



**REHABILITATION SCIENCE  
GRADUATE PROGRAM**

**GUIDE TO GRADUATE STUDIES  
2011-2012**

**HAMILTON, ONTARIO**

**SEPTEMBER 2011**

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## WELCOME

Welcome to the Graduate Program in Rehabilitation Science at McMaster University. We are pleased that you have chosen this program for furthering your education. We believe you have made an excellent choice. McMaster University is internationally renowned; has faculty that are leaders in the rehabilitation field and offers an innovative curriculum that is open to diverse areas of research and practice.

Upon completion of the Rehabilitation Science Program, you should expect the following:

1. To understand the theoretical foundations of Rehabilitation Science,
2. To have methodological skills in the design, analysis and critical appraisal of health research
3. To understand and deal with barriers to moving rehabilitation research into practice
4. To have enhanced critical reasoning skills and apply these to a variety of clinical, research or policy issues
5. To have enhanced scientific writing and other communication skills
6. To be prepared to assume leadership positions in clinical practice, research-clinician, academic and/or policy positions

The purpose of this handbook is to provide information students will need while studying at McMaster. We hope that you find the handbook useful and if you have any suggestions for additions, please pass those on to the Assistant Dean of Rehabilitation Science, through the Administrative Assistant.

Please note that this handbook is a supplement to the information obtained in the School of Graduate Studies Calendar. **The School of Graduate Studies Calendar is your ultimate source for information on general aspects of graduate studies, university regulations pertaining to graduate school, information on university funding opportunities, degree requirements, course information, and faculty listings.** The School of Graduate Studies Calendar is located online here:  
<http://graduate.mcmaster.ca/graduate-calendar>

We have tried not to duplicate information in this handbook that should be obtained from the graduate calendar since the latter is the official documentation. Rather, this guidebook should provide information that is more specific to The Rehabilitation Science Graduate Program.

### **Rehabilitation Science Graduate Program Assistant Dean**

- Dr. Joy MacDermid

x 22524 - [macderj@mcmaster.ca](mailto:macderj@mcmaster.ca)

### **Master's Course-based (Online) Coordinator**

- Dr. Joyce Tryssenaar

[tryssen@mcmaster.ca](mailto:tryssen@mcmaster.ca)

### **Administrative Assistant (Rehabilitation Science Programs):**

- Laura Jakubczyk

x 27859 - [jakubcl@mcmaster.ca](mailto:jakubcl@mcmaster.ca) or  
[RSGrad@mcmaster.ca](mailto:RSGrad@mcmaster.ca)

## I. OFFICE OF THE ASSOCIATE DEAN OF GRADUATE STUDIES (HEALTH SCIENCES)

The Rehabilitation Science Graduate Program operates within the School of Rehabilitation Science in the Faculty of Health Sciences at McMaster University as a component of the Health Sciences Graduate Programs. Graduate Studies in the Faculty of Health Sciences are under the jurisdiction of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences) and are administered by the Graduate Policy and Curriculum Council under the auspices of the School of Graduate Studies as described in the current SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES CALENDAR (<http://graduate.mcmaster.ca/graduate-calendar>) The Office of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies provides administrative support for the program. This includes support to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences), the Rehabilitation Science Program Assistant Dean, and all graduate faculty members. In addition, the office administers all student-related activities from admissions to graduation. The Rehabilitation Science program has administrative support, but many aspects of your program are administered through the faculty graduate office.

The Office of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences) is in the MDCL 2235, Telephone: (905) 525-9140.

### Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences)

Dr. Catherine Hayward x 21609 - [adeanhsc@mcmaster.ca](mailto:adeanhsc@mcmaster.ca)

### Administration:

Elizabeth Williams, (Administrative Assistant to Dr. Catherine Hayward) x 21609 - [williaeg@mcmaster.ca](mailto:williaeg@mcmaster.ca)

Rose Mason (Manager) x 22735 - [masonr@mcmaster.ca](mailto:masonr@mcmaster.ca)

Ann Greene (Programs Coordinator) x 24445 - [greenea@mcmaster.ca](mailto:greenea@mcmaster.ca)

**Linda Wilson (Administrative Assistant, Rehabilitation Science) x 27458 - [wilsnl@mcmaster.ca](mailto:wilsnl@mcmaster.ca)**

Mary Lynn Taylor (Admissions Coordinator, Medical Science & Nursing) x 22983 - [taym@mcmaster.ca](mailto:taym@mcmaster.ca)

Dympna McCully (Administrative Assistant, Medical Science & Scholarships) x 22982 - [mccully@mcmaster.ca](mailto:mccully@mcmaster.ca)

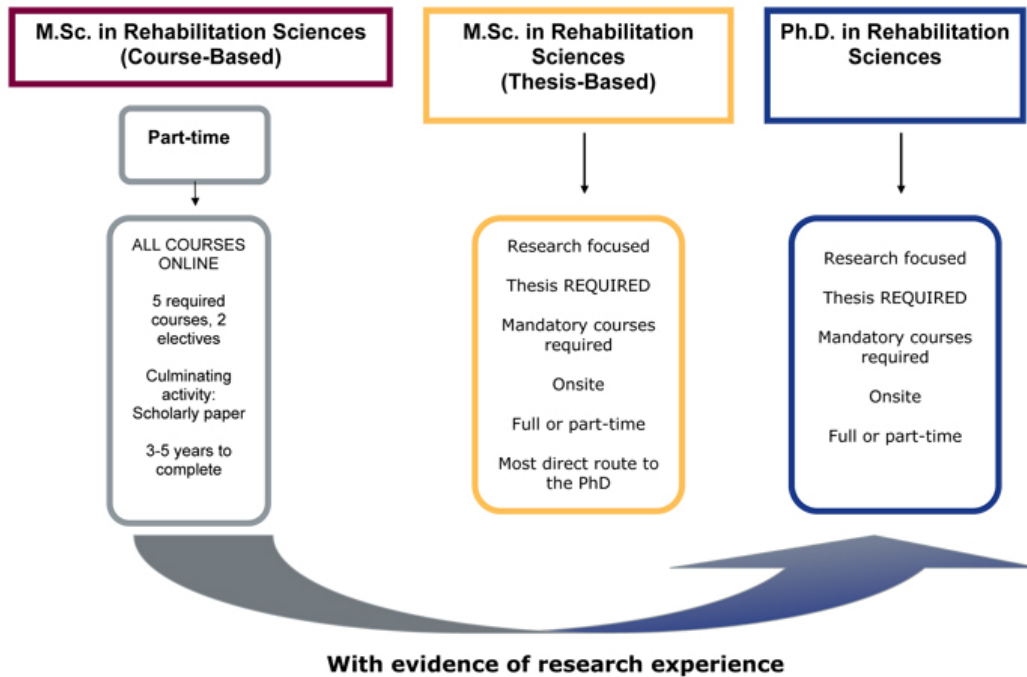
Cassandra Weimann (Administrative Assistant, Nursing) x 22736 - [cweima@mcmaster.ca](mailto:cweima@mcmaster.ca)

Lorraine Carroll (Administrative Assistant, HRM) x 27718 - [carrl@mcmaster.ca](mailto:carrl@mcmaster.ca)

## II. SCHOOL OF REHABILITATION SCIENCE

The School of Rehabilitation Science was founded in 1989 and presently offers four programs:

- 1) MSc (Occupational Therapy) entry level, professional program for occupational therapists,
- 2) MSc (Physiotherapy) entry level, professional program for physiotherapists,
- 3) Rehabilitation Science, which includes a PhD program and an MSc program with a thesis option and an on-line course-based option, and
- 4) the Master of Health Management Program (in collaboration with the DeGroot School of Business), which is an on-line, course-based program for part time students.



The School is located in the Institute of Applied Health Sciences (IAHS) building on the McMaster campus. The School currently has over 350 students, 30 full or part-time faculty members, and over 100 clinical faculty and professional associates. Additional information on the School, its faculty and their research activities can be found on the Internet: <http://www.srs-mcmaster.ca/>

The purpose of the Rehabilitation Science program is to educate rehabilitation scientists who will contribute high quality research that informs rehabilitation practice. Persons who are naturally aligned with Rehabilitation Scientists include physical therapists, occupational therapists, and other rehabilitative disciplines. The program also accepts students from other backgrounds whose interests align with rehabilitation. Rehabilitation can be defined as a treatment or process that facilitate the process of recovery from injury, illness, or disease to as normal a condition as possible; or, more broadly as the restoration of someone to a useful place in society. The Rehabilitation Science Program expects students to be able to define how their work contributes to advancing Rehabilitation Science.

### III. GENERAL INFORMATION

#### 1. Student ID

You will receive a student card when you register for the program. If you will be conducting your research in the hospital, you will also need a hospital photo ID. For new on campus students, please check your orientation package for times to have this done in MDCL 2235. If you need a replacement card, please contact the Office of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences, MDCL 2235) and they will tell you where to obtain one.

#### 2. Work Space/Mail

Rehabilitation Science graduate students who are full-time have work space available in the Institute of Applied Health Sciences and should contact **Laura Jakubczyk in IAHS 402**. Laura will provide

you with the key pad code for the room. Also at this time, a **\$10.00 lock deposit is required from each student (refundable when you leave) to obtain a key to a desk of your choice.**

**Mail for on-campus students is delivered to Rehabilitation Science Graduate Student Mailbox in room 402 and is then picked up by graduate students for delivery to either the shared mailbox in the graduate student room or to individual desks (room 308).**

### **3. Parking**

Applications for a parking permit are available from E.T. Clarke Building (Room 102). Further information may be obtained by phoning ext. 24232

### **4. Communication**

All Rehabilitation Science students are asked to provide the Office of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences, MDCL 2235) and Laura Jakubczyk (IAHS 402) with their home and office addresses, including phone numbers, E-Mail address and Fax number. Please update these as they change; including providing an alternate email that we can reach you after graduation. The address form can be found at this website: <http://fhs.mcmaster.ca/medsci/events/orient2011.html>

### **5. Where to Go for Help**

The School of Graduate Studies Calendar is posted annually with the most up-to-date information and should be your first stop in searching for information since it is the official version of the policies and procedures. However, it is common for students to need help finding or interpreting this information. It is advisable to direct your concern to the appropriate person to get your answer as quickly and efficiently as possible. Faculty and support staff within the different levels (School, Faculty, University) have different roles. While staff across the different offices communicates with each other to optimize coordination, you will get your answers more efficiently if you learn who to contact for different issues. It is advisable to ensure that you have checked University policy when making decisions.

Here are some guidelines to follow when you require assistance:

- For administrative details within the School of Rehabilitation Science (booking meetings with Joy MacDermid, IAHS room bookings, AV equipment set up, internal procedures and student records, sign-out of internal thesis exemplar, submitting forms, study space, online safety training, course registration, drop and add procedures, etc.), contact Laura Jakubczyk, IAHS 402 or [jakubl@mcmaster.ca](mailto:jakubl@mcmaster.ca)

Although you are told about your funding level by the School of Rehabilitation Science, it is important to remember that the primary responsibility for anything to do with your pay is operationalized through the Office of Health Science Graduate Studies (MDCL 2235). They process pay and enforce policies related to financial matters. For financial matters (e.g. TAs), University policies and procedures, please contact Ann Greene, ext. 24445.

**For access to information on academic accommodations/supports, or student counselling on academic or personal challenges, please see Appendix 1 at the end of this handbook.**

For information about your registration, tuition payments, student cards or general graduate student policies, contact the School of Graduate Studies in Gilmour Hall 212, or extension 23679.

Your thesis supervisor or your faculty advisor (in the MSc course-based option) is the first person to approach with academic concerns about your training program or any other issues that are affecting your graduate studies. She or he carries the overall responsibility for overseeing all aspects of your degree work. It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in regular contact with your supervisor to fully inform them of your concerns and progress. Students assume the responsibility for arranging these regular meetings.

- If either yourself or your supervisor wants information or support in handling a specific academic issue, it is appropriate to consult with the RS Assistant Dean (Joy MacDermid). It is often appropriate to consult with the RS Assistant Dean about internal processes, program expectations/opportunities, facilitators/barriers to completion of your training program, concerns/clarification about policies and procedures etc. Please arrange an in-person, telephone or Skype meeting with Joy MacDermid through Laura Jakubczyk, [jakubcl@mcmaster.ca](mailto:jakubcl@mcmaster.ca)
- If you require additional information or advice beyond what the School has been able to provide, then you may contact the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences, MDCL 2235). Please arrange an appointment through Elizabeth Williams in the Office of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences), MDCL 2235, ext. 21609.
- For all aspects of admissions, MSc oral defenses, administrative matters such as leaves of absence, education plans, supervisory committee meetings, change of status, etc., please contact Linda Wilson, MDCL 2235, ext. 27458.

For PhD oral defences, please contact Christina Bryce in the School of Graduate Studies, Gilmour Hall 212, or by email at [gthesis@mcmaster.ca](mailto:gthesis@mcmaster.ca)

- For external and internal awards competitions, special events information, and some University policies and procedures, please contact Dympna McCully, MDCL 2235, ext. 22982.

## **6. Full-time and Part-time Status**

Students in all options of the Rehabilitation Science Program may be registered as either full-time or part-time students. Students make decisions about registrations on the balance of commitments and opportunities that are associated with either type of registration. Full-time students are expected to complete the program more quickly, to be more available for on-campus/program responsibilities, and are eligible for scholarship/funding opportunities that are not open to part-time students. Part-time status is preferred by students who have work or other obligations that preclude full-time training. The program has both full-time and part-time students. Students are expected to meet program milestones on timelines commiserate with either full or part-time status. Milestone expectations take into consideration the difference in time commitment.

**THE DESCRIPTION OF FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME STATUS** (Excerpt from School of Graduate Studies Calendar - 2.4 Registration; 2.4.3 McMaster University Regulations for Full and Part-Time Status)

### **Provincial Definitions of Full- and Part-time Status**

Under the regulations of the Government of Ontario, a full-time graduate student must:

- a) be pursuing his/her studies as a full-time occupation;

- b) identify him/herself as a full-time graduate student;
- c) be designated by the university as a full-time graduate student;
- d) be geographically available and visit the campus regularly. Without forfeiting full-time status, a graduate student, while still under supervision, may be absent from the university (e.g. visiting libraries, doing field work, attending a graduate course at another institution, etc.) provided that, if any such period of absence exceeds four weeks in any one term, written evidence shall be available in the Graduate Studies Office to the effect that the absence has the approval of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences) and the Dean of Graduate Studies;
- e) be considered to be a full-time graduate student by his/her supervisor or equivalent (designated by the University).

In addition to these government regulations, it is the position of the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies (OCGS), which appraises all of our graduate programs, that it supports, “a ten-hour limit on university-related employment and encourage(s) full-time students to limit time spent on employment inside or outside the university.”

