

Department of Community Health and Epidemiology

College of Medicine University of Saskatchewan

Graduate Student Handbook **Fall 2023** (version: August 2023)

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Where We Are - Land Acknowledgement

We learn, teach, work, and live on traditional Indigenous territories that in Canada include treaty lands, unceded lands, and Métis homelands. We pay our respects to First Nation, Métis, and Inuit ancestors. The University of Saskatchewan is on the Homeland of the Métis and Treaty 6 territory. In our commitment to this place we value respectful relationships with the people around us -past, present, and future – and the animals, lands, waters, and skies that nurture us all. We strive to live these values in our programs, activities, and interactions: relationships grounded in safety and humility, respect for all peoples and their world views, reciprocity in all relationships, relevance to wholistic wellness, and responsibility for informed pedagogy and practice.

Who We Are

The **Department of Community Health and Epidemiology (CH&E)** is a dynamic, cohesive academic department comprising 19 faculty, 25 medical faculty and 28 associate and adjunct faculty, located in the Academic Health Sciences Building. We have active graduate programs at the Master's and Doctoral levels, and make a vital contribution to the undergraduate education of medical and health sciences students and postgraduate education with the Public Health and Preventative Medicine Residency Program. Our teaching, research and community engagement focus on population health with a lens on social justice and equity for all.



[CH&E faculty](#) are concerned with understanding the individual and collective factors that determine health and applying this knowledge to maintain and improve the health status of populations and reduce inequities in health status between groups.

In addition to involvement in medical undergraduate education and housing the Public Health and Preventive Medical Residency Program, the Division of Social Accountability, and the Division of Public Health and Preventive Medicine, the Department offers MSc and PhD programs in Community and Population Health Sciences. CH&E is also involved in the delivery of MSc and PhD programs in Biostatistics in collaboration with the Department of Math and Statistics and the School of Public Health.

CH&E also has three great administrative assistants:

- Stephanie Kehrig (Graduate Programs Assistant)
- Debra Haubrich (Communications Coordinator)
- Deana Thunderchild (Department Head Secretary)

Department Head's Message

Welcome to the Department of Community Health & Epidemiology! It is a great place to learn, work and live. The Faculty's diverse backgrounds and training combined with a wealth of experiences create excellent opportunities for academic development as well as ground-breaking and meaningful research.

It is a place where each faculty, each staff, each student is also encouraged to show leadership and contribute to the collective. Our teaching, research, and social engagement focus on population health with a lens on social justice and equity for all.

Students, expect to be inspired by your studies, encouraged to think out of the box, and to push yourself. You will be called to engage at the community level to make a difference and be nurtured by great change leaders.

It is also a place to have fun and to grow a deeper appreciation of diversity in a creative and safe environment. One of the best measures of success is the testimony of many of our graduates who currently occupy leadership positions in the health care system, in public health, in academia, in community, and government.

- Dr. Anne Leis, Department Head

Vision, Mission, Values, and Goals

Our Vision

We envision a society in which all people have equitable opportunity to experience optimal health, shaped by evidence-informed policies and practices and based on principles of sustainability.

Our Mission

We create, synthesize and translate knowledge for evidence-informed policies and practices which support population health equity locally and globally.

Values

1. Respect is defined as mutual acceptance and encouragement of people's critical thinking and the diversity of persons, communities and cultures.

Behaviours which demonstrate respect:

- We address the needs and concerns of students, faculty and staff.
- We use participative decision making.
- We consult with and value the views of others.
- We encourage respectful collegial discussion and critical examination of diverse opinions.
- We value other people's perspectives, time, and space.

2. Fairness involves exercising impartiality and equity in interpersonal relationships as well as balancing conflicting interests.

Behaviours which illustrate fairness

- We consider the interests of all parties.
- We treat others equitably and with dignity.
- We provide timely and constructive feed-back.
- We support equitable relationships with partners.
- We practice collaboration through regular communications and equitable distribution of powers among stakeholders.
- We work within and follow ethical principles and guidelines.
- As a department we provide fair access to learning and funding opportunities for all students.
- As a department we provide fair access to departmental support and professional development opportunities for all faculty and staff.

3. Excellence refers to the achievement of exceptionally high quality in academic standards, service to the community and innovation.

Behaviours which demonstrate excellence:

- We support perseverance in the pursuit of challenging goals.
- We are committed to be active participants in the excitement and enrichment of a learning community.
- We support high achievement in students' work habits and personal career goals.
- We promote curiosity and critical thinking in teaching and research.
- We vigorously pursue research for the benefit of persons and communities.
- We model and mentor commitment to quality.
- We foster new ideas and innovation in all we do.
- We are open to constructive criticism through peer reviews and students' evaluations.

