1 Environment

11.1.1 Location

Macdonald Campus

Bieler School of Environment
 Rowles House
 21,111 Lakeshore Road
 Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue QC H9X 3V9

Downtown Campus

Bieler School of Environment
 3534 University Street
 Montreal QC H3A 2A7
 Telephone: 514-398-2827

Coordinator – C. Zhu

Telephone: 514-398-2827
 Email: christina.zhu@mcgill.ca
 Website: mcgill.ca/environment

Graduate Option website: mcgill.ca/environment/envroption

11.1.2 About Environment

Resolving environmental issues requires a dialogue between pure and applied sciences, the social sciences, and the humanities. The degradation of the biological and biophysical environment has roots in the structure of human societies while solutions to environmental problems have an impact on human livelihoods.

A number of academic departments and institutes at McGill promote graduate-level research and training on environmental topics and have faculty members whose main research interest falls in this domain. As such, environmental research is widespread throughout the McGill community. The Environment option provides a vehicle whereby discipline-based graduate programs can easily and effectively incorporate collaborations from at least one other discipline into their research.

Goals of the Option

- To provide thesis or non-thesis students with an understanding of how knowledge is transferred into action with regard to the environment;
- To develop an appreciation of the role of scientific, political, socioeconomic, and ethical judgments in influencing that process;
- To provide a forum whereby graduate students in environment throughout the University bring their disciplinary perspectives together and enrich each other's learning through structured courses, formal seminars, and informal discussions and networking.

Students admitted into the Environment option will be supervised or co-supervised by either a Bieler School of Environment appointed faculty member or a Bieler School of Environment associate member. Their advisory committee will include at least one individual from outside the home department. It is expected that the thesis, dissertation, or project, as well as the final seminar presentation, will contain an environmental component and will include a discussion of the applied implications of the research findings. Together with the courses common to the Environment option, specific course requirements for each program are given within the departmental listings cited below.

Program List

The Environment option is currently available with the following graduate programs:

: Anthropology

: *Master of Arts (M.A.) Anthropology (Thesis): Environment (45 credits)* ([Arts](#) > Graduate > Browse Academic Units & Programs > Anthropology)

: Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences

: *Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences: Environment* ([Science](#) > Graduate > Browse Academic Units & Programs > Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences)

: Biology

: *Master of Science (M.Sc.) Biology (Thesis): Environment (45 credits)* ([Science](#) > Graduate > Browse Academic Units & Programs > Biology)

: *Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) Biology: Environment* ([Science](#) > Graduate > Browse Academic Units & Programs > Biology)

: Bioresource Engineering

: *Master of Science (M.Sc.) Bioresource Engineering (Thesis): Environment (45 credits)* ([Agricultural & Environmental Sciences](#) > Graduate > Browse Academic Units & Programs > Bioresource Engineering)

: *Master of Science, Applied (M.Sc.A.) Bioresource Engineering (Non-Thesis): Environmental Engineering (45 credits)* ([Agricultural & Environmental Sciences](#) > Graduate > Browse Academic Units & Programs > Bioresource Engineering)

: *Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) Bioresource Engineering: Environment* ([Agricultural & Environmental Sciences](#) > Graduate > Browse Academic Units & Programs > Bioresource Engineering)

Entomology (under : Natural Resource Sciences)

: *Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) Entomology: Environment* ([Agricultural & Environmental Sciences](#) > Graduate > Browse Academic Units & Programs > Natural Resource Sciences)

: Geography

: *Master of Arts (M.A.) Geography (Thesis): Environment (45 credits)* ([Science](#) > Graduate > Browse Academic Units & Programs > Geography)

: *Master of Science (M.Sc.) Geography (Thesis): Environment (45 credits)* ([Science](#) > Graduate > Browse Academic Units & Programs > Geography)

: *Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) Geography: Environment* ([Arts](#) > Graduate > Browse Academic Units & Programs > Geography)

: Law

: *Master of Laws (LL.M.) Law (Thesis): Environment (45 credits)* ([Law](#) > Graduate > Browse Academic Units & Programs > Law)

: *Master of Laws (LL.M.) Law (Non-Thesis): Environment (45 credits)* ([Law](#) > Graduate > Browse Academic Units & Programs > Law)

: Medicine, Experimental

: *Master of Science (M.Sc.) Experimental Medicine (Thesis): Environment (45 credits)* ([Medicine](#) > Graduate > Browse Academic Units & Programs > Medicine, Experimental)

: *Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) Experimental Medicine: Environment* ([Medicine](#) > Graduate > Browse Academic Units & Programs > Medicine, Experimental)

: Philosophy

: *Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) Philosophy: Environment* ([Arts](#) > Graduate > Browse Academic Units & Programs > Philosophy)

: Plant Science

: Master of Science (M.Sc.) Plant Science (Thesis): Environment (48 credits) ([Agricultural & Environmental Sciences](#) > Graduate > Browse Academic Units & Programs > Plant Science)

: Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) Plant Science: Environment ([Agricultural & Environmental Sciences](#) > Graduate > Browse Academic Units & Programs > Plant Science)

Renewable Resources (under : [Natural Resource Sciences](#))

: Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) Renewable Resources: Environment ([Agricultural & Environmental Sciences](#) > Graduate > Browse Academic Units & Programs > Natural Resource Sciences)

11.1.3 Environment Admission Requirements and Application Procedures

11.1.3.1 Admission Requirements

Candidates must apply **separately** to the Bieler School of Environment for the graduate Environment option. Their admissibility will be based on their academic experience and performance, and the availability of a potential Bieler School-accredited supervisor or co-supervisor for their proposed research. For further information, please consult the following website: mcgill.ca/environment/envroption.

11.1.3.2 Application Procedures

McGill's online application form for graduate program candidates is available at mcgill.ca/gradapplicants/apply.

See [University Regulations & Resources](#) > Graduate > Graduate Admissions and Application Procedures > : [Application Procedures](#) for detailed application procedures.

11.1.3.2.1 Additional Requirements

The items and clarifications below are additional requirements set by this department:

- Option application form
- Signed option supervisory form (A supervisor or co-supervisor must be Bieler School-affiliated. Please visit the following website for the faculty list: mcgill.ca/environment/envroption.)

11.1.3.3 Application Dates and Deadlines

The application deadlines to the graduate Environment option may vary depending on the department you are applying to. For more information, please contact the [Graduate Program Coordinator](#) in the department you are interested in.