### **McMaster University’s Regulations for Full- and Part-time Status – Graduate Studies Calendar - 2.4.3**

The School of Graduate Studies recognizes three academic terms for purposes of interpreting the rule limiting employment with the University to ten hours per week on average: Fall (September through December); Winter (January through April); and Summer (May through August). These are deemed to have 17, 17, and 18 weeks, respectively. The ten-hour limit includes work as a Teaching Assistant at McMaster.

If the student is to be employed at the University other than as a TA or invigilator, the School of Graduate Studies should be informed in writing of the nature of the employment, and the approval of the supervisor and the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences) is required. The approval of the School of Graduate Studies is required if the student is to be hired for University teaching. If students wish to perform more work for the University than set out in the calendar (average 10 hours/week) then they must complete a permission form and follow the associated guidelines around overload work (section 2.4.4 Employment Regulations).

A part-time student is one who works more than an average of 10 hr/week. A part-time student is not eligible for University teaching assistantships, scholarships or most external awards. A part-time student may, however, apply for and obtain an external award from a granting agency which enables him/her to become a full-time student, depending on the agency’s regulations.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Office of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences) (MDCL 2235) if you have any questions on these matters.

## **7. Financial Support of Students – Graduate Studies Calendar - 5.2 Teaching Assistantships**

Each year, the Faculty of Health Sciences Graduate Programs receives an allocation of teaching assistantships (TAs) from the Dean of the Faculty. At present, the program offers only half-TAs (equivalent to 130 hours of employment). Full-time thesis students can receive a maximum of two years of TA support at the MSc level and 4 years at the PhD level depending upon availability. TA awards and conditions of employment are regulated by the School of Graduate Studies and CUPE,

Local 3906. These awards are usually outlined in the admission offer. Once students give up their TA option, the university is not obligated to re-instate it. If the student wishes to decline a TA that was intended to comprise a component of their minimum funding package (required for full-time PhD students only) , then they may need to document this source of income. Students are not guaranteed reinstatement of their TA if they change their mind.

Major scholarship awards may have their own demands or limitations on hours worked or on total remuneration. Certain students may choose to work in a professional capacity for 10 hours per week rather than accept a TA. Students are not required to provide documentation of employment outside of the university. The university does not monitor off-campus employment. Supervisors will become concerned if student employment interferes with their ability to participate in training activities or progress in a timely manner.

### **External and Internal Awards**

All students must provide a copy of any external funding (personal awards and research funding) to the RS Administrative Assistant and to the Office of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences, MDCL 2235). Funding packages may be altered based on the amount of external funding obtained.

**External Awards:** It is important that full-time students pursue external funding as this is a condition of the funding provided by the program. A number of external awards are available from numerous agencies. There are very few awards available to part-time students. Students will receive a competitions calendar from the Office of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences) in September outlining awards for which they may apply during the current academic year. Most applications must be downloaded from the Website. Notices are provided by the School of Graduate Studies and the Assistant Dean to provide student notices about external awards where possible. Students are encouraged to discuss opportunities for funding and in particular external awards with their supervisor prior to starting training and at regular intervals.

Many students apply for CIHR PhD awards starting in the fall of their entry into the program. While this is a competitive funding process, a number of RS trainees have been successful. Students can apply to more than one agency for training awards and should pursue multiple funding sources. Funding organizations all have different restrictions about eligibility that may include issues on citizenship, type of training, and length in the program and research focus. Students should check eligibility before starting an application or asking for support letters. The Assistant Dean typically offers a session on preparing training applications each fall. Students should attend this session and any grantsmanship training sessions offered. *Please see appendix 2 regarding how to optimize the support letter.*

### **Internal (McMaster University) Awards:**

These awards are made primarily on the basis of academic qualifications by the Graduate Programs in Health Sciences Scholarship Committee and the Scholarship Committee of Graduate Council. A competitions calendar for internal awards will be available in January of each year. Students will also receive notification of details outlining procedures for applying for these awards. **Only full-time students are eligible for internal awards.**

## Financial Statement

During September, a letter with details of the financial support for the coming academic year is sent to each student (with a copy to the supervisor). The details will include any external or internal awards, TA support and any contribution from the supervisor's grant(s). A copy of the letter is sent to the student's supervisor and kept on file. A new letter will be produced if this package changes, such as when the student receives new awards. Please ensure that your funding letter is correct as your pay will be based on the description of your funding as outlined in that letter.

## 8. Student Pay Cheques

All aspects of payments to graduate students (including Income Tax receipts and address changes) are handled in the School of Graduate Studies Office in Gilmour Hall 212 (Dina Lopresti, ext. 23686 and Lorna Thomas, ext. 24258). Inquiries about payments, etc. should be directed to this office, not to Financial Services. You must provide a S.I.N. as soon as possible for payroll. Employee Number: **Your student number and your employee number are the same.** When asked for your employee number on documents pertaining to payments, please provide your student number.

Pay for graduate students are made on the last Thursday of each month except in December. December pay will be deposited in the second week (you will be notified of the actual date). The statement of earnings will be placed in your mail box at the end of each month. Monthly payments are calculated so that you will receive an approximately equal monthly cheque over the academic year (September to August) after tuition is deducted. The first cheque each year will also show additional deductions for the Graduate Students Association fee, the Capital Building Fund, Admin Service, and the Student Services Fee. These deductions are made only once per year. There will also be a one-time Learning Resource fee of \$10.00 for an MSc thesis student and \$20.00 for a PhD student which must be paid by each student in September.

**Vacation pay is included in the TA's monthly wages.** (Please refer to Article 19.01 in the Collective Agreement between CUPE and McMaster University). You will not receive a lump sum payment at the end of the year.

## 9. Petitions for Special Consideration – Graduate Studies Calendar - 2.4.7

### Other Deductions

- a) Tuition - If you are being paid for a period which is less than 12 months, your tuition fees for the academic year, September to August, will be deducted during the period that you are being paid (i.e. if you are being paid for four months, all of your fees will be deducted during that period).
- b) Taxes - The University is required by law to deduct Unemployment Insurance and Canada Pension premiums on all employment income (e.g. TA payments). Federal Income Tax will be assessed on all income (including scholarships and bursaries). You may obtain a Tax Exemption Return (form TD 1) on <http://graduate.mcmaster.ca/payment-services/payroll-information> if you have additional exemptions (e.g. you are supporting a spouse in Canada) which will change the rate at which you are taxed. Please return completed forms to the School of Graduate Studies Office (GH room 212).
- c) If you are receiving a Teaching Assistantship or a Research Assistantship in lieu of a TA, you are a member of the Canadian Union of Public Employees, Local 3906, Unit 1. Union dues (at the current rate of 2.5% of the above employment) will be deducted in each month in which you receive TA/RA monies.

- d) Dental Plan: An Employee in Classification A (CUPE Unit 1) who is contracted to work at least 130 hours for the academic year, September 1, 2011 to August 31, 2012 will have Dental Plan premiums \*for single coverage or \*for family coverage deducted each month for the full year (September to August). Provisions for opting-out of the Dental Plan or for obtaining family coverage are covered in two separate documents. \* **New rates not yet determined.** The rates will be updated when known. For reference purposes 2010-11 rates were \$8.43 for single coverage and \$66.64 for family coverage. Please contact CUPE office for more information and this webpage [http://graduate.mcmaster.ca/images/files/Pay\\_Info\\_Sept\\_2011.pdf](http://graduate.mcmaster.ca/images/files/Pay_Info_Sept_2011.pdf). Also see the Graduate Calendar [http://www.mcmaster.ca/oia/McMaster\\_Grad\\_Calendar-2010-2011.pdf](http://www.mcmaster.ca/oia/McMaster_Grad_Calendar-2010-2011.pdf) (**Section 5 Financial Matters, 5.1 Fees for Graduate Students**).
- e) Bookstore Accounts: If you have an outstanding Bookstore account, you may wish to have all or part of it deducted from your monthly cheque. You can also set up an ongoing Bookstore deduction for a fixed amount (e.g. \$25 per month). You will be charged interest on the unpaid balance. Please submit your request in writing (including your student number) to Ms. Dina Lopresti in the School of Graduate Studies Office, Gilmore Hall room 212.

Please Note: All outstanding account balances (i.e. Bookstore, library and parking fines, etc.) at the end of December, April and July will be deducted from the next month's pay.

### **Direct Deposit**

Student payroll will be made by Direct Bank Deposit. AN EMPLOYEE DEPOSIT INFORMATION application form must be completed and a VOIDED cheque must be attached. A "Statement of Earnings", showing details of your payment, will be placed in your student mailbox. You may obtain an "Employee Deposit Information Form" from the following website: <http://graduate.mcmaster.ca/current-students/forms/570-student-forms> or from the School of Graduate Studies Office (GH 212).

### **10. Vacation (Graduate Studies Calendar - 2.4.6), Leave of Absence (Graduate Studies Calendar - 2.4.5), Maternity/Parental Leave (Graduate Studies Calendar - 2.4.5)**

**Students are entitled to take vacation and leave of absence time, but must conform to University regulations/procedures to avoid problems with the registration.** It is important to use a leave of absence where appropriate, as students may be deemed as failing to progress during times where health or personal issues limit their ability to participate in their training program if such permissions are not in place. **It is important to consult the university calendar around these regulations. The regulations are outlined in Section 2.4.5 of the Graduate Studies Calendar.**

### **Reasons for Leaves of Absence – Graduate Studies Calendar - 2.4.5**

**Students may require leaves for parental, health, or personal reasons. Please refer to the Graduate Studies Calendar section 2.4.5 for information about different types of Leaves.**

If you plan on taking a Leave related to family responsibilities such as pregnancy and child rearing, please use the "Leave of Absence Information Form where Leave of Absence Includes Pregnancy or Parental Leave" located here: <http://graduate.mcmaster.ca/current-students/forms/570-student-forms>

If you are requesting a Leave for health or personal circumstances, please fill out a Petition for Special Consideration form entitled "Petitions for Special Consideration to the Committee on Graduate

**Admissions and Study”** located here: <http://graduate.mcmaster.ca/current-students/forms/570-student-forms>. Note: you will require a physician’s note for processing of a medical leave request.

It is important to discuss with your supervisor whether you will have periods of absence from the university or your program activities. The university policy states that students who are absent from campus for more than two weeks during the fall or winter terms or four weeks in the summer term **without prior permission** from the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences) and the School of Graduate Studies will be deemed to have withdrawn voluntarily from graduate study. However, students may often need to arrange, through the Office of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences) and the School of Graduate Studies, to be "full-time off-campus" for various periods to carry out their research. Application for such permission should be made at the time of the first supervisory committee meeting. The form entitled “Request to be Full-Time Off-Campus” is available from the following website: <http://graduate.mcmaster.ca/current-students/forms/570-student-forms>  
In cases of unauthorized absence, the student will have to apply for readmission. The Graduate Admissions and Study Committee will rule on each request on a case-by-case basis. No guarantee of readmission or of renewal of financial arrangements can be made.

#### **CONTINUATION OF SCHOLARSHIP FUNDING DURING GRADUATE STUDENT PARENTAL LEAVE FROM STUDIES (See Section 2.4.5 of the Graduate Calendar)**

Whether funding is continued during a leave depends on the nature of the leave, the source of funding and any associated agency regulations and university rules. Please consult the agency for specific information about their policies. University policies about scholarship funding are found in Section 2.4.5 of the graduate calendar. Policies around TAs would be in the CUPE collective agreement.

#### **INFORMATION ABOUT PROGRAMS**

##### **IV. MSc THESIS OPTION - Graduate Studies Calendar - page 558 of the paper calendar**

Students must comply with the School of Graduate Studies and the Health Sciences Graduate Programs regulations, successfully complete the required courses, and complete and defend a research thesis. Additional courses may be required of a student by his/her supervisory committee or the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences) and may be selected by the student in consultation with the supervisory committee.

Full-time students should normally take 2 years to complete the program. For part-time students, the expected duration of the program is 4 years.

#### **Courses**

Minimum course requirements:

1. Theory course: RS 700\* - The Development, Evaluation and Utilization of Theories in Rehabilitation
2. An approved specialty course: e.g., RS 701\*, 702\*, 703\*, 704\*, 711\* or 712\*

3. An approved research methods course: e.g. RS 707\*
4. An approved data analysis course: e.g., RS 714\*
5. **SGS 101#** - Academic Research Integrity and Ethics (an online module taken by all graduate students – completed on Avenue to Learn)  
**SGS 201#** - Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) (an online module taken by all graduate students – completed here: <http://www.mcmaster.ca/accessibility/>)

**See Graduate Studies Calendar – Section 2.5.5 for more information regarding these online modules.**

6. The School of Rehabilitation Science has a series of research rounds given by rehabilitation scientists. Regular attendance at these rounds is required.

-The student's supervisory committee may require students to take additional courses

-Students may choose additional courses, which may be taken once approved by the student's supervisory committee

The MSc program includes a thesis which is described in the thesis section below.

Course schedules are posted online here:

<http://www.srs-mcmaster.ca/CurrentStudents/RehabilitationScienceMScPhD/tabid/2117/Default.aspx>

*An example template for students to record the elements of their MSc training plan is included in Appendix 7.*

### **Masters and PhD Thesis Information**

Students must conduct research under the supervision of a supervisor and supervisory committee. The topic of research will depend on the interests of the students and the expertise of the supervisor. Students will prepare and defend a research proposal, conduct the research, prepare a written thesis, and defend the research thesis at a final oral examination.

### **Guidelines for Thesis Proposal**

A thesis proposal is a written plan that the student prepares to outline in brief the thesis research. Thesis proposals should be brief, concrete, and focussed. The purpose of the proposal is to set out a plan for the thesis research and for writing the thesis. The proposal also functions as a contract between the student and the committee. A concrete thesis proposal, once approved, should eliminate the possibility of later conflict over the scope and nature of the thesis.

There is no required format; but supervisors will indicate their expectations. Two basic approaches are common. In one the student prepares a detailed literature review and proposed methods that will ultimately form major components of the thesis (10-15 pages). In the streamlined manuscript format the student outlines major background issues arising from the literature very briefly, and describes in brief, but sufficient detail, for the supervisory committee to review and approve the methods as they will ultimately appear in thesis manuscripts. In the streamlined format, the literature review detail is added to the thesis in more detail at a later date. The streamlined format may be 4-5 pages for a masters proposal

and 6-7 pages for a PhD proposal. Students should consider if they adopting the manuscript format for the thesis and may wish to format their proposal accordingly.

The following guidelines are suggested to assist you in the development of your thesis proposal.

Well formulated thesis proposals should be 10 double-spaced pages not including appendices and references.