4. Professionalism refers to a commitment to abide by high ethical standards of behaviour and relevant group standards. It requires an on-going personal commitment to integrity.

Behaviours which demonstrate professionalism:

- We demonstrate inclusiveness in our day to day work.
- We practice open communications and responsibility.
- We know and apply ethical and professional standards of conduct.
- We take responsibility for our actions.
- We are actively engaged in research and activities which move knowledge to action.
- We are prepared to take risks and learn from our mistakes.

Goals of the Department of Community Health & Epidemiology

Department as a Healthy Community

1. To be a healthy and vibrant community providing a supportive working environment based on good communication and collaboration.
2. To support faculty and staff professional development towards personal career goals.
3. To integrate the goals of individual faculty and staff with Department priorities, responsibilities, and funding.

Community Engagement and Social Accountability

1. To develop relationships with community members, groups and agencies, with attention to issues of social justice.
2. To share and mobilize the knowledge and skills of the department with diverse partners. This includes the provision of direct service to develop and maintain professional skills, and for remuneration.
3. To continuously improve our outreach through on-going monitoring and feedback.

Teaching and Learning

1. To foster high-quality, scholarly teaching, based on an interdisciplinary evidence-informed Population Health approach.
2. To prepare students to effectively perform the roles of practitioner, researcher, and/or educator.
3. To foster self-directed, life-long, and collaborative learning.
4. To use evidence-based methods to effectively self-evaluate and to assess courses and programs on a regular basis.

Research

1. To conduct excellent, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary research in population health with a focus on inequities locally and globally.
2. To recruit and retain students and trainees who have succeeded in their preparatory fields, and mentor these students/trainees to become excellent researchers and research users.
3. To develop diverse partnerships to co-create knowledge and find applications in society.

To support one another, via formal and informal means, thereby creating and sustaining a vibrant research milieu that is one of the most successful in Canada for its size and resources

Building a Strong Community

There are many ways to be involved within the department, with graduate student organizations at the University of Saskatchewan, or within local communities. We have a number of department sub-committees which require student representation, and students are encouraged to consider membership in [College of Medicine Graduate Student Society \(CMGSS\)](#), and/or [Graduate Students' Association \(GSA\)](#). We have engaged students and promote activities, events and accomplishments via Facebook, Twitter (X), and YouTube.

Masters (MSc) in Community and Population Health Sciences

Department of Community Health & Epidemiology

Overview

The MSc program in Community and Population Health Sciences prepares students for academic careers, including pursuit of doctoral studies, or to work in a variety of research-intensive environments. Students will learn about community and population health concepts, epidemiology, theory, and research; develop basic skills in qualitative and quantitative research methods and project management; and gain hands-on experience in research through the completion of a thesis.

The MSc in Community and Population Health Sciences is a thesis-based program that can be completed in two years of full-time study.

All current graduate students should familiarize themselves with [the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies \(CGPS\) policies](#); portions of this graduate student handbook are taken directly from the CGPS policy manual and the Grad HUB [Thesis Roadmap](#).

Residency Requirement

CH&E graduate students are required to be 'in residence', meaning residing in Saskatoon, until core program requirements have been met, including thesis committee approval of pre-proposal and completion of required courses. Until the residency requirement has been met, students are expected to attend the 990 in person.

Policy regarding transfer from MSc to PhD program

In cases where a student is enrolled in the MSc program, although having a MSc from another university, or where outstanding academic and research performance is evident, consideration may be given to transfer to the PhD program. Transfer from MSc program to PhD program should take place after the end of the first year in the program. Recommendation to transfer must be initiated through a formal meeting of the student's Advisory committee and in consultation with the Graduate Program Chair who will then forward their recommendation to the CGPS. It is expected that the student will have completed most of their course work (i.e. at minimum 15 credit units, out of the 18 CUs required) obtaining a grade point average greater than 85%. A student who is recommended for transfer to a PhD program will be required to take a PhD qualifying examination. The following conditions must be met:

- The student shows great promise both in terms of academic accomplishments and in potential for research and has a supervisor able to recommend the student for the PhD;
- The student has completed at least 9 credit units from MSc required courses, and has achieved a high academic standing (defined as a minimum grade point average of 85%) in courses taken prior to transfer;
- There is evidence of superior writing and oral communication ability;

- There is evidence the student has requisite research skills and knowledge to be able to successfully complete a PhD dissertation;
- The student has successfully completed the PhD Qualifying Examination prior to being recommended for transfer. The results of the examination must clearly indicate that the student has the potential to obtain sufficient knowledge of his/her general field of study to proceed towards successfully completing the candidacy exam for the PhD degree. The Qualifying Examination for the purposes of transfer can only be taken once. A student failing the Qualifying Examination or any part thereof cannot be recommended for transfer.