While the specific format of thesis proposals can vary, the basic principles to be considered include the following elements:

- A clear introductory statement of the problem to be researched. The reason for proposing the particular research must be stated. Note: For doctoral work, the research problem for the thesis must represent an original contribution to the discipline of rehabilitation science; the nature of this contribution should be made clear in this introductory section of the proposal.
- A brief, critical review of the relevant theoretical and empirical literature in the specific area of the thesis. The student should discuss the format of this with their supervisor and be clear whether it is to be in the format of that for the thesis, or the basic support for the thesis rationale in brief.
- A statement of the problem and specific research questions to be addressed should be stated.
- A description of the research methods to be employed in the thesis, and the manner in which they will be employed. This section should include the nature of study participants, (inclusion/exclusion criteria, ethics, sampling methods) tools/scales, test protocols, interview plan, analyses should be explained and referenced where appropriate. It is important to keep the data collection plan realistic and within the means of the student.
- Research "instruments," such as questionnaires or interview schedules, should be appended to the proposal.
- A tentative schedule of work, indicating when each part of the thesis is to be completed. Be realistic.
- It must be clear if the student intends to adopt justification for the choice of a traditional integrated or a "sandwich or manuscript" format for the thesis. The format and content must be approved by the supervisory committee.

The following appendices are not required for use; but provided in case students find them useful- to use or customize as needed:

***See Appendix 3. Potential outline for Master`s Thesis Proposal Manuscript Style***

***See Appendix 4. Potential outline for PhD Thesis Proposal Manuscript Style***

### **Transfer to PhD**

Exceptional students enrolled in the McMaster MSc thesis option in the Rehabilitation Science Program could apply to transfer to the PhD after meeting all the course requirements of the MSc, attaining an A- and demonstrating adequate research potential as determined by the student's supervisory committee.

## V. TRANSFER PROCEDURE FROM THESIS-BASED MSc TO PhD IN REHABILITATION SCIENCE PROGRAM

The following procedure is to be used by the supervisor and supervisory committee of a thesis-based MSc student enrolled in the Rehabilitation Science (RS) Program when recommending review for transfer to the PhD program without completion of the MSc degree.

The objectives of the transfer procedure are:

- a. To assess the progress of the student toward the Master's degree,
- b. To assess the potential of the candidate to carry out independent, original research, and
- c. To consider the suitability of the candidate for direct admission to the PhD program.

### PROCEDURE

1. The process is initiated by the supervisor and supervisory committee after the student has successfully completed the 4 required courses: RS 700, an approved specialty course (such as RS 701, 702, 703, or 704), an approved research methods course and an approved analysis course. Normally these should be completed in the first year in the MSc thesis based curriculum and the transfer process is normally initiated after 12 months and before 18 months of study. In the case of part-time thesis students, the period will be extended to 24 and 36 respectively.

The process begins with a "Request for Transfer Form" (<http://www.srs-mcmaster.ca/CurrentStudents/RehabilitationScienceMScPhD/RSForms/tabid/3578/Default.aspx>) from the student and supervisor to the Office of the Associate Dean (Health Sciences), stating that the student wishes to transfer from the MSc to the PhD program. This notification normally takes place **3 months prior** to the date of the expected transfer. Normally the student and supervisor will also meet with the Rehabilitation Science Assistant Dean at this time to discuss the transfer procedure. **Transfers become effective only on the following dates: September 1, January 1, & May 1.**

2. The student must have a minimum of an A- average in the four required courses of the MSc curriculum.
3. To be considered for transfer, the student must complete a **Transfer Report** to be submitted to each member of the Transfer Committee (in hard copy) two weeks before the scheduled date of the Transfer meeting. The transfer report will consist of three components:
  - a. A description of the reasons for the request to transfer from the MSc to the PhD program including a statement of career goals and plans for PhD research.
  - b. A progress report containing a description of the research work accomplished by the student in his/her MSc Program (approximately 5-10 double-spaced pages). Ideally this should include pilot data.
  - c. A PhD thesis proposal including the literature review, research question or hypothesis, rationale, methods, timeline, et cetera as related to the chosen methodology (approximately 10-15 double spaced pages). Emphasis should be placed on the proposal. At this time the student will be expected to have identified a PhD supervisor and the proposal will be a result of discussions between the student and the proposed supervisor.

4. The student's MSc supervisor must write a letter of support for the transfer of the student. This letter must describe the student's suitability for PhD level study. The proposed PhD supervisor must write a letter indicating his or her ability to support the student and his/her research as well as an indication of available financial support. The letters must be forwarded to the Transfer Committee with the Transfer Report.
5. The Transfer Committee is composed of:
  - a. The student's proposed PhD supervisor,
  - b. Two members of the RS PhD Admissions Committee appointed by the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences) in consultation with the RS Assistant Dean,
  - c. One member of the RS graduate faculty, and
  - d. One member who serves as chair usually the RS Program Assistant Dean or his/her delegate who will not have a vote except in the event of a tied vote.

In the event that the RS Assistant Dean is also the proposed supervisor of the student requesting the transfer, the Assistant Dean should delegate the role on the student's Transfer Committee to one of the following RS graduate faculty members: 1) Chair of the PhD Admissions Committee; 2) Chair of the Curriculum Committee; 3) Chair of the Comprehensive Examination Committee.

6. The Transfer Committee, after independent consideration of the supervisor's recommendation and the Transfer Report, will meet at the Transfer meeting.
7. The student will be expected to present and defend orally the work he/she has accomplished and the future research proposed for the PhD at the Transfer Meeting. A maximum of 2 hours will be allowed for the Transfer Meeting.
8. The time, date and place of the Transfer Meeting will be arranged by the Office of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences). Once arrangements have been made, the student, the Transfer Committee and the Assistant Dean of the RS Program will be notified.
9. After the examination, the Chair will invite the Committee to appraise the oral defense and, following discussion, will decide to recommend one of the following options to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences):
  - a. The candidate be allowed to proceed directly to the PhD program, without completion of the MSc degree. (This recommendation will require a unanimous committee vote).
  - b. The candidate be allowed to proceed to the PhD program, but only after completing the MSc degree (This decision may be made by a majority committee vote).
  - c. The candidate be invited to complete the MSc only at this time. (This decision may be made by a majority committee vote).
10. The Chair of the Transfer Committee will convey the Committee's decision to the student orally and in writing with a brief explanation of the reason if the transfer is not approved. The Chair will also complete the "Request for Change in a Graduate Student's Status" form (<http://graduate.mcmaster.ca/current-students/forms/student-forms>) which will be forwarded to the Office of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences).

11. If successful, the student will provide a final corrected copy of the Transfer Report to the RS Administrative Assistant, Laura Jakubczyk in IAHS 402, to be kept in the student's RS file.

## **VI. PhD PROGRAM – Graduate Studies Calendar – page 559 of the paper calendar.**

PhD students must comply with the School of Graduate Studies regulations and successfully complete at least three graduate half courses at the 700 level which are the minimum course requirements as well as complete a comprehensive examination and defend a research thesis. Additional courses may be required of a student by his/her supervisory committee or may be selected by the student in consultation with the supervisory committee.

Full-time students should normally take 4 years to complete the program. For part-time students, the expected duration of the program is 6 years.

### **Courses**

**The supervisor and supervisory committee provide guidance to ensure that courses and supplemental training activities help the students to attain the scope and depth of knowledge and skills in methods and content required for the associated degree. Students select courses with the following minimum considerations:**

The required PhD courses include:

1. RS 725\* **specialty** course - Effective Knowledge Transfer for Rehabilitation Scientists (3 credits)
2. an approved **data analysis** or methods course (3 credits)
3. an **additional content** course relevant to thesis (3 credits)
4. PhD students who have not taken a theory research/science course or its equivalent will be required to complete RS 700 in addition to the other PhD course requirements.
5. **SGS 101#** - Academic Research Integrity and Ethics (an online module taken by all graduate students – completed on Avenue to Learn)
- SGS 201#** - Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) (an online module taken by all graduate students – completed here: <http://www.mcmaster.ca/accessibility/>)

**See Graduate Studies Calendar – Section 2.5.5 for more information regarding these online modules.**

6. The School of Rehabilitation Science has a series of Research Rounds given by rehabilitation scientists. Regular attendance at these Research Rounds is required.
7. The student's supervisory committee may require students to take additional courses. PhD students are expected to have previously completed Masters level training in research methods, data analysis and theory. If these have not been completed during Masters level training, then additional courses in research methods/analysis will be required. If a course on the theory of science relevant to Rehabilitation has not been completed at the Master's level, students will be required to complete RS \*700.
8. Students may choose additional courses, which may be taken once, approved by the student's supervisory committee.

Course schedules are posted online here:

<http://www.srs-mcmaster.ca/CurrentStudentsnbsp/RehabilitationScienceMScPhD/tabid/2117/Default.aspx>

*An example template for students to record the elements of their PhD training plan is included in Appendix 8*

**COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION – General Information on Comprehensive Examinations is in the Graduate Studies Calendar – Section 4.3**

*Comprehensive Examination Information Specific to the Rehabilitation Science Program is in Appendix 5.*

*Information provided to comprehensive examiners about their role as an examiner is in Appendix 6.*

**Thesis – Graduate Studies Calendar – 4.4**

All students must complete and defend a thesis according to regulations outlined by the School of Graduate Studies (**Graduate Calendar Section 4.4**) under the supervision of a supervisor and supervisory committee. The topic of research will depend on the interests of the student and the expertise of the supervisor. Students will prepare and defend a research proposal, conduct the research, prepare a written thesis demonstrating an original contribution to rehabilitation science and defend the research thesis at a final oral examination. A supervisory committee determines when a candidate is ready to write the thesis and ascertain whether the quality is satisfactory. The committee will document permission to defend in the committee report. When this happens the student completes a form (for Masters) or contact Christina Bryce for PhD.

## **RESEARCH FIELDS IN REHABILITATION SCIENCE**

**SRS is required to have research fields. These fields are stated below. Students are NOT required to specify a field or to limit their work within these areas.**

**Participation across the life course** - within this field, research focuses on the study of participation in everyday life when a disability or change in health occurs. We examine the impact of activity performance and environmental factors as well as study interventions to enhance participation. We research the impact on changes in a person's body function and structure on activity and participation. Primary populations within this field include children/youth with special needs, workers, and older adults.

**Evidence-based rehabilitation and knowledge transfer** - within this field, our research focuses on development and validation of outcome measures, systematic reviews of rehabilitation evidence, and utilization of research knowledge by clients, families, rehabilitation practitioners, students and policymakers.

**VII. MSc COURSE-BASED (ONLINE) OPTION - Graduate Studies Calendar - page 558 of the paper calendar.**

Students must comply with the School of Graduate Studies and the Health Sciences Graduate programs regulations. The non-thesis course-based (online) option is offered on a part-time basis. Courses are available on-line, by distance education through the Schools of Rehabilitation Science(s) at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario and The University of British Columbia in Vancouver, British Columbia.

Students are expected to complete the program within a time period, usually 3-5 years, which reflects reasonable progress based on their other commitments, affording as much flexibility as is needed. **If the program is taken at an accelerated pace, it could be finished in 24 months.**

### **Courses - Graduate Studies Calendar – page 558 of the paper calendar.**

A student must complete seven (7) courses and a major scholarly paper (6-credit equivalent). At least half of the course work must be undertaken through McMaster and with McMaster faculty. Five courses, RS 705\*, 706\*, 708\*, 709\*, and 710\* are mandatory. Students may take courses: RS 700\*, 701\*, 702\*, 703\*, 707\*, 711\*, 712\* as electives, if they are able to be onsite at McMaster University and 704\* dependent upon the availability of faculty. Two elective courses may be chosen from among on campus and other distance education courses, including those offered by other universities and may be geared towards the particular interests and clinical specialties of the student. A list of pre-approved courses for electives has been created (see the website) and approved by the Assistant Dean of RS Graduate Program and the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences).

Course schedules are posted online here:

<http://www.srs-mcmaster.ca/CurrentStudents/RehabilitationScienceMScPhD/tabid/2117/Default.aspx>

#### **a. SCHOLARLY PAPER**

Each student must complete a scholarly paper (RS 730) which demonstrates integrative thinking at a general and abstract level and is designed as an opportunity for course-based MSc students to demonstrate, in writing, their ability to integrate ideas that reflect current knowledge in areas of rehabilitation practice, education, research, and/or policy. A student will identify a topic, and in consultation with a faculty member with expertise in the area develop a proposal that is individualized to the student's area of interest. The student will then develop the paper under the guidance of a faculty member. The paper must be 25 to 30 pages, excluding references and appendices. The paper does not involve the collection or analysis of primary data or the conduct of research with subjects. It is a scholarly essay, not a thesis.

#### **RS 730 COURSE OUTLINE**

The scholarly paper is a full course which is completed over two academic terms.

#### **1.0 TIMING**

Under normal circumstances, students are expected to complete the scholarly paper in the academic term following completion of their course work or during the term that the student is completing the last course, if only taking one course that term. Failure to successfully complete the scholarly paper will require withdrawal from the Program. The student should declare any potential conflicting event which may take place during the scholarly paper process so that the Faculty Advisor can take the time into consideration.

**2.0 STEPS IN THE SCHOLARLY PAPER PROCESS (see the RS 730 Handbook for further information. Contact Joyce Tryssenaar, [tryssen@mcmaster.ca](mailto:tryssen@mcmaster.ca))**

- 2.1 A Faculty Advisor will be chosen or assigned for the scholarly paper. The student will arrange an in-person, online or telephone meeting with his/her Faculty Advisor to begin exploring possible client-focused, research-focused, health-system or education-focused topics that are complementary to his/her course work about 1 month before the course begins. The topic cannot be one on which the student has previously written a paper or done a substantive presentation (e.g. worth 40% or more of a course grade). The student notifies Linda Wilson ([wilsnl@mcmaster.ca](mailto:wilsnl@mcmaster.ca)) in the Office of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences, MDCL 2235) that he/she wishes to begin the process for approval of a scholarly paper topic and she will send the student an electronic copy of the Selection of Topic for Scholarly Paper form (see Appendix 1).
- 2.2 Student will meet as necessary with his/her Faculty Advisor to discuss topics and prepare a proposal. This proposal becomes the student's contract with the examiners and his/her roadmap for writing the paper.
- 2.3 Complete a proposal of the scholarly paper (2 pages exclusive of references). This should consist of: (a) a paragraph which provides the rationale for choosing the topic; (b) a paragraph which describes the purpose of the paper, and (c) a point-form outline of the main areas of content to be included in the paper. Note that the rationale and purpose should be supported with appropriate references. A list of preliminary key references (extensive but not exhaustive) should be appended. The student must also append a list of the titles of papers they have written and graded presentations they have made for courses during the Program, along with the course numbers of the courses for which each was submitted (see Appendix 2).
- 2.4 The proposal must be approved by the Advisor before it goes forward for consideration by the Rehabilitation Science (RS) Curriculum Committee and this approval should be confirmed by an e-mail from the Advisor to Dr. Joy MacDermid, the Chair of the RS Curriculum Committee ([macderj@mcmaster.ca](mailto:macderj@mcmaster.ca)). Also included in this e-mail should be the names of potential examiners on the topic. It is then considered for approval by the RS Curriculum Committee.
- 2.5 The Chair of the RS Curriculum Committee will notify the student and advisor when the proposal is approved, which usually occurs within one week after submission, and will confirm the due date of the paper. The student must then complete an updated electronic copy of the Selection of Topic for Scholarly Paper form, reference list, and list of papers and presentations as required by the RS Curriculum Committee and submit these to Laura Jakubczyk ([jakubcl@mcmaster.ca](mailto:jakubcl@mcmaster.ca)) electronically. A signature page must be sent by fax to Laura Jakubczyk as well (905-524-0069). Laura will then ensure that the paperwork is sent to Linda Wilson in the Office of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences, MDCL 2235). This includes ensuring the appropriate signatures are completed. The student is given sixteen weeks to write the paper. An extension of up to two weeks may be requested for extenuating circumstances.
- 2.6 Note that the student may consult with the Advisor during the writing period regarding resources and points of clarification, and the Advisor may read drafts of the paper.
- 2.7 Before 4:00 pm on the day that the scholarly paper is due, an electronic copy of the Scholarly Paper must be sent to the Chair of the RS Curriculum Committee who will forward the Paper, the evaluation form and the approved Paper proposal to each of the two examiners.

- 2.8 Selection of the external examiner is done by the Chair, RS Curriculum Committee in collaboration with the Coordinator (course-based program), from the list provided by the Advisor. Usually the paper is read by the Advisor and one other SRS graduate faculty. Once confirmed, the examiners are sent copies of the Scholarly Paper Evaluation Form (see Appendix 3) and the approved proposal for the paper. The examiners will review the paper independently, using the evaluation criteria included on the evaluation form. A completed evaluation form and recommended letter grade from the examiners will be sent to the Chair of the RS Curriculum Committee within two weeks of receipt of the paper.
- 2.9 Written feedback to the student about whether (s)he passed or failed will then be given by the Chair of the RS Curriculum Committee. If the paper is deemed unsatisfactory, one rewrite will be allowed (within a four-week period) after formal written notification of the unsatisfactory grade to the student is given by the Chair of the RS Curriculum Committee. A pass/fail decision will be made and feedback given within one week (with consideration of availability of both readers).
- 2.10 Once a student passes the final scholarly paper requirement, the Chair RS Curriculum Committee informs the student and Linda Wilson, in the Office of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences, MDCL 2235), who then prepares the Notification of Completion of RS MSc Requirements-Course-based Option form and forwards it to the School of Graduate Studies.

The scholarly paper, like final papers for courses, is to be written solely by the student. It is essential that the student references appropriately and avoids any suggestion of plagiarism.

Following a grading decision, the student is provided with the feedback from the examiners. This is a courtesy in that we know that some students may wish to use the paper for another purpose (e.g., publication or as the introductory part of a grant application).

## **VIII. REHABILITATION SCIENCE COURSE INFORMATION**

**THE SCHOOL OF REHABILITATION SCIENCE HAS MONTHLY RESEARCH ROUNDS GIVEN BY REHABILITATION SCIENTISTS AND GRADUATE STUDENTS. ATTENDANCE OF STUDENTS AT THESE ROUNDS IS REQUIRED.**

**Required Course for ALL Graduate Students: All graduate students, including part-time students, must complete the course SGS 101# - Academic Research Integrity & Ethics and SGS 201# Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities. A graduate student may not obtain a graduate degree at McMaster without having passed these courses. See Graduate Studies Calendar – Section 2.5.5**

**1A. Courses in the thesis based option - Please refer to page 561 of the Graduate Studies Calendar for a description of courses offered in the thesis option.**

### **RS 700\* - The Development, Evaluation and Utilization of Theories in Rehabilitation** **1. Wishart –Winter 2011**

Required by all students, this course is a prerequisite or co-requisite for all other courses in the Rehabilitation Science program. Students will discuss the development and utilization of theories in rehabilitation, and critically evaluate specific macro and micro theories currently in use and of relevance to their topic of research.

**RS 701\* - Analysis and Rehabilitation of Functional Movement -M. Pierrynowski-  
Winter 2011**

This course will explore approaches to the study of human movement and their utility in rehabilitation. Students will integrate evidence from movement science, rehabilitation models and clinical research to make decisions about movement evaluation and intervention for persons with disabilities.

**RS 702\* - Occupation and Occupational Performance – NOT OFFERED 2011-2012 Note: This course is being updated and may be available in 2012.**

This course will explore theories and research related to occupation and occupational performance. Students will review the predominant theories and critically analyse them in relation to current research, measurement methods and application to health and well-being.

**RS 703\* - Selected Topics - Assistant Dean and Faculty**

This special topic course is designed to allow the development of courses that cover the leading edge of thinking about specific/issues in rehabilitation science. The specific topics course will be developed in response to needs identified by faculty or students. Examples of structured selected topics offered in the past two years have been *The International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health* and *Advanced Clinical Measurement Topics (including Rasch analysis)*.

**RS 704\* - Independent Study in Rehabilitation Science - Assistant Dean and Faculty**

This course is designed to allow students to tailor their learning to the specific topics in Rehabilitation Science and to do advanced work in this area. The topic must not be covered in-depth in any other Rehabilitation Science course. Under the guidance of a faculty member the student will critically examine the pertinent literature. The course may be taken only once during the student's graduate studies.

**RS 707\* - Research Methods in Rehabilitation Science - J. Richardson, Fall Term, 2011**

This course is designed to introduce students to the basic concepts and methods associated with observational and experimental research in the field of rehabilitation science. Topics include the following: clinical measurement concepts, qualitative methods, etiologic investigation, therapeutic intervention investigation, prognostic determination, and systematic review assessment. Common themes within these topics include: framing the research question, defining the patient sample, selecting the most appropriate study design, applying strategies for enhancing both internal and external validity, estimating sample size, understanding basic analytical methods, interpreting results, and considering ethical issues.

**RS 714\* - Statistical Methods in Rehabilitation Science - P. Stratford , Fall Term, 2011**

This course is designed to address basic statistical concepts and techniques that are applied frequently in rehabilitation research. The course covers graphical presentation of data, elementary probability, descriptive statistics, probability distributions (Normal, Binomial, Poisson, Hypergeometric), hypothesis testing and parameter estimation. Specific techniques covered include z-tests, t-tests, ANOVA, contingency table analysis, regression and correlation analyses. In addition to covering these statistical tests, this course also addresses how to effectively report statistical findings in publications.

**RS 720\* - Measurement and Evaluation of Quality of Life in Rehabilitation - NOT OFFERED 2011-2012**

This online course is designed for occupational therapists, physical therapists and practitioners in other rehabilitation disciplines, who want to acquire the knowledge and skills to develop, interpret and integrate quality of life measures into clinical practice and research. Specific topics include a review of: constructs and conceptual frameworks underlying measurement of quality of life, psychometric issues relating to

Quality of Life (QoL) measurement in rehabilitation, commonly used generic and rehabilitation-specific QoL measures, strategies to develop and select qualitative and quantitative QoL measures issues relating to the administration and interpretation of QoL measures used to evaluate the impact of rehabilitation interventions. This is a required course for students involved in the CIHR Quality of Life Program.

**RS 725\* - Knowledge Exchange and Translation - J. MacDermid – Spring 2012**

This modular course will present students with an introduction to basic principles, conceptual frameworks, research design, and interventions used in knowledge exchange and translation. Faculty with specific expertise in knowledge exchange and translation for different target audiences (patients/public, policy makers, clinicians) will facilitate modules that address theoretical and practical issues around using developmental knowledge to improve health or health care systems. Students will present their research protocol or KET project in the final module.

**RS 758\* - Qualitative Research Methods for Analysing and Interpreting Data - L. Lohfeld  
[Cross-listed with HRM/NUR 758\*] Spring 2012**

This intermediate-level course builds on prior knowledge about qualitative research approaches and their philosophical basis. The emphasis in this course will be on how the approaches affect data analysis and interpretation, as well as presenting findings in written and oral formats. The course is based on active involvement of learners through student-directed discussions and hands-on experiences, guidance and facilitation by graduate faculty with expertise in qualitative research, and interdisciplinary collaboration with faculty and classmates.

**1B. Courses in the Course-Based Option – Please refer to page 563 of the Graduate Studies Calendar for a description of courses in the Course-Based Option**

**RS 704\* - Independent Study in Rehabilitation Science - Supervisor - Fall, Winter**

This course is designed to allow students to tailor their learning to the specific topics in Rehabilitation Science and to do advanced work in this area. The topic must not be covered in-depth in any other Rehabilitation Science course. Under the guidance of a faculty member the student will critically examine the pertinent literature. The course may be taken only once during the student's graduate studies.

**RS 705\* - Evaluating Sources of Evidence – Aileen Costigan, Fall 2011; Heidi Schwelnuess, Winter 2012**

The value of evidence to rehabilitation practice, and how to assess and use evidence to make practice decisions that lead to best client outcomes.

**RS 706\* - Measurement in Rehabilitation - Karen Pontello, Fall 2011; Janet Law, Winter 2012**

The theory of measurement, and the critical review, selection, interpretation and integration of outcome measures and assessment instruments in practice.

**RS 708\* - Clinical Reasoning and Decision-Making - M. Clark/W. Jelley, Fall 2011; M. Clark, Winter 2012**

Reasoning is the process by which rehabilitation practitioners consider alternatives and make decisions on a day to day basis. Guided by relevant conceptual frameworks, participants will practice strategies such as critical reflection, narratives, and assessment of the literature and other evidence to improve their reasoning and decision-making skills.

**RS 709\* - Developing Effective Rehabilitation Programs – K. Wise/S. Bressler, Fall 2011 & Spring 2012**

The application of approaches to effective design, marketing and evaluation of rehabilitation services, and to writing and responding to Requests for Proposals (RFPs).

**RS 710\* - Facilitating Learning in Rehabilitation Contexts - Joyce Tryssenaar, Fall 2011; Darene Toal-Sullivan, Winter 2012**

Approaches to creating positive and innovative learning experiences for clients, families, peers and students in rehabilitation. Incorporates principles of adult learning, learning styles, plain language, teaching tips and evaluation methods.

**RS 711\* - Musculoskeletal Health Assessment and Diagnostics for Advanced Practice Therapists – Lisa Carlesso, NOT OFFERED IN 2011-2012**

This course will cover the elements of a comprehensive musculoskeletal health assessment and introduces the basic concepts of radiology. Practitioners will gain the knowledge, confidence and skills required to perform a complete health assessment including biomechanical, physical and functional assessments of patients with musculoskeletal disorders or diseases, particularly osteoarthritis. Learners will gain an understanding of the interpretation of clinical and functional findings to determine the necessity for additional diagnostic evaluations (e.g. X-rays, EMGs, and diagnostic ultrasounds) and laboratory tests (blood and urine analyses). This course will prepare the practitioner in the use of medical directives such as ordering and interpreting x-rays and laboratory investigations for patients with musculoskeletal diseases. There is a focus on evidence-based clinical reasoning and the use and interpretation of objective measures to formulate a differential diagnosis, communicate clinical findings and/or the diagnosis, the prognosis and management (conservative and surgical) of patients with musculoskeletal conditions (primary focus on osteoarthritis of the lower extremities).

**RS 712\* Therapeutics for Advanced Practice Musculoskeletal Care - Lisa Carlesso, Winter 2012**

This course will introduce the concepts integral to an in-depth understanding of the therapeutic approaches to the management (both conservative and surgical) of patients with musculoskeletal disorders or disease. An understanding of pharmacology, surgical approaches, advanced counseling and complementary therapies predominantly related to common degenerative musculoskeletal diseases (e.g. osteoarthritis) will be covered. Learning will focus on: managing clients with chronic debilitating musculoskeletal disorders, diseases and functional deficits, further developing the ability to critically appraise and integrate current, relevant literature, clinical practice guidelines and research findings into clinical practice, applying pharmacological knowledge including: pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics when advising clients regarding prescriptions and over the counter medications, the application of topical and injectable formulations to manage osteoarthritis, and

- evaluating the effectiveness of interventions using objective outcome measures.

**RS 730 - Scholarly Paper - J. Tryssenaar - Fall, Winter, Spring**

This full course is designed as an opportunity for graduate course-based MSc students to demonstrate, in writing, their ability to integrate ideas that reflect current knowledge in areas of rehabilitation practice, education, research, and/or policy. The scholarly paper is to demonstrate integrative thinking at a general and abstract level. A student will identify a topic, and in consultation with a faculty member with expertise in the area develop a proposal that is individualized to the student's area of interest. The student will then develop the paper under the guidance of a faculty member. The paper must be 25-30 pages, excluding references and appendices. The paper does not involve the collection or analysis of primary data or the conduct of research with subjects. It is a scholarly essay, not a thesis.

### **RS 770\* Leadership in Rehabilitation - J. Tryssenaar/S. Michlovitz, Spring 2012**

This course is designed for occupational therapists, physiotherapists and practitioners in other rehabilitation disciplines who want to acquire the knowledge and skills to develop as leaders in their current and future practice. The course emphasizes the development of knowledge regarding theories of leadership and the application of learning at the level of self, profession, and organizations. The skills of effective leadership are also explored. Specific topics include major theories of leadership, leadership styles, skills, principles, practices, trends and issues of leadership in rehabilitation settings, leadership within organizations, the culture of leadership, and application to current practice

### **RS 771\* - Work Organization and Health – J. Tryssenaar/J. Law, Winter 2012**

This online, problem-based course addresses the political, economic, health system and workplace factors that contribute to workplace environments and the health of workers. Sessions will start as broad-based problems that will develop specific content knowledge (nature of work environments, stressors, health systems and legislation) and then move on to problems that target specific types of health issues requiring students to integrate knowledge across different disciplines.

## **2. Course Selection**

We recommend that students take their required core courses for their degree as soon as possible during their program of study. Students should speak with their supervisor and later with their supervisory committee members to select an appropriate course of study. The course of study must be documented on an education plan form and submitted to the Rehabilitation Science Program Assistant Dean who will forward it to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences) within 3 months of registration. The supervisory committee or the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences) may recommend a more extensive course of study than the minimum course requirement for certain students if this is considered to be necessary. All deadlines for course selection and changes are in the Graduate Calendar.