Note: The overarching principle is that the student who is seeking transfer from the MSc to the PhD program should not be using this path to circumvent standards of admission that would have been originally applied for entrance to the PhD program.

Curriculum

Five core courses (11 credit units), one approved research methods course (3 credit units), 4 credit units of elective graduate-level courses.

Required Credit Courses

These five courses are offered in this sequence in the Fall term:

CHEP 821.2 Introduction to Community and Population Health Equity

CHEP 822.2 Introduction to Community and Population Health Research Methods

CHEP 823.2 Introduction to Health Care and Public Health Systems

CHEP 800.3 Introduction to Epidemiology and Biostatistics

CHEP 824.2 Qualitative and Alternative Research Skills in Community and Population Health

Approved 3 credit unit research methods class:

Typically offered in January, Spring or the next fall:

CHEP 805.3 Biostatistics I

CHEP 816.3 Population Health Intervention Research (PHIR)

CHEP 818.3 Advanced Qualitative Health Research Methods in Population and Public Health

CHEP 820.3 An Introduction to Critical Realism its Methodology and Practice

Required Non-Credit Courses

CHEP 994 – Research Thesis each term

CHEP 990 – Departmental Seminar: Students are required to register for the 990 seminar throughout their time in program. CHEP 990 is treated as a course, in which students receive a 'grade' (e.g., in progress/incomplete/pass) at the end of each term that a student is enrolled. Seminars are typically held several times a month during Fall and Winter terms.

MSc and PhD students are strongly encouraged to attend in-person all 990 seminars, with the expectation that they will attend at minimum 75% of all seminars. A core requirement of the 990 seminar is the student's presentation of his/her thesis work at the annual CHEP Student

Research Day. Master's students in their 4th year (or beyond) and PhD students in their 5th year (or beyond) are considered to have met the 990 requirement and attendance is no longer mandatory except for Student Resident Research Day in Term 2.

* After their residency requirement is met (proposal accepted, comprehensives completed for PhD students) *and* if they have the approval of their thesis supervisor to study via distance the student may attend 990 online.

GPS 960 – Introduction to Ethics and Integrity (on-line): This course discusses ethical issues that graduate students may face during their time at the U of S.

GPS 961 – Ethics in Human Research (on-line): This course is required of those students who are conducting research that will involve human subjects. It is strongly recommended that the GPS 960 and GPS 961 be completed early in your program as possible, but no later than in the end of the first year.

Additional Courses

In addition to required classes, a minimum of 4 credit units of electives are required. Electives need to be chosen to support the student's thesis project. **Electives are chosen by students in consultation with their supervisor and thesis advisory committee.** Ideally, the student should take the required courses first and the electives only once the thesis topic has been chosen. If a student takes electives earlier in the program, the student runs the risk that these courses will subsequently be found by the advisory committee to be not appropriate for the program of studies, in which case the student would be required to take additional elective courses.

If a student wishes to take an elective course prior to the formation of the advisory committee, they must obtain the approval of the supervisor who may wish to consult with the Graduate Program Chair.

There are several courses offered by CH&E which may meet the elective requirement (please refer to the course catalogue for other options):

Possible 3 credit unit electives:

CHEP 801.3- Epidemiology II

CHEP 806.3 - Applied Statistical Methods for Follow-up Data

CHEP 808.3 - Complex Survey Data Analysis

CHEP 810.3 - Advanced Topics in Clinical Trials

CHEP 814.3 - Closing the Gap: Global Health and Social Inequities

CHEP 815.3 -Food Systems and Community Health

CHEP 816.3 - Population Health Intervention Research

CHEP 818.3 - Advanced Qualitative Health Research Methods in Population and Public Health

CHEP 819.3 - Colonization and its Impact on Indigenous Peoples' Health and Healing

CHEP 820.3 - An Introduction to Critical Realism, its Methodology and Practice

Possible 1 credit unit electives:

CHEP 898.1: SPSS Software for Health Research

CHEP 898.1: SAS Software for Health Research
CHEP 898.1: NVIVO Software for Health Research
CHEP 898.1: STATA Software for Health Research
CHEP 898.1: Data Management and Analysis in Excel for Health Research

Grades Required to Pass

Graduate courses for which students receive grades of 60-69% are minimally acceptable in a Master's program, provided the GPA is at least 70%.

Grades Required to Hold Funding

In most cases, graduate awards administered through the University of Saskatchewan require students to have first-class standing, which is a GPA of 80%, equivalent to the University of Saskatchewan grading system. Students holding devolved or department awards must maintain their eligibility while they hold their award (maintain at least an 80% average on their course work).

MSc Thesis

Overview

The purpose of the thesis is to give students' experience in designing and carrying out a research project. A major component of the MSc program, it provides the opportunity to develop a particular set of skills and familiarity with a specific content area. Through the completion and defense of a thesis, students will demonstrate ability to apply appropriate theory and methodology to investigation of a problem.