**All students wishing to take a graduate course are expected to meet with and be approved by the appropriate Course Coordinator. If approved, the student may then register to take the course on SOLAR (Student On-Line Academic Registration). If you require assistance, please contact Cassandra Weimann in the Office of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences), [cweima@mcmaster.ca](mailto:cweima@mcmaster.ca).**

For each of the three academic terms (Fall, Winter, Summer), there is a deadline date for registration and changes (delete and add) in graduate course selection. Students who register in, or add a course after the deadline will not receive academic credit for that course. Students who drop a course after the deadline will receive a grade in that course, usually a failure. The deadline for adding and dropping courses are located on page 27 of this booklet under “Terms and Deadline Dates” and in the 2009-2010 Academic Calendar (pg. xii). It is the student’s responsibility to initiate and follow through on the completion of the “Drop and Add” feature on SOLAR. A graduate student who informs the course instructor that he/she is adding or dropping the course is NOT sufficient. It is not the instructor’s responsibility to inform the School of Graduate Studies about students who have dropped in or out of his/her course(s).

## **3. Course Outlines**

Graduate Course Coordinators are responsible for providing students with a **written** course outline at the outset of the course. The outline shall specify the following: the content and duration of the course; the nature and timing of course assignments; the method of assessment that will be used to evaluate the

students' work and any penalties that may be assessed for lateness. In the selected topics courses concerned with the study of topics at the leading edge of research (e.g. RS 703\*), it is frequently difficult to predict accurately the content and direction the course will take. Therefore, a Course Coordinator is allowed some flexibility to shift the focus of the course as research and other interests dictate but, in this respect, the Course Coordinator is also responsible for keeping the graduate students informed (in writing if necessary) of any changes as the course progresses. **While allowed flexibility with regard to content, the Course Coordinator will not alter the amount of work expected, or the schedule of assignments and due dates, or the procedures for evaluation which are specified in the original course outlines.**

#### **4. Illness or Unavoidable Absence During Course-work**

If a student is ill or legitimately absent (e.g. for personal or family reasons) prior to an examination or course deadline, this must be brought to the attention of the Course Coordinator as early as possible, so that the examination or deadline can be deferred at the Course Coordinator's discretion. Excuses made after the fact are not acceptable. Students may be requested to submit medical or other types of documentation.

#### **5. Course Assessment by the Student**

For each course, the Course Coordinator will provide each student with a course evaluation form which should be completed by the student and handed in to the Office of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences) (MDCL 2235). The student may remain anonymous on the assessment form if he/she wishes; the Curriculum Committee is interested in the information provided by the student only in order to initiate improvements before the course is given again.

#### **6. Course Grading**

- a) Course Coordinators must be prepared to use the full range of grades from F or B- to A+.
- b) The grades of "A" and "A+" are reserved for exceptional levels of achievement by students who, by definition, cannot represent more than a small minority of the graduate student population or of the students registered in our courses.
- c) Course Coordinators will be responsible for ensuring that faculty who contribute to their courses follow the above approach in grading students.

#### **7. Incomplete Assignments**

Under exceptional circumstances, a course coordinator may approve an extension for a student for the completion of work in a course and assign an incomplete grade (INC). This extension is usually for a few weeks. A student who receives this permission must complete the work as soon as possible, and in any case early enough to allow the course coordinator to report the grade to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences) by the date specified in the School of Graduate Studies Calendar (pg. xii). If the 'INC' grade is not cleared by the deadline, a failing grade will automatically be recorded.

#### **8. Course Failure**

A student who fails to obtain at least a B- grade in a course that is to count towards the Master's degree requirements ('M') is normally asked to withdraw from the Graduate Program. In some cases, the student's Supervisory Committee may advise the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences) that, because of certain circumstances, the student should: a) take an alternative course, or b) repeat the course. Such a recommendation should be made in writing to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies

(Health Sciences) within one month of the student's grade being announced, outlining the possible reasons for the failure. The Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences) will consider this request and recommend a course of action for consideration by the Faculty's Graduate Admissions and Study Committee.

**Information on Student Appeal Procedures can be accessed at**

**<http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/StudentAppeal.pdf>**

**9. For Terms and Deadline Dates, Course Registration Dates, & Drop and Add Dates, please see the Sessional Dates document provided on the School of Graduate Studies website here:**

**<http://graduate.mcmaster.ca/graduate-calendar>**

## **DEADLINES FOR COURSE CANCELLATIONS**

Course coordinators are responsible for cancellation of graduate courses. This should be done in writing, as a formal request sent to the Chair of the RS Curriculum Committee during the week following course registration.

1. FALL - First week of September
2. WINTER - First week of January

## **IX. ORIENTATION SESSIONS**

“Orientation Week” follows immediately after ‘Registration Week’ in the Fall Term. **Attendance at those orientation sessions marked with an \*asterisk\* is mandatory for all new onsite graduate students.** Students bringing in a letter stating they have previously received WHMIS and Fire Safety Training **must update** this training if it is more than one year old. In addition, the Health Sciences Library sessions **are strongly recommended** for all new students.

### **WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2011**

**Graduate Student Day – Burke Sciences Building - 8:00am – 2:30pm**

**BBQ at the Phoenix – 5:30pm**

### **TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2011**

IAHS 201 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. **Rehabilitation Science Graduate Program Orientation**

### **WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2011**

IAHS 244 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. \*TA Orientation Session\* (Mandatory for TAs in the RS program)

## **REQUIRED HEALTH & SAFETY TRAINING**

TRAINING SESSIONS IN OFFICE WHMIS\* AND FIRE SAFETY\*:

Please visit [www.fhs.mcmaster.ca/safetyoffice](http://www.fhs.mcmaster.ca/safetyoffice) to find a session in September that best fits your schedule.

\*In addition, ALL students must complete the following online training:

Slips, Trips and Falls  
Ergonomics  
Asbestos Awareness  
Office WHMIS  
Fire Safety

To do so, please visit <http://cfl.mcmaster.ca/eohss/>

All completed tests should be submitted to Laura Jakubczyk in IAHS 402, who will keep a copy in your student file and then submit it to the Safety Office, CSB 202B.

A training matrix is located at:

<http://www.workingatmcmaster.ca/med/document/Training-Matrix-Corporate-4-36.pdf>

The matrix lists the required training for Graduate students.

Safety training requirements are based on the hazards that are encountered as part of the job. Supervisors are responsible for determining the training of those individuals under their supervision. The training matrix outlines the requirements of the institution. Training requirements are different for office and lab settings since the hazards that are encountered are different.

The Faculty of Health Sciences requires additional training which asks individuals to maintain annual updates for WHMIS and Fire. This is a requirement of the Healthcare Regulations and since many staff and students are in health care facilities we ask that they maintain their updates. Other legislative requirements require annual updates as well.

You are also encouraged to review RMM 300 regarding the safety training program at McMaster. It may help to clarify training requirements.

<http://www.workingatmcmaster.ca/med/document/RMM-300-Safety-Orientation-and-Training-Program-June-2008-1-36.pdf>

Additionally, all Graduate Students must complete the following online training (See section 2.5.5 of the Graduate Calendar for further information):

1. Academic Research Integrity and Ethics (SGS 101): <http://avenue.mcmaster.ca/>
2. Accessibility at McMaster (SGS 201): <http://www.mcmaster.ca/accessibility/>

Please register in person for 'Introduction to Medline Searching' at the information desk in the Health Sciences Library (HSC 2B) during the month of SEPTEMBER.

For course-based MSc students, an online orientation will be held the week prior to the start of each term. Joyce Tryssenaar will provide detailed information at the end of August.

## **X. RESEARCH METHODS SEMINAR**

The following **one-day** Seminar is usually offered during the period **September – December**. **No assessment of student performance will be made and no course credit given!** Students will be

notified by e-mail of upcoming seminars, at which time they will be given instructions on how to register by Cassandra Weimann in the Office of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences), MDCL 2235.

*\*RESEARCH LITERATURE IN THE CLINICAL HEALTH SCIENCES:*

*FINDING THE RIGHT STUFF*

organized by Ms. Neera Bhatnagar (x 23775)

## **XI. SUPERVISION AND THE SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE IN THE MSc/PhD THESIS BASED OPTIONS**

Each graduate student in the PhD or MSc thesis option will be supervised by a **supervisor** who is an approved member of Graduate Faculty in the Rehabilitation Science Program. The supervisor, assisted by a **supervisory committee**, will provide leadership and guidance to the student throughout the time that the student is registered in the Rehabilitation Science Program.

### **1. First Meeting and Education Plan**

It is the supervisor's responsibility to select a supervisory committee and ensure that this committee meets with the student within a maximum of **six** months from the time that the student first registers in the program. For the MSc or PhD, the committee consists of the supervisor, who will chair the committee, and at least two other members of approved Rehabilitation Science graduate faculty. Additional committee members may be added as required. A non-graduate faculty member may be invited to join the supervisory committee (as an optional fourth member) at the discretion of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences). The appointment of 4th members, who are not faculty members of McMaster University, requires written permission of the Dean of Graduate Studies. The research interests of all committee members will encompass the thesis topic of the student.

Once a committee is selected, the supervisor will inform the Rehabilitation Science Program Assistant Dean of these potential committee members. The Assistant Dean will consult with the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences) to ensure that the supervisory committee is appropriate for the student's proposed research. The Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences) will advise the supervisor if the intended committee is appropriate or inadequate as necessary. **Before the first meeting** of the supervisory committee, the supervisor will provide both the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences) and the Rehabilitation Science Program Assistant Dean with an **education plan** for the student. The education plan will name the chosen supervisory committee members, summarize the student's thesis topic, identify the graduate courses (M, D, or EC) to be taken by the student and provide the date of the first supervisory committee meeting. If this education plan includes a research topic which can only be undertaken off campus, then all necessary letters of approval (ethics approval, access to data, laboratories, etc.) from the intended site of research must be sent to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences) who will approve (or not) the student to be full-time off campus to the extent required for the proposed research. In the event of any change in the education plan, the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences) and the Rehabilitation Science Program Assistant Dean should be informed by the supervisor.

### **2. Supervisory Committee Meetings**

The Rehabilitation Science Program Assistant Dean will attend the first supervisory committee meeting as a non-voting observer to get to know the student and members of the committee. After the first meeting,

each student is expected to meet with his/her supervisory committee regularly (usually **once every six months**) unless the committee believes that more frequent meetings are necessary. If the student is having academic problems or difficulties with the research project, an extraordinary meeting can be called by either the supervisor or the student.

### 3. Supervisory Committee Reports

Both the supervisor and student ensure that supervisory committee meetings take place and are officially recorded by completing a **Supervisor Committee Report** Form. Different forms are used for MSc (<http://www.srs-mcmaster.ca/CurrentStudents/RehabilitationScienceMScPhD/RSForms/tabid/3578/Default.aspx>) and PhD students (<http://graduate.mcmaster.ca/current-students/forms/569-department-forms>). The PhD form includes several features (e.g. the 'excellent' category) and several other queries designed to obviate possible difficulties with the supervision of PhD students that have been encountered throughout the University from time to time.

The MSc form is available under Current Students, RS Forms on the School of Rehabilitation Science website. The PhD form is on the School of Graduate Studies website under Forms. The original report form, after completion, must be signed by the Rehabilitation Science Program Assistant Dean and sent to Linda Wilson in the Office of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (MDCL 2235) after each meeting. Please keep a copy for your files and submit another copy to Laura Jakubczyk, IAHS 402.

On the report, each committee member must indicate whether the progress made by the student in course work and thesis research has been 'excellent', 'satisfactory', 'marginal' or 'unsatisfactory'. **If a marginal or 'unsatisfactory' grade is given by any one member, another committee meeting must be held within three months** to re-assess the student's progress; the Rehabilitation Science Program Assistant Dean may be invited to attend this meeting (as a non-voting member) at the invitation of either the student or the supervisor. If an 'unsatisfactory' or marginal rating is given by all committee members, the supervisor will confer with the Rehabilitation Science Program Assistant Dean and/or the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences) to decide what further course of action to take. **The student will be asked by the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences) to withdraw from the program if ratings are unsatisfactory at two consecutive supervisory committee meetings.**

### 4. Supervisor's Absence

If the supervisor leaves the University temporarily, or is on extended research leave, or is required by the University to perform other duties which prevent effective supervision, the supervisor must make formal arrangements for an interim supervisor (usually another supervisory committee member) in consultation with the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences). Written copies of this agreement will be given to the student, to supervisory committee members and to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences). If the supervisor leaves the University permanently, the supervisor is expected to arrange with the co-operation of the student, the Rehabilitation Science Program Assistant Dean and Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences), to transfer the supervisory duties permanently to another member of graduate faculty (usually a supervisory committee member).

In the event of pending retirement, the supervisor will nominate to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences) a graduate faculty member who is willing to accept formal responsibility for the supervision of the student. However, Emeritus Faculty may continue *de facto* supervision of their existing students. In special cases, for example that of early retirees, emeritus faculty may be permitted to accept new students or transfer their MSc student to a PhD, but only after approval by the Associate Dean of

Graduate Studies (Health Sciences), the Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences and the Dean of Graduate Studies of an "Application for Post-Retirement Supervision of a Graduate Student".

### **5. Student Grievance – Graduate Studies Calendar – section 6.3**

Generally, if a graduate student is having a disagreement with another person(s) to the extent that present or intended studies/research are upset or interrupted, the student should seek advice from the supervisor. **If the conflict directly involves the supervisor, the student should then consult either another member of the supervisory committee or the Rehabilitation Science Program Assistant Dean.** In cases where disharmony exists between student and supervisor, an extraordinary meeting of the supervisory committee may be called **by either the supervisor or student.** The Rehabilitation Science Program Assistant Dean may wish to initiate and attend the meeting on these occasions. If no satisfaction is gained by this approach, the Rehabilitation Science Program Assistant Dean and supervisor may request an interview with the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences) who will recommend an appropriate course of action.

### **6. Change of Supervisor**

It is possible to change supervisors or the membership of a supervisory committee before the filing of the education plan. Changes to either supervisor or the supervisory committee after the filing of the education plan are only possible if the match between the student and the supervisor is not compatible and all reasonable attempts by the supervisory committee and the Rehabilitation Science Program Assistant Dean to repair differences have failed. A request in writing to change the supervisor may be made by the supervisor or the student to the Rehabilitation Science Program Assistant Dean and to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences). If a student feels that she/he is receiving unsatisfactory supervision, she/he should consult the Assistant Dean of Rehabilitation Science or the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences).

### **7. Withdrawal from the Program**

A student wishing to withdraw for personal reasons is expected to write a letter to the supervisor, the Rehabilitation Science Program Assistant Dean and to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences) detailing the reasons for withdrawal. A **“Request for Change in a Graduate Student’s Status”** must be completed. The form is available on the website <http://graduate.mcmaster.ca/current-students/forms/570-student-forms>

## **XII. MSc THESIS REQUIREMENTS AND DEFENSE**

All students should consult the booklet **"GUIDE FOR THE PREPARATION OF THESES"**, published by the School of Graduate Studies (GH 212)

([http://graduate.mcmaster.ca/images/files/graduate/ThesisGuide\\_Final\\_May2011.pdf](http://graduate.mcmaster.ca/images/files/graduate/ThesisGuide_Final_May2011.pdf)). The thesis may be a traditional integrated document or a “sandwich” format whereby the thesis is constructed around a core of papers which the student either has published or has submitted for publication. Many examples of successfully-defended theses of this type are available for inspection in the Health Sciences Library and Office of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences). While the sandwich format is more often seen as a format for PhD theses, there is no rule which prohibits a student from writing this type of MSc thesis although the likelihood that the MSc student has accumulated a sufficient weight of publishable results within two years is small. **Students must seek approval from the supervisory committee for the chosen format.** A copy of the detailed regulations regarding the use of the above format is available from the School of Graduate Studies Office (GH 212) or may be obtained from the following website: <http://graduate.mcmaster.ca/current-students/completing-your-degree/649-step1-write>

Sandwich theses that do not comply with these regulations will not be accepted for defense.

The procedure for thesis preparation is as follows:

1. The student asks the supervisor for permission to write the thesis. This request is considered formally at a supervisory committee meeting, usually after the student has summarized the research that he/she has done to meet the objectives of the thesis work. The committee must agree unanimously with the request. "Permission to write" indicates that the student has essentially completed the data collection for the research work. The permission is noted on the committee report. Students should clarify if they will be asking for feedback on the entire thesis or components and clarify expectations of committee members about the nature and timing of feedback.
2. A first complete draft of the thesis or thesis component should be submitted to the supervisor for critical comments. After revisions are completed and the supervisor approves that the draft thesis is ready for committee review, a complete version is given to each supervisory committee member for his/her comments. The supervisor/committee may approve sections of the thesis, but must also see a complete version of the entire thesis before approval for defense.
3. When suitable revisions have been made, the student submits a completed **"MSC THESIS Approval To Defend"** form available on the SRS website here: <http://www.srs-mcmaster.ca/CurrentStudentsnbsp/RehabilitationScienceMScPhD/RSForms/tabid/3578/Default.aspx> to the Office of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences, MDCL 2235) a minimum of three weeks before the expected date of the defense. **Please note that the majority of members of the supervisory committee must have approved the thesis by signing this form before the oral defense can be arranged.** The student then distributes a copy of the thesis to all examiners including an external examiner at least two weeks before the defense. The external examiner is selected by the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences), usually from a list of three candidates suggested by the student and supervisor. The external examiner must be a member of graduate faculty from McMaster University, or another university but should not have a primary appointment in the School of Rehabilitation Science at McMaster. If the proposed candidate for external examiner is from another university, his/her curriculum vitae must be submitted to the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences) for final approval.
4. **The Master's thesis defense is organized by Linda Wilson in the Office of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences, MDCL 2235).** The Examination Committee consists of a minimum of four graduate faculty members, of which at least three are members of the student's supervisory committee. The student's **supervisor must be in attendance**, whether in person, via teleconference, or Skype. The Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences) in consultation with the Assistant Dean of Rehabilitation Science will appoint one member (**not the student's supervisor or the external examiner**) to Chair the Examination. The defense will be open to the Faculty of Health Sciences community. The Examination Chair will ask all persons except the Examination Committee to leave the room in order to discuss the format of the Examination and the responsibilities of the examiners. The Examination will consist of an oral overview (15 - 20 minutes) of the thesis given by the student, followed by a series of questions asked by the members of the Examination Committee in turn. **All** examiners are expected to ask at least one relevant question.

At the end of the defense, the Examination Committee will consider their decision in closed session. The Examination Chair does not normally have voting privileges. The majority rules in case of a split vote but if there is a "tie" then the Chair must vote to break the "tie". The Examination Chair will then call the student into the room to give the committee's decision. When the student has made any corrections and revisions suggested by the examiners to the satisfaction of the supervisor and Examination Chair, the student needs to go to the School of Graduate Studies website for information on submitting their final version: <http://graduate.mcmaster.ca/current-students/completing-your-degree/651-step3-final-submission>

### **XIII. PhD THESIS REQUIREMENTS AND DEFENSE**

For PhD students, the thesis may either take the traditional form or a "sandwich" form (see section XII on 'MSc Thesis', and the Graduate Calendar). For either format, the entire length of the thesis must not exceed 300 type-written, double-spaced pages on letter-sized paper, **including** all figures, tables, references and appendices.

#### **Procedure Leading to the PhD Defense:**

1. **Permission to write and preparation of the thesis:** Section XII.1 above for procedures for MSc students which also applies to PhD students. **Please note that the majority of members of the Supervisory Committee must approve the thesis before the oral defense can be arranged.**
2. When the final version of the thesis has been accepted by the Supervisory Committee, the student (after consultation with their supervisor) will **submit their request to defend on the online Thesis Defence System (TDS)**, <http://graduate.mcmaster.ca/current-students/completing-your-degree/651-step3-final-submission>. The student will receive a confirmation email (to their McMaster email account) with a secure link to complete the thesis title and the estimated date to submit their thesis for examination to the School of Graduate Studies (usually four weeks from the date of the initial request to defend). Once the student has submitted this information, the supervisor will receive an email with a secure link to complete the **"Nomination of an External Examiner to the Dean of Graduate Studies"** electronic form. The supervisor (after consultation with the Supervisory Committee) will complete and submit this form online for the approval of all the committee members and program Chair. This must be done at least one month prior to the anticipated date of approval of the thesis for submission for defence. Potential examiners should be chosen for their expertise in the area of the student's research and must not be recent collaborators of the supervisory committee members. From this list of recommended examiners, the School will contact an examiner and secure her/his agreement to read the thesis. The Supervisor must not contact potential examiners.
3. When the Nominations for External Examiners have been approved on-line by the supervisory committee and Chair, the student will receive a **"Ready to Propose a Defense Date"** email (with secure link) to complete the **"Submission of a Doctoral Thesis for Examination and Identification of a Date for Oral Defense"** form online. Here the student will submit the date and time of defense, which should be pre-approved by their supervisory committee. Once submitted, the committee will receive an email that will link them to the submission form to approve the date and time of defense. In addition, each member will indicate that they have read and judged the thesis in the form in which it is to be submitted. This should occur approximately 2 months and **not later than seven weeks**, before the anticipated defense. The Thesis Coordinator at the School of Graduate Studies (GH-212) and the Administrative Assistant in the Office of the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health

Sciences) (MDCL-2235) will be informed of the student's request to defend via email and will have access to the online process. The student is then required to submit **three copies** (printed on inexpensive paper) of the thesis to the School of Graduate Studies (GH-212). The School will assume that the Supervisory Committee members already have copies of the thesis. For more information concerning any details of thesis defense, please see the Thesis Defense Scheduling timetable <http://www.fhs.mcmaster.ca/grad/documents/DefenceSchedulingTimetablerevised.pdf>

4. The **PhD defense** is organized by the Thesis Coordinator, Christina Bryce, in the School of Graduate Studies (GH 212). The examining body will consist of the following members: the student's supervisor, two representatives of the department selected by the chair (normally from the supervisory committee), and an external examiner. If the external examiner cannot attend the oral defense, either in person or through tele- or video-conferencing, one additional representative of the faculty at large will be selected as an attending external examiner (**See Section 4.4 of the Graduate Calendar**).  
The School of Graduate Studies will send a copy of the thesis to each internal examiner and will also send one copy to one of three possible external examiners suggested by the Supervisory Committee. The latter is given one month to read the thesis. The external examiner will report back to the Dean of Graduate Studies whether or not the thesis is acceptable for defense. **If it is acceptable**, the School of Graduate Studies will confirm the date and time and will arrange the location for the examination.
5. A PhD examination Chair, appointed by and representing the Dean of Graduate Studies, will oversee the PhD defense; the examination Chair does not have voting privileges. The examination is open to all University faculty and students. The examination is conducted in essentially the same manner as described for the MSc defense (see above). Any questions posed by an external examiner who is unable to attend the examination will be asked by either the supervisor or the Chair in proxy.
6. **Electronic link for thesis: See above (XIII.2)**
7. The use of the PhD designation is official after the degree has been confirmed.

#### **XIV. REVIEW OF ACADEMIC DECISIONS**

##### **Review of Course Grades**

- a) A student who wishes to question a grade received in a graduate course should request, **in writing**, a review of the grade by the course coordinator;
- b) If not satisfied with this result, the student can request, **in writing**, a review of the grade by the Assistant Dean. A written decision will be sent to the student;
- c) If the student is not satisfied with this result, he/she can request a Formal Inquiry by the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences)/Dean of Graduate Studies as outlined in the Student Appeal Procedures available from University Secretariat, Gilmour Hall, Room 210;

- d) The final level of appeal is to the Senate Board on Student Appeals or the appropriate Faculty Committee in cases involving substantive academic judgement.

### **Withdrawal on Academic Grounds**

- a) A student who contests a recommendation by the School of Graduate Studies that he/she withdraw on academic grounds should request, **in writing**, a review of the case by the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies. This request should be made within 6 months of the academic year in which the grievance occurred.
- b) The case will be reviewed in accordance with the Senate Student Appeal Procedures. The document outlining these procedures is available from the Senate Office.

### **XV. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY – Graduate Studies Calendar - 6.1**

Students are responsible for maintaining academic integrity as outlined in the Graduate Calendar, section 6.1.

### **XVI. THE EXIT INTERVIEW**

All students leaving the Rehabilitation Science program may be asked to complete, or may request, an Exit Interview with the Rehabilitation Science Program Assistant Dean. The contents of the Exit Interview form are confidential and will be seen only by the RS Assistant Dean and the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies (Health Sciences). The purpose of this interview will be to obtain the graduate's perspective of strengths, gaps and potential areas of development for the RS program. The interview may also be used to collect information on the student's career plans, and organize administrative tasks like returning program keys and documenting future contact information.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON MANY OF THESE MATTERS, SEE THE GRADUATE CALENDAR LOCATED HERE: <http://graduate.mcmaster.ca/graduate-calendar>

# **APPENDICES**

## **Appendix 1 Student Resource Contacts (referenced on page 5 of this handbook):**

### **Student Accessibility Services (formally CSD) Information**

1. STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES (formally CSD) supports students with disabilities.

Student Accessibility Services offers various supports for students with disabilities. They work with full time and part time students. SAS provides or assists with academic and disability-related needs, including:

- Learning Strategies
- Assistive Technologies
- Test & Exam Administration
- Note Taking Programs
- Classroom Accommodations
- Groups and Events

For further information: <http://sas.mcmaster.ca/>

2. The STUDENT SUCCESS CENTRE (formally Career Services)

The Student Success Centre acts as a central resource for academic support providing services for students that will increase their confidence and improve their skills necessary for success at university.

They offer support services in the areas of:

- Academic and life skills development
- Writing support services
- Education planning
- English as a Second Language (ESL)

For further information: <http://studentsuccess.mcmaster.ca/academic-skills.html>

3. STUDENT WELLNESS CENTRE (formally Campus Health) provides a broad range of health and personal counselling to students.

For further information on personal counselling services available: <http://wellness.mcmaster.ca/personal/personal-counselling.html>

## **Appendix 2 Reference Letter Information (referenced on page 8 of this handbook):**

### **What information do my referees/sponsors need to write good reference letters?**

Letters of support are critical for training applications or other applications and are a common request. It requires substantial time to write a strong supporting letter. Letters that reflect this effort are more likely to help your case and distinguish you from other applicants. You can help your sponsors/referees write more engaging letters by giving each of them information that supports includes:

A cover note that includes:

- Information on call and deadlines ( including links); but DO NOT expects the person writing the letter to determine the agency priorities- make these clear so they can best position their information.
- A clear indication of when the letter is due, to whom it should be addressed, to whom it should be delivered and how it should be submitted
- What unique perspective the letter should offer (since you may choose people for their different perspectives make it clear if there are things you assume they are uniquely positioned to comment on). This will avoid “duplicate letters”.
- Your updated CV
- What you would like emphasized in each letter
- Any other SPECIFIC information (accomplishments, roles, skills) that is relevant- especially things not evident on your cv
- Unofficial transcripts or summarize your academic record
- A draft summary, if possible, of what your application will propose (OR offer to send when ready)
- Open and close your note with thanks and acknowledgement that the letter writer’s time is valuable and that this letter is important to your professional future.

When asking a person to write a letter for you, you should check what support they need to complete the task. Some people may ask you to draft sections-which ultimately they will revise but it might help them be more efficient.

If there is hard copy Recommendation Form – make it easy for the letter writer to complete forms in a timely manner by completing the following:

- Applicant information typed in
- Sponsor’s name, title, contact info (telephone, fax, address etc.) typed-- if you can
- Addressed envelopes to send letters and forms directly to the appropriate contact.

**Please show respect for your sponsor’s effort on your behalf by putting effort into your request.**

## **Appendix 3 MSc Thesis Proposal - Optional Outline (referenced on page 13 of this handbook):**

### **MSc Thesis Proposal Components**

#### **My Research Focus**

Insert 2-3 sentences describing the central theme of your work; i.e. content area. This can be broad or narrow but describe what theme or issue unites the 4 papers listed below.

#### **Key background knowledge**

Summarize the key background knowledge in this area that summarizes the key literature that informs the foundational work in your research area and the gaps you plan to address (max 2 pages). If there are relevant systematic reviews, include a synopsis. This may include the key headings that will be used for a more detailed literature review that will become the introductory chapter in your thesis.

#### **Paper # 1 (max 1 page)**

##### **Objectives**

Insert 1-2 objectives that research will address

##### **Methods**

Specify basic methods that will be employed.

##### **Subjects/Recruitment Plan**

Specify the type of subjects and how they will be obtained- if applicable.

##### **Test/Procedures**

Specify the basic procedures will be performed. Reference the reliability of approach if possible.

##### **Analysis:**

State the basic analysis approach that will be used to answer objectives.

#### **Paper # 2 (max 1 page)**

##### **Objectives**

Insert 1-2 objectives that research will address

##### **Methods**

Specify basic methods that will be employed.

##### **Subjects/Recruitment Plan**

Specify the type of subjects and how they will be obtained- if applicable.

**Test/Procedures**

Specific the basic procedures will be performed. Reference the reliability of approach if possible.

**Analysis:**

State the basic analysis approach that will be used to answer objectives

**Timeline**

Specify landmarks for completion of thesis elements. Include where applicable milestones like ethics submission, data collection start/completion, data analysis completed, first draft submitted to committee for each manuscript.

**References - Provide key references**

## **Appendix 4 PhD Thesis Proposal Optional Outline (referenced on page 13 of this handbook):**

### **PhD Thesis Proposal Components**

#### **PhD Thesis Proposal Template - Manuscript Style Thesis**

##### **My Research Focus**

Insert 2-3 sentences describing the central theme of your work; i.e. content area. This can be broad or narrow but describe what theme or issue unites the 4 papers listed below.