Master's thesis projects in CH&E vary widely in terms of purpose, content, and method. While recognizing this diversity, it is important to set some parameters around the scope of projects—the amount of work required—to ensure that students are treated fairly and to help them complete their degree in a timely fashion.

All research consists of four general components:

- (1) framing a problem in the form of research questions;
- (2) determining what data are needed to answer those questions;
- (3) designing research to collect and analyze those data; and
- (4) using the data to answer the questions.

While every Master's thesis project will include these components, the relative emphasis placed on each one, and the amount of work involved, will vary depending on the nature of the project. The following guidelines have been developed to try to create some consistency across projects.

- While original data collection is not required, students should develop their own research question. In other words, even if analyzing a data set collected by the supervisor, the student should come up with the question to be addressed, not the supervisor.
- The research question need not be completely original; in other words, replicating a prior study is acceptable. However, there needs to be something new about the research, e.g., replicating a study in a different population or setting.

- The research question should be appropriate to the state of knowledge in the field. For example, in a completely new area, a descriptive study, perhaps using qualitative methods, would be most suitable, while a well-developed area calls for an analytical study, often testing a theory.
- When conducting a secondary analysis of existing data, more sophisticated and complex analyses are expected than when original data are collected.
- Research should be guided by a theoretical or conceptual model or framework. This may be developed by the student for the purpose of the specific research project, or it may already have been created by someone else.
- Knowledge translation is an important component of every research project and should be addressed in the thesis proposal. The form and extent will depend on the nature of the research, ranging from producing a brief summary of results for research participants, publication in a scientific journal or presentation at a conference, to a more extensive process involving, for example, a public meeting or the development of a fact sheet for practitioners or policy-makers.

Thesis Advisory committee

MSc students' thesis research is conducted under the guidance and mentorship of the thesis supervisor and thesis advisory committee.

At the MSc level, there is a minimum number of two committee members needed: 1) the supervisor and 2) a committee member. A Chair is not required for the MSc committee, but the MSc defense will typically be chaired by the graduate program chair, department head or a member of the Graduate Committee. The choice of committee members depends on your thesis topic and is decided through discussion with your supervisor. Your supervisor will approach and ask committee members to serve on your thesis advisory committee. Once the committee is formed, it is the responsibility of the student to arrange meetings (including necessary technology) with the supervisor and the advisory committee. Once you have a committee date/time confirmed, ask the Graduate Programs Assistant to book a room. If you are having problems scheduling the meeting, contact your supervisor. In most cases, the supervisor will chair committee meetings, but they may request a chair if a neutral party is required or for the MSc defense. The supervisor is responsible for organizing the thesis defense including approaching potential external examiners who are approved by the thesis advisory committee.

From the development of the pre-proposal to the thesis defense, the advisory committee will meet approximately five times, at the following points: (1) to give feedback on the pre-proposal (and to review the student's timeline, coursework and grades); (2) to approve the proposal; (3) if needed, at some point during or just after data collection; (4) to give feedback on the first full thesis draft; and (5) to decide whether the thesis is ready for examination. The student should work closely with the supervisor between meetings.

Prior to committee meetings, students will often need to send out material to committee members for their review; this material must be reviewed and approved by the supervisor before distribution to the rest of the committee. The student should provide committee

members with the material a minimum of 2-3 weeks prior to the scheduled meeting (more time may be needed for a full thesis draft).

Committee members are expected to provide their feedback to students at formal committee meetings and are not required to meet with students outside of these formal meetings. If the student requires additional help on thesis-related content beyond formal committee meetings, this should be discussed during the advisory meeting; if the committee member(s) agrees, parameters should be set. If the student requires assistance from a faculty member who is not part of the student's advisory committee, the request should come from the supervisor.

At each committee meeting, students are expected to start the meeting with a PowerPoint presentation (approximately 20-25 minutes) outlining their thesis and program progress to date, including a timeline to defense.

At each meeting, the supervisor prepares a progress report and minutes of the meeting to be submitted to the CGPS. A copy of the report will be placed in the student's file.

Students who encounter difficulty with their supervisor are encouraged to try to approach them directly, describing the problem as specifically as possible. If this approach does not result in a satisfactory resolution, or the student feels unable to talk openly to the supervisor, the student has the option to approach either the Graduate Chair or the Department Head, depending on the student's preference. A student who wishes to make a further appeal should contact the Dean of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

Thesis Pre-Proposal

For this first thesis advisory committee meeting, the student must prepare a 3-5 page pre-proposal. The pre-proposal should include a brief literature review, rationale, research questions, proposed methodology and some key references. The purpose of this pre-proposal is to provide the committee with the opportunity to give input into the refinement of research questions and make sure the project is feasible, given timeframe and resources, before the development of a full proposal. Once the supervisor has approved the pre-proposal, circulate it to the advisory committee to review before the meeting. At this first meeting, the committee will: (a) give guidance for the development of a full proposal; (b) decide which, if any, additional electives should be taken to support the proposed research; (c) in conjunction with the student, set a target date for the completion of the full proposal; and (d) approve the student's program of studies. The meeting will start a PowerPoint presentation by the student which will include: 1) an overview of the pre-proposal; 2) a list of courses taken and grades received; 3) additional coursework needed; and 4) a timeline to defense.

Thesis Proposal

Approval of the thesis proposal typically takes place at the 2nd advisory committee meeting. The format for the thesis proposal is not rigid or fixed. Students should work closely with their supervisor to determine the appropriate content and organizational framework.

The proposal should be approximately 20 pages long, excluding references and appendices. The length depends considerably on the extensiveness of the literature review. Some

qualitative traditions, e.g., grounded theory, advise researchers to review the literature after data collection, to avoid influencing the findings.

The following is a typical outline for a quantitative thesis proposal.

- 1) Introduction
 - a) Statement of the problem
 - b) Purpose of the study
 - c) Theoretical perspective
 - d) Research questions/hypotheses
 - e) Definition of terms
- 2) Review of the literature
- 3) Methods
 - a) Type of research design
 - b) Sample, population, and participants
 - c) Data collection instruments and variables
 - d) Data analysis procedures
 - e) Knowledge translation
- 4) Anticipated ethical issues
- 5) Significance of the study
- 6) Appendices: Instruments, timeline, references

A qualitative research proposal usually has a slightly different format, as the following example shows.

- 1) Introduction
 - a) Statement of the problem (including relevant literature)
 - b) Purpose of the study
 - c) Research questions
- 2) Procedures
 - a) Characteristics of qualitative research (optional)
 - b) Qualitative research strategy
 - c) Role of the researcher
 - d) Data collection procedures
 - e) Data analysis procedures
 - f) Strategies for validating findings
 - g) Narrative structure (i.e., the narrative forms that will be used to present the findings, e.g., a process model, an extended story, an analysis across cases)
 - h) Knowledge translation

Once the full proposal is complete and the supervisor agrees it is ready, the student will circulate to the advisory committee and arrange a committee meeting. At this meeting, the committee will provide feedback on the proposal and either give approval to begin the study or indicate what needs to be done before they can approve the proposal (e.g., they may want another meeting or they may be willing to review the changes through email). When the proposal is approved, a departmental form is signed by committee members and placed in the student's file.

Thesis research must be approved by the appropriate University Ethics Committee. The student should wait until the thesis proposal is approved by the committee before submitting the ethics application; but to speed up the process, students may wish to get the application ready while writing the proposal, so it can be submitted soon after committee approval. As with all other aspects of the thesis, the student should seek advice and input from the supervisor. Please refer to the Ethics Office:

<https://research.usask.ca/rei/researchers/ethics/human-ethics.php>

Full Thesis Draft

[After considerable hard work and perseverance, a student will have completed a full thesis draft](#). With the permission of the supervisor and advisory committee, a student may draft a traditional or [manuscript-style](#) thesis. A manuscript-style thesis is a document that includes one or more scholarly manuscripts written in a manner suitable for publication in appropriate venues. The recommended length of the main body of a MSc thesis (traditional style) is between 50 and 150 pages. It is the responsibility of the student with support from the supervisor to ensure that the thesis is written in correct scholarly/scientific English, that it is free of errors in punctuation and typing, and that it respects academic standards and any conventions which are specific to the discipline.

Once you have completed a complete thesis draft and your supervisor agrees it is ready, circulate it to your advisory committee and arrange a committee meeting. The supervisor is responsible for ensuring, within reasonable limits, that the thesis presented to the advisory committee is of an acceptable standard and quality for the degree sought. At this meeting, the committee will provide you with feedback and either give you approval for defense or indicate what needs to be done before they can approve it (e.g., they may want another meeting or they may be willing to simply review the changes through email). When the thesis is approved for defense, a departmental form is signed by committee members and placed in your file. At this final committee meeting, potential external examiners will also be discussed. Care must be taken in proposing the names of external examiners to ensure any possibility of conflict of interest, either personal or professional in nature. Defense dates will also be discussed, and the supervisor will contact potential external examiners regarding availability. Once finalized, the supervisor will communicate to the Graduate Programs Assistant the defense date and time and the chosen external examiner.

Preparing for Defense

The Graduate Programs Assistant must notify CGPS a **minimum of three weeks** prior to the desired oral defense date. Upon receipt of the notification, a convocation check will be completed by the CGPS to verify that all program requirements have been met, including current registration.

It is the student's responsibility to:

- Ensure that all revisions required by the advisory committee were incorporated into the thesis.
- Prepare and assemble all materials for the thesis in accordance with University and CGPS regulations and to ensure that the thesis volume is complete and in good order.

- Deliver copies of the thesis defense draft to members of the Advisory committee. The student must also provide an additional copy to the Graduate Programs Assistant, who in turn makes this copy available to the External Examiner after this person is approved. The student is to have no contact with the external examiner prior to the defense.
- Inform the Graduate Programs Assistant whether it will be an open or closed defense.
- Inform the supervisor at the time of scheduling the defense of a disability that could interfere with the ability to respond to questioning at an oral defense, which in turn will allow for appropriate accommodation.
- Ensure all requirements of the program of studies have been completed, registration is current, outstanding fees are paid, and University deadlines are respected in view of any particular convocation.

Oral Examination of the Thesis

It is the responsibility of the research supervisor to provide advice and support to the student in preparing for the oral defense.

The student shall make a brief (10-20 minute) presentation followed by questions from the examining committee, beginning with the External Examiner. Examination questions are limited to work done by the candidate for the thesis, to knowledge of matters directly related to it, and to peripheral knowledge of the subject matter.

All members of the examining committee are expected to ask relevant and probing questions on the methodology/contents of the thesis, and/or on the research field. Candidates should respond to questions directly, in a manner which is informed by the contents of the methodology and contents of the thesis, and as concisely as is appropriate to the question. They should not hesitate to make clarification should they have the impression that the questions asked derive from misconceptions about the research material or the literature.

Students are judged on their ability to speak in an informed way about their research and to respond clearly and cogently to questions on the thesis (results and methodology) and on the thesis topic (knowledge of the academic field and related literature).

At the conclusion of the examination, the candidate shall withdraw while the Examining Committee decides by majority vote whether the thesis as submitted and the candidate's oral defense meet the requirements for the degree: <https://cgps.usask.ca/policy-and-procedure/Academics/defense.php#85ORALEXAMINATIONOFTHEMASTERSTHESIS>

Procedures Following Thesis Defense

Following a successful defense and completion of all recommended revisions to the thesis the student is required to submit an [Electronic Thesis or Dissertation \(ETD\)](#) to the CGPS site.

Thesis students should work closely with their advisory committee in order to ensure all necessary documents have been received in their academic unit and in the CGPS office. Following the thesis defense, students will receive a Convocation Checklist. Students are strongly advised to pay close attention to this useful information.

Applications to graduate must be submitted by the student online through PAWS on or before the last working day of March to receive their degree at Spring Convocation, or on or before the last working day of August, to receive their degree at Fall Convocation. Students should apply to graduate even if they are uncertain they will make convocation deadlines.

MSc Program Milestones (completion in two years)

	Milestones
YEAR 1	
Term 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required CHEP classes: 821, 823, 823, 800, 824. Required non-credit CHEP 994, 990, GSR 960, 961 Advisory committee meeting to approve pre-proposal (this may occur next term)
Term 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required Research methods course: CHEP 805, 816, 818, or 820 this term or Term 3 Registration in CHEP 994, 990 4 credit unit electives: A one credit unit course may be used in addition to a three-credit unit class to meet the minimum elective requirement; or this can be taken over spring/summer or in second year Advisory committee meeting to approve proposal Ethics approval
Term 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registration in CHEP 994 Elective (if not already taken) Research and writing
YEAR 2	
Term 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registration in CHEP 994, 990 Elective (if not already taken) Research and writing Advisory committee meeting to review progress/'permission' to finish thesis draft
Term 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registration in CHEP 994, 990 Research and writing Present at CHEP Student Research Day Advisory committee meeting to approve thesis for defence
Term 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registration in CHEP 994 Thesis defence

Doctorate (PhD) in Community and Population Health Sciences

Department of Community Health & Epidemiology

Overview

The PhD in Community and Population Health Sciences is a research-intensive degree, preparing students to work as community/population health researchers in an academic or government setting. The program is designed with considerable flexibility, recognizing that students come to the population health field with diverse backgrounds. This allows students, with their advisory committee, to create individualized programs that take into consideration their research interests and the areas in which they need additional development. Through coursework and seminars, students will gain a more sophisticated understanding of community/population health theory and the research-policy-practice context. Designing and carrying out an independent research project provides an opportunity to further develop knowledge and skills around a specific problem.

The PhD in Community and Population Health Sciences is a thesis-based program that can be completed in four years of full-time study.

All current graduate students should familiarize themselves with the [College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies \(CGPS\) policies](#); portions of this graduate student handbook are taken directly from the CGPS policy manual and the Grad HUB [Thesis Roadmap](#).

Residency Requirement

CH&E graduate students are required to be 'in residence', meaning residing in Saskatoon, until core program requirements have been met, including thesis committee approval of pre-proposal, completion of core courses, and completion of the comprehensive exam. Until the residency requirement has been met, students are expected to attend the 990 in person.

Curriculum

Two core courses (6 credit units) and two elective courses (6 credit units) and non-credit courses: CHEP 996 Thesis, CHEP 990 Department Seminar and on-line courses, GPS 960 Introduction to Ethics and Integrity and GPS 961 Ethics in Human Research. **Students who have not taken courses that represent an adequate introduction to Community and Population Health Sciences at the Master's level will be required to take additional core classes.**

Required Credit Courses

CHEP 817.3 – Advanced Research Seminar in Population Health

An advanced methods course, either quantitative (CHEP 806.3 or equivalent) or qualitative (i.e. CHEP 818.3 - Advanced Qualitative Health Research In Population or equivalent). Other research courses require approval by the Graduate Program Chair.

Required Non-Credit Courses

CHEP 996 – Research Thesis

CHEP 990 – Departmental Seminar: CHEP 990 – Departmental Seminar: Students are required to register for the 990 seminar throughout their time in program. CHEP 990 is treated as a course, in which students receive a 'grade' (e.g. in progress/incomplete/pass) at the end of each term that a student is enrolled. Seminars are typically held several times a month during Fall and Winter terms.

MSc students and PhD students are strongly encouraged to attend **in-person** all 990 seminars, or are required at minimum a 75% attendance of all seminars. A core requirement of the 990 seminar is the student's presentation of his/her thesis work at the annual CHEP Student Research Day. Master's students in their 4th year (or beyond) and PhD students in their 5th year (or beyond) are considered to have met the 990 requirement and attendance is no longer mandatory except for Student Resident Research Day in Term 2.

*After their residency requirement is met (proposal accepted, comprehensives completed for PhD students) *and* if they have the approval of their thesis supervisor to study via distance the student may attend 990 online.

GPS 960 – Introduction to Ethics and Integrity (on-line): This course discusses ethical issues that graduate students may face during their time at the U of S.

GPS 961 – Ethics in Human Research (on-line): This course is required of those students who are conducting research that will involve human subjects. It is strongly recommended that the GPS 960 and GPS 961 be completed early in your program as possible, but no later than in the end of the first year.

Additional Courses

Two graduate level courses related to the area of the thesis research and with the approval of the supervisor and thesis advisory committee. There are several courses offered by CH&E faculty which may meet this requirement (please refer to the course catalogue for other elective options):

CHEP 801.3- Epidemiology II

CHEP 808.3 - Complex Survey Data Analysis

CHEP 810.3 – Advanced Topics in Clinical Trials

CHEP 814.3 – Closing the Gap: Global Health and Social Inequities

CHEP 815.3 – Food Systems and Community Health

CHEP 816.3 – Population Health Intervention Research

CHEP 818.3 - Advanced Qualitative Health Research In Population

CHEP 819.3 – Colonization And Its Impact On Indigenous Peoples’ Health And Healing

CHEP 820.3 - An Introduction to Critical Realism, its Methodology and Practice

Grades Required to Pass

Percentage scores of at least 70% are required for a minimal pass performance for each course which is included in a PhD program.

Grades Required to Hold Funding

In most cases graduate awards administered through the University of Saskatchewan require students to have first-class standing, which is a GPA of 80%, equivalent to the University of Saskatchewan grading system. Students holding devolved awards must maintain their eligibility while they hold their award (maintain at least an 80% average on their course work).

Qualifying Exam

Students who have not taken courses at the Master’s level that represent an adequate introduction for the PhD program will be required to take course work required by the Master of Science program. These Fall modular courses will be identified for the student when they are recommended for admission and are in addition to the regular Ph.D. course load. The qualifying exam will consist of the student taking each module required for their program within the first year and receiving a grade at over 80% for each class.

Comprehensive Exam

In addition to coursework, all PhD students are required to successfully complete a comprehensive exam. Students take this exam once their required coursework is complete (i.e. 12 credit units) and before they begin their doctoral research, usually in their second year of program. A student passing the comprehensive exam is deemed a PhD candidate. A student needs to have their thesis research proposal approved before they write the comprehensive exam. Students must remain in residence until successful completion of the comprehensive exam.

The CHE comprehensive exam process is structured to reflect the general goals of the Community & Population Health Sciences Program as well as the individualized nature of each student's program of studies. The examination is therefore a collaborative undertaking of both the Department and the Thesis Advisory committee with representatives from both forming a student's comprehensive examination committee.

*** Note that some changes to comprehensives are in discussion and will be updated in Fall 2023. All students who have taken CHEP 817 before Fall 2023 will follow the process below.*

The exam consists of eight (8) questions across four (4) competency areas; two in each area. The areas are:

- 1) Community & Population Health;
- 2) Epidemiology;
- 3) Advanced Methods; and
- 4) Theory/Content.

The student is required to respond to four (4) questions, one in each area. Responses will first be provided in a written format, completed over four consecutive days. A student who successfully passes the written portion will advance to an oral examination, scheduled typically within 2-3 weeks after completion of the written exam. A detailed account of the comprehensive exam process can be found in figures 1 and 2, and the policies and practice related to the comprehensive exam are found in the Appendix.

Community Health and Epidemiology - Comprehensive Exam Decision Tree

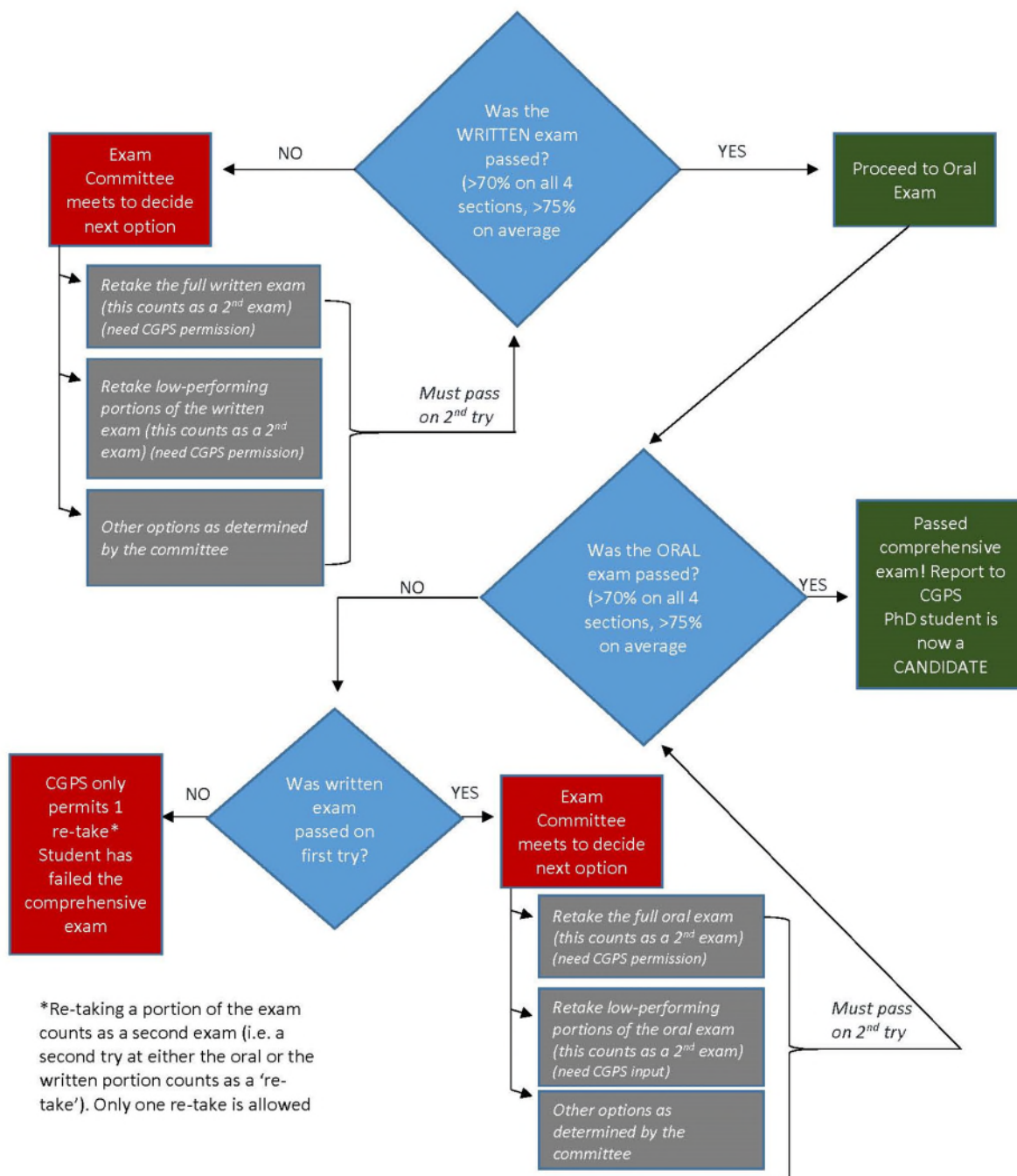


Figure 1. Comprehensive Exam Decision Tree

Community Health and Epidemiology - Typical PhD Comps Timeline