##### **Key background knowledge**

Summarize the key background knowledge in this area that summarizes the key literature that informs the foundational work in your research area and the gaps you plan to address. If there are relevant systematic reviews, include a synopsis. If a theoretical framework has been identified explain how it will inform thesis. This section might include key headings that will be used for a more detailed literature review that will become the introductory chapter in your thesis. This section can be completed with 2 pages of content; or in consultation with your supervisor contain the more detailed literature review that will be closer to thesis-ready. Regardless of which option is undertaken, the introductory chapter of your thesis will need enhancement as the project evolves and the thesis is finalized. This section should end with a statement of how the thesis work will be divided into manuscripts (Minimum of 3).

##### **Paper # 1 (max 1 page)**

##### **Objectives**

Insert 1-2 objectives that research will address

##### **Methods**

Specify anticipated methods that will be employed.

##### **Subjects/Recruitment Plan**

Specify the type of subjects and how they will be obtained- if applicable.

##### **Test/Procedures**

Specify the basic procedures that will be performed. Reference reliability of approach if possible.

##### **Analysis:**

State the basic analysis approach that will be used to answer objectives.

## **Paper # 2 (max 1 page)**

### **Objectives**

Insert 1-2 objectives that research will address

### **Methods**

Specify anticipated methods that will be employed.

### **Subjects/Recruitment Plan**

Specify the type of subjects and how they will be obtained- if applicable.

### **Test/Procedures**

Specify the basic procedures that will be performed. Reference reliability of approach if possible.

### **Analysis:**

State the basic analysis approach that will be used to answer objectives.

## **Paper # 3 (max 1 page)**

### **Objectives**

Insert 1-2 objectives that research will address

### **Methods**

Specify anticipated methods that will be employed.

### **Subjects/Recruitment Plan**

Specify the type of subjects and how they will be obtained- if applicable.

### **Test/Procedures**

Specify the basic procedures that will be performed. Reference reliability of approach if possible.

### **Analysis:**

State the basic analysis approach that will be used to answer objectives.

## **Paper # 4 (max 1 page)**

### **Objectives**

Insert 1-2 objectives that research will address

### **Methods**

Specify anticipated methods that will be employed.

### **Subjects/Recruitment Plan**

Specify the type of subjects and how they will be obtained- if applicable.

### Test/Procedures

Specify the basic procedures that will be performed. Reference reliability of approach if possible.

### Analysis:

State the basic analysis approach that will be used to answer objectives.

### Timeline

Specify landmarks for completion of thesis elements. Include where applicable milestones like ethics submission, data collection start/completion, data analysis completed, first draft submitted to committee for each manuscript. If appropriate, the table below can be used.

<b>Component</b>	<b>Ethics</b>	<b>Data Collection Start</b>	<b>Data Complete</b>	<b>Analysis Complete</b>	<b>Draft to Committee</b>	<b>Revision Returned by Committee</b>	<b>Revisions complete</b>
<b>Chapter 1- Lit Review</b>							
<b>Paper 1</b>							
<b>Paper 2</b>							
<b>Paper 3</b>							
<b>Paper 4</b>							
<b>Final chapter</b>							

**References- Provide key references**

## **Appendix 5 (referenced on page 16 of this handbook):**

### **COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION**

#### **Overview**

#### **COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION**

##### **Overview**

1. Students are expected to successfully complete the Comprehensive Examination process within 18 months (by 5<sup>th</sup> term) for full-time students and within 28 months (by 7<sup>th</sup> term) for part-time students, starting from the date of admission to the PhD program.
2. The Comprehensive Examination process will include the submission and oral defense of a Portfolio as described in point 4 below.

##### **Purpose**

3. The purpose of the Comprehensive Examination is for students to demonstrate a breadth of knowledge and skills as Rehabilitation Scientists. Specifically, they are expected to demonstrate their competency in areas that extend beyond their thesis work, including the ability to:
  - a) Critically appraise and synthesize concepts, theories, research literature and key themes within their field, but distinct from their thesis topic
  - b) Produce written and oral communications that meet scientific standards for peer-reviewed publication and presentation
  - c) Produce a funding application that meets scientific standards for peer-reviewed grant funding
  - d) Develop effective strategies to transfer rehabilitation research knowledge to various stakeholders (e.g. peers, students, policy makers, lay public)

##### **Content of Portfolio**

4. The Portfolio must include the following scholarly materials:
  - a) A scholarly paper ready for submission to a peer reviewed journal. This paper may consist of a theoretical/conceptual paper; or a primary/secondary research analysis. The scholarly paper must demonstrates breadth by being distinct from the thesis in terms of the content area addressed; and may also be an opportunity to demonstrate breath in methods. That is, the content must address a different content area than the thesis research. Students will be expected to explain how the content and methods are distinct from those addressed by their thesis. Students should consider that if a proposed paper could reasonably be seen as viable chapter within their manuscript thesis, then it is probably not sufficiently distinct from the thesis.
  - b) A grant proposal of 10 pages ready for submission to an appropriate agency that conducts peer reviews of submissions for operating funds. The research grant may request funding for the thesis research, or may request operating funds for a different project. **Personnel awards are not considered eligible products to fulfill this criterion.** The grant should follow grant agency guidelines but must include:

- Rationale for the study and a review of the literature
  - Detailed description of the research methods and analysis
  - Preparation of a budget
  - Any other components required by the agency (e.g. lay summary, description of pilot work, description of researchers' roles)
- c) A knowledge translation package/module- Students will develop and evaluate one aspect of knowledge translation e.g. resources, tool or interventions. Target audiences may include clinicians, policymakers or patients/public. Examples include any of the following:
1. Informational resources (e.g. databases, knowledge refineries, evidence support systems)
  2. Knowledge products (e.g. lay or policy evidence summaries, interactive workshops, brochures)
  3. Application tools, stand-alone tools (e.g. computer/CD/web-based guides or modules, instruction manuals)
  4. Decision support tools (e.g. practice guidelines, decision rules, decision support tools)
  5. Behaviour change interventions (e.g. Audit and feedback, reminders, knowledge brokering, opinion leaders)

The description of the KT must include the following:

1. Statement of the problem being addressed and the supporting evidence of what action is indicated.
2. Definition of the components of the evidence-gap being addressed and the target audience
3. A specific description of the KT component to be developed (recruitment of targets, components of the KT, implementation strategy)
4. A description of how the KT will be evaluated (outcome evaluations); and how these evaluations will be used.

#### Distinction of the portfolio from other academic activities and products

The comprehensive proposal meets the learning needs of the student and supplement the knowledge and skills obtained through thesis research. It is important that the work that is presented for credit in the comprehensive portfolio not duplicate work that has, or will be, provided academic credit e.g. part of the thesis research or coursework. The funding application and knowledge translation components of the Comprehensive Portfolio can be related to the thesis or coursework, but must not duplicate course assignments or sections of the thesis. The scholarly paper must be on a topic that is clearly distinct from the thesis. Ultimately the comprehensive committee adjudicates whether it is sufficiently distinct. A paper that uses a different target population, topic and methods is clearly distinct. Where there is overlap on any these, the student explanation of distinction from the thesis research will be critical. Comprehensive components, including the scholarly paper, can extend or build on course assignments; but this distinction must be clarified in the portfolio. For example, a course paper that is substantively enhanced and revised can be included as a comprehensive scholarly paper. A knowledge translation tool or product that is proposed during the KT course can be conducted and evaluated as the KT component of a comprehensive portfolio.

The grant proposal component may describe the methods proposed for the thesis; but must comply with the restrictions/format of the granting agency. To maintain consistency across applications students are required to submit a minimum 10-page grant application as part of their portfolio. On occasion students choose to apply to smaller grant agencies that have requirements for a short proposal. Where the student selects a granting agency with brief applications requirements; they should submit an extended 10-page version for the comprehensive proposal.

## **Portfolio Plan**

5. It is expected that the students, with support and guidance from their Supervisor and Supervisory Committee, will begin working on the Portfolio upon admission to the program. Students should submit their comprehensive plan to their supervisory committee within the first eight-months in the program. Students are expected to obtain approval for their comprehensive portfolio plan from the Supervisory Committee and Oversight Committee within the first 12 months in the program. Once approved the student has 6-months to complete the components of the comprehensives. The recommended milestones for full-time students to complete the comprehensive proposal on time are listed at the end of this document.
  6. The Portfolio Plan can be a maximum of 8 pages (total length excluding references and appendices). Plans over 8 pages will be returned to students for editing. The plan should include the following:
    - a) An overview of the initial plan for the thesis including proposed chapters, if known and a brief summary of the three components of the proposed portfolio.
    - b) A list of completed or ongoing courses including titles of the assignments; a explanation that addresses any potential overlap between proposed portfolio components and thesis or coursework. (a and b: maximum of 2-pages)
    - c) A description of each component of the proposed portfolio (2 pages maximum for each component). Suggested guidelines for each component description include:
      - Overview of Component: Describe the basic goal and approach to be used in the component. Rationale: A brief list/description of the content knowledge or skills the component will provide.
      - Plan: A brief description of the methods that will be used during completion of the task; and
      - Outcomes: State the product to be delivered when the task is completed. For the scholarly paper this will require identification of a target Journal. For the grant application the target agency, type of funding call, and research design/approach will need to be specified. For the knowledge translation project the specific KT deliverable will need to be identified; and the portfolio must outline how this deliverable will be evaluated.
- Required appendices:
- A. For paper: A copy of the target journal's instruction to authors
  - B. For the grant: The posted grant call and grant guidelines
  - C. For the KT: A copy of any tools to be evaluated (if developed)

- Potential Pitfalls and Their Management- A brief description of key potential barriers to task completion and how they will be mitigated.

Once the student's Supervisor and Supervisory Committee has reviewed and approved the student's Portfolio Plan, it is then submitted to the Oversight Committee. The Oversight Committee makes a decision on whether the student is prepared to proceed with the proposed work based on the following criteria of acceptability:

1. There is no duplication/inappropriate overlap between courses/thesis work and proposed comprehensive components
2. The scope of the work proposed is consistent with objectives of the Comprehensive Process to demonstrate breath of knowledge and skills.
3. There are no apparent critical flaws in the proposed work\*

#### \*Committee Roles in Comprehensive Process

The trainees' supervisor and committee has the main responsibility for insuring the quality of the work the student proposes and conducts. They are responsible for ensuring that the comprehensive process is used to enhance student skills and knowledge consistent with the overall training goals.

The Comprehensive Oversight Committee has the main responsibility for insuring the work proposed and conducted complies with program and university policies around the comprehensive process and academic integrity. The Oversight Committee reviews the plan to insure that it meets the objectives for the Comprehensive Examination Process; and that there is no duplication between previous and ongoing coursework. It also verifies that the manuscript is sufficiently distinct from the thesis research. The comprehensive committee does not judge whether optimal methods have been selected or determine if the proposed work is high quality. The Comprehensive Oversight Committee *may* make comments on feasibility or methods to benefit the student, but are not obligated to do so. The trainee is expected to discuss this advice with their supervisor and consider it in maximizing the quality, efficiency and success of their comprehensive components. The comprehensive oversight committee may fail to approve a comprehensive plan if a critical flaw is identified - since a critically flawed component is inconsistent with the objectives of the comprehensive process.

#### **Defense of the Completed Portfolio**

7. Once the Portfolio is complete it should be submitted to the Oversight Committee along with the signature sheet of the supervisory committee. Within 2 weeks, the Oversight Committee will review the Portfolio to ensure that the content is complete and congruent with the plan submitted and that it meets the objectives as outlined in point 4 above. Upon granting approval for defense, the Oversight Committee will, in consultation with the supervisor, set the date of the Comprehensive Examination and appoint the members of the Comprehensive Examination Committee (see point 10). **Students are expected to complete their comprehensive portfolio within six months of the comprehensive plan being approved by The Comprehensive Oversight Committee.**

8. The student must provide all members of the Comprehensive Examination Committee with a copy of the Portfolio at least 2 weeks prior to the examination date. In addition to the scholarly materials listed in point 4, the student must submit the following as part of their completed portfolio:
  - a) The approved comprehensive plan including the appendices
  - b) A description of deviations from the original comprehensive plan- with an explanation for the change (1 page maximum)
  - c) A 1 page reflective summary on how the comprehensive component contributed to their training /development as a Rehabilitation Scientist/Educator; and implications for their future development.
  - d) Curriculum vitae
  
9. The Portfolio will be presented and defended in an open-door meeting. The presentation and questioning will be open. The deliberations of the committee and feedback to the candidate will be performed with only the candidate, the candidate supervisor, The Assistant Dean of Rehabilitation Science and the examining committee present.
  - a) The student will outline the content of the 3 components of the Portfolio, and indicate how these projects have contributed to his or her development as a Rehabilitation Scientist (15 - 20 minute presentation). In addition, the student will describe the potential impact of their work on rehabilitation practice/policy/research.
  - b) The Comprehensive Examination Committee will consist of two members from the student's Supervisory Committee, a member from the Oversight Committee, and an External Examiner (a content expert or specialist from outside the Rehabilitation Science PhD program). Examiners will evaluate the student on the criteria outlined in point 13. The supervisor will not be a member of the Comprehensive Examination Committee; but will be encouraged to attend the oral defense.
  
10. The chair of the Comprehensive Examination Committee will be the representative from the Oversight Committee.
  - a) All members of the Comprehensive Examination Committee (including the chair) will vote on the performance of the student (first on the written Portfolio and then the oral defense). If the Portfolio and its defense are considered acceptable to all of the committee members, the student will receive a "pass". To pass, no negative vote is permitted; abstentions are not allowed. If all committee members are in agreement, the outcome could also be a "pass with distinction". A pass with distinction should be considered if all three components are considered to be of excellent quality (a publishable manuscript, a fundable grant application and an effective knowledge translation product or intervention.

If the result of the examination is "fail" (any of members vote "fail"), then the examining committee must define whether the written or oral components were unsatisfactory for each of the three components of the portfolio. The student must be given a second opportunity to take either the entire examination, or those portions on which the failure occurred. The Comprehensive Examination Committee will determine the requirements

for the second opportunity (e.g. Written components to be re-submitted; components to be orally defended) and, conduct the second comprehensive examination; preferably with same examining committee.

On the repeat examination, the committee should make every effort to achieve consensus on the final pass/fail decision. If the committee cannot agree, The Assistant Dean of Rehabilitation Science adjudicates the final decision. This may require that the decision be delayed until the Assistant Dean is able to pursue additional investigation and discuss issues with committee members independently.

11. The student will be provided with feedback from the Comprehensive Examination Committee at the completion of the examination. Usually this will take place by each member of the committee providing verbal feedback to the student at the end of the defense. The student's supervisor will be invited to attend the feedback session to ensure that they are able to clarify or reinforce the feedback with the student at a later date; but will not provide respond to the feedback provided.

### **Criteria for Evaluation of the Defense**

12. The purpose of the Comprehensive Examination is for students to demonstrate their ability to synthesize, integrate and apply information. The following are criteria they are expected to meet through the submission of the Portfolio and/or its oral defense:

- a) The Portfolio document is well-written and organized with appropriate development and defense of ideas and actions.
- b) The Portfolio content is of appropriate depth and breadth for the doctoral level and demonstrates the student's advancing knowledge of the chosen topics.
- c) The student is able to critically appraise the literature, and synthesize and integrate information, concepts and theories and apply these to critical thinking in their field.
- d) The student can pose a sound research question and design a study appropriate to answer it; recognize limitations; and defend his/her decisions.
- e) The student understands knowledge translation and is able to apply this knowledge to the conduct and evaluation of KT in their area of research
- e) The student communicates effectively.
- f) The student conveys an understanding of how their work fits within the field of Rehabilitation Science.

13. Recommended Milestones expected for on-time completion of the comprehensive proposal.

- a) Month 3 - The student arranges a meeting with supervisor to review the comprehensive proposal guideline and discuss plans for identifying training plan that will allow for completion of comprehensive portfolio requirements. This discussion should include 1. Opportunities that might facilitate early development of the manuscript 2. A research grant that facilitates the student's progress in the program and 3. A knowledge translation project that will align with the thesis research considering, but not duplicating work performed in the knowledge translation graduate course (RS 725).
- b) Month 5 - The student submits a brief (one page or less) written plan to supervisor outlining tentative components of the comprehensive plan. The student meets with the

supervisor to discuss the proposal and finalize specific components to be included in the portfolio.

- c) Month 6-7 - The student submits a brief draft of the written plan for discussion to the supervisory committee (preferably at a supervisory committee meeting). This brief outline will address the planned components for the comprehensive portfolio plan and inform the committee discussion about how to optimize the comprehensive proposal plan.
- d) Month 8 - The student submits a draft, but complete, comprehensive portfolio plan to the supervisory committee for feedback and approval. Committees are requested to provide feedback and a statement about readiness to proceed within 3 weeks. The approval of the comprehensive portfolio should be noted on the next committee meeting form.
- e) Month 9 - The student submits the revised version of the portfolio plan to the Comprehensive Oversight Committee for approval.
- f) Month 10 - The comprehensive oversight committee reviews the proposal and submits a written response to the student. Note-The comprehensive committee typically returns feedback within 2 (two) weeks.
- g) Month 10 - The student addresses any remaining concerns of the comprehensive proposal committee and obtains approval from the comprehensive oversight committee to officially proceed with proposed comprehensive portfolio components.
- h) Month 11-16 - The student completes the individual components of comprehensive portfolio\*, and submits drafts to the supervisor/supervisory committee for feedback. The student completes revisions of these components as requested by the supervisory committee.
- i) Month 17 - The student compiles the completed comprehensive portfolio and submits it to the Comprehensive Oversight Committee.
- j) Month 18 - The student defends the comprehensive portfolio.

***\*Note many students begin work on tentative components of their comprehensive portfolio prior to approval. This is an excellent strategy for overall success; but the final components of the comprehensive will be determined by the comprehensive plan approved.***

Revised November 11, 2011

## **Appendix 6 Information for Comprehensive Examiners (referenced on page 16 of this handbook):**

### **School of Rehabilitation Science: Information for Comprehensive Examiners**

The School of Rehabilitation Science appreciates your contribution to the comprehensive examination of our trainee. This is an important step in achieving the learning goals of the candidate and an important milestone in our program.

The philosophy of our comprehensive portfolio/examination is to provide trainees with an opportunity to achieve learning goals that complement those acquired during their thesis research and extend their knowledge, methods and skills with an emphasis on the type of academic productivity expected of Rehabilitation Scientists. The comprehensive portfolio is based on three specific tasks that must be completed and then defended orally. The three components include a paper written in the format and quality expected for scientific publication, a grant proposal written in the format and quality expected for submission to a funding agency and a knowledge translation project defined, conducted and evaluated by the student.

There are four examiners who adjudicate this defense. Two examiners are selected from the student's advisory committee, one is from the Comprehensive Oversight Committee and the other is an external examiner. External examiners are recommended to the Comprehensive Oversight Committee by the student's supervisory committee based on their knowledge and experience and its relevance to the candidate's work. The Comprehensive Oversight Committee uses these recommendations to select a candidate who can fulfill the duty at the designated period of time. The candidate will be examined on all comprehensive portfolio components during an oral exam. The comprehensive components are completed by the student during the first half of the program and are required for successful progression through the program. The candidate is expected to continue with his/her thesis research during this time, but may not have a fully developed thesis research plan at the time the comprehensive portfolio is defended. Comprehensive examiners are encouraged to consider that the student is in the midst of their training (may not have finalized their thesis plan) when formulating their questions and when adjudicating the student responses.

Examiners should be aware that the topics of study chosen by the candidate and approved by the student's supervisory committee and the comprehensive oversight committee are expected to extend knowledge and experience beyond the thesis research. The examiners are not expected to evaluate whether these questions/tasks were appropriate since they have been approved by both committees. However, examiners can make judgments about whether the student adequately conducted the work, understand its implications and limitations; and can appropriately explain and defend the choices made.

The process for the oral examination is modelled after a thesis defence. Full attendance of all examiners is required for the oral examination. Attendance can be in person, or by conferencing (electronic or telephone) if necessary. There will be an appointed Chair of the Comprehensive Examination who will be selected from the Comprehensive Oversight Committee. The chair of The Comprehensive Examination Committee is usually the person designated to oversee the

organization of the comprehensive examination, with administrative support. The chair also chairs the oral comprehensive examination. Typically there will be two rounds of questions, with the second round being shorter than the first. The candidate is expected to demonstrate expertise in the selected topics and discuss/debate the topics with a level of depth and breadth that are consistent with their background and training. After the questioning is complete, the candidate will leave the room and the examiners will be asked to provide comments and vote for a pass, fail, or pass with distinction.

The following is information taken from the comprehensive portfolio policy approved by graduate studies for The Rehabilitation Science Program and provides information on the expectations about the examination.

10. The Portfolio will be presented and defended in an open-door meeting.

- a) The student will outline the content of the 3 components of the Portfolio, and indicate how these projects have contributed to his or her development as a rehabilitation scientist (15 - 20 minute presentation). In addition the student will describe the potential impact of the research/knowledge transfer on rehabilitation practice/policy/research.
- b) The Comprehensive Examination Committee will consist of two members from the student's Supervisory Committee, a member from the Oversight Committee, and an External Examiner (a content expert or specialist from outside the Rehabilitation Science PhD program). They will evaluate the student on the criteria outlined in Point 14.
- c) The supervisor will not be a member of the Comprehensive Examination Committee; but will be encouraged to attend the oral defense.

11. The chair of the Comprehensive Examination Committee will be the representative from the Oversight Committee.

12. All members of the Comprehensive Examination Committee (including the chair) will vote on the performance of the student (first on the written Portfolio and then the oral defense). If the Portfolio and its defense are considered acceptable to all of the committee members, the student will receive a "pass". To pass, no negative vote is permitted; abstentions are not allowed. If all committee members are in agreement, the outcome could also be a "pass with distinction". A pass with distinction should be considered if all three components are considered to be of excellent quality (a publishable manuscript, a fundable grant application and an effective knowledge translation product or intervention. If the result of the examination is "fail" (all members vote "fail"), then the examining committee must define whether the written or oral components were unsatisfactory for each of the three components of the portfolio. The student must be given a second opportunity to take the examination, or those portions on which the failure occurred. The Comprehensive Examination Committee will determine the requirements for the second opportunity (e.g. oral defense of one or more components, write and defend again one or more components) and if possible, conduct the second comprehensive examination.

13. The student will be provided with feedback from the Comprehensive Examination Committee at the completion of the examination. The student's supervisor will be invited to attend the feedback session.

### **Criteria for Evaluation of the Defense**

14. The purpose of the Comprehensive Examination is for students to demonstrate their ability to synthesize, integrate and apply information. The following are criteria they are expected to meet through the submission of the Portfolio and/or its oral defense:

- a) The Portfolio document is well-written and organized with appropriate development and defense of ideas and actions.
- b) The Portfolio content is of appropriate depth and breadth for the doctoral level and demonstrates the student's advancing knowledge of the chosen topics.
- c) The student will demonstrate advanced knowledge of research methods, particularly those relevant to the components of the exam.
- d) The student is able to critically appraise the literature, and synthesize and integrate information, concepts and theories and apply these to critical thinking in their field.
- e) The student can pose a sound research question and design a study appropriate to answer it; recognize limitations; and defend his/her decisions.
- f) The student understands knowledge translation and is able to apply this knowledge to the conduct and evaluation of KT in the area of their own research
- g) The student effectively communicates verbally.
- h) The student can plan and present information appropriately for the chosen audience
- i) The student conveys an understanding of how their work fits within the field of Rehabilitation Science.

Please feel free to contact either the Assistant Dean of Rehabilitation Science ([macderj@mcmaster.ca](mailto:macderj@mcmaster.ca)) or The Chair of the Comprehensive Oversight Committee for further information.

Thank you for this important contribution to training Rehabilitation Scientists at McMaster University.

Appendix 7 (referenced on page 12 of this handbook)

An example template for students to record the elements of their MSc training plan

**Overview of Masters Training Program**  
**Thesis, Courses, Skills and Comprehensive Exam**  
**McMaster University – Rehabilitation Sciences**

**Candidate:**

**Program Start Date:**

**Target Comprehensives Completion Date:**

**Target Completion Date:**

**Supervisory Committee:**

Note at a minimum an annual meeting with the supervisory committee is required; Graduate Calendar recommends every 6 months.

<b><u>Timeline for Key Milestones</u></b>		<b>Achieved</b>
<b>Entry to Program</b>	September, 20XX	
<b>Program Plan (courses, thesis)</b>	October, 20XX	
<b>Major Committee Meeting Approval of Study Plan</b>	March, 20XX	
<b>Required Courses Complete</b>		
<b>Thesis Component 1</b>		
<b>Thesis Component 2</b>		
<b>Thesis Written</b>		
<b>Thesis Defense</b>		

SRS Program:

<http://www.srs-mcmaster.ca/rehabsci/RSHomenbsp/PhDThesisProgram/tabid/3352/Default.aspx>

**Overview of thesis plan:**

Guide to preparation of thesis:

[http://graduate.mcmaster.ca/images/files/Guide\\_for\\_the\\_Preparation\\_of\\_Theses\\_May2011.pdf](http://graduate.mcmaster.ca/images/files/Guide_for_the_Preparation_of_Theses_May2011.pdf)

Thesis Theme:

<u>Title of Projects/Manuscripts</u>	<u>Study design/Content</u>	<u>Status</u>
1.		
2.		

<b><u>Methods/Content Development Plan</u></b>		
<b><u>Method/Skill</u></b>	<b><u>Formal (Courses)</u></b>	<b><u>Experiential/Informal</u></b>

<b><u>TA/Educator Role Plan</u></b>		
<b><u>Skill/Experience</u></b>	<b><u>Formal (Courses)</u></b>	<b><u>Experiential/TA/Informal</u></b>

**Funding Status**     Full-time     Part-time  
 Plan:  Set     Continuing to pursue     Abandoned/Ineligible

<u>Source</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Years</u>	<u>Status</u>
<b><u>External funding agency-</u></b>			
<b><u>Internal-TA</u></b>			
<b><u>Internal- Other</u></b>			
<b><u>Supervisor-</u></b>			
<b><u>Other -</u></b>			

**Note Program Deadlines**

Committee Meetings:  
 Comprehensive Process Completed  
 Program Expected Milestones

**Brief Progress Updates**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Current Focus</u>	<u>Status/progress</u>

Appendix 8 (referenced on page 16 of this handbook)

An example template for students to record the elements of their PhD training plan

**Overview of PhD Training Program**  
**Thesis, Courses, Skills and Comprehensive Exam**  
**McMaster University – Rehabilitation Sciences**

**Candidate:**

**Program Start Date:**

**Target Comprehensives Completion Date:**

**Target Completion Date:**

**Supervisory Committee:**

Note at a minimum an annual meeting with the supervisory committee is required; Graduate Calendar recommends every 6 months.

<b><u>Timeline for Key Milestones</u></b>		<b>Achieved</b>
<b>Entry to Program</b>	September, 20XX	
<b>Funding Application Plan</b>	September, 20XX	
<b>Program Plan (courses, thesis, comps)</b>	October, 20XX	
<b>Comps Proposal submitted to supervisor</b>	January, 20XX	
<b>Major Committee Meeting Approval of Study Plan</b>	March, 20XX	
<b>Comps Committee Approval</b>	November 20XX	
<b>Comps Defense</b>		
<b>Required Courses Complete</b>		
<b>Thesis Component 1</b>		
<b>Thesis Component 2</b>		
<b>Thesis Component 3</b>		
<b>Thesis Component 4</b>		
<b>Thesis Written</b>		
<b>Thesis Defense</b>		

SRS Program:

<http://www.srs-mcmaster.ca/rehabsci/RSHomenbsp/PhDThesisProgram/tabid/3352/Default.aspx>

**Overview of thesis plan:**

Guide to preparation of thesis:

[http://graduate.mcmaster.ca/images/files/Guide\\_for\\_the\\_Preparation\\_of\\_Theses\\_May2011.pdf](http://graduate.mcmaster.ca/images/files/Guide_for_the_Preparation_of_Theses_May2011.pdf)

Central Theme of Thesis:

<b><u>Title of Projects/Manuscripts</u></b>	<b><u>Study design/Content</u></b>	<b><u>Status</u></b>
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		

**Proposed comprehensive plan:**

<b>Title</b>	<b>Study design/Content</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>1. Paper</b>		
<b>2. Grant</b>		
<b>3. KET</b>		

**Methods/Content Development Plan**

<b><u>Method/Skill</u></b>	<b><u>Formal (Courses)</u></b>	<b><u>Experiential/Informal</u></b>

**Educator Role Development Plan**

<b><u>Skill/Experience</u></b>	<b><u>Formal (Courses)</u></b>	<b><u>Experiential/TA/Informal</u></b>

**Funding Status**

Full-time       Part-time

Plan:  Set       Continuing to pursue  Abandoned/Ineligible

<b><u>Source</u></b>	<b><u>Amount</u></b>	<b><u>Years</u></b>	<b><u>Status</u></b>
<b><u>External funding agency-</u></b>			
<b><u>Internal-TA</u></b>			
<b><u>Internal- Other</u></b>			
<b><u>Supervisor-</u></b>			
<b><u>Other -</u></b>			

## **Brief Progress Updates**

<b><u>Date</u></b>	<b><u>Current Focus</u></b>	<b><u>Status/progress</u></b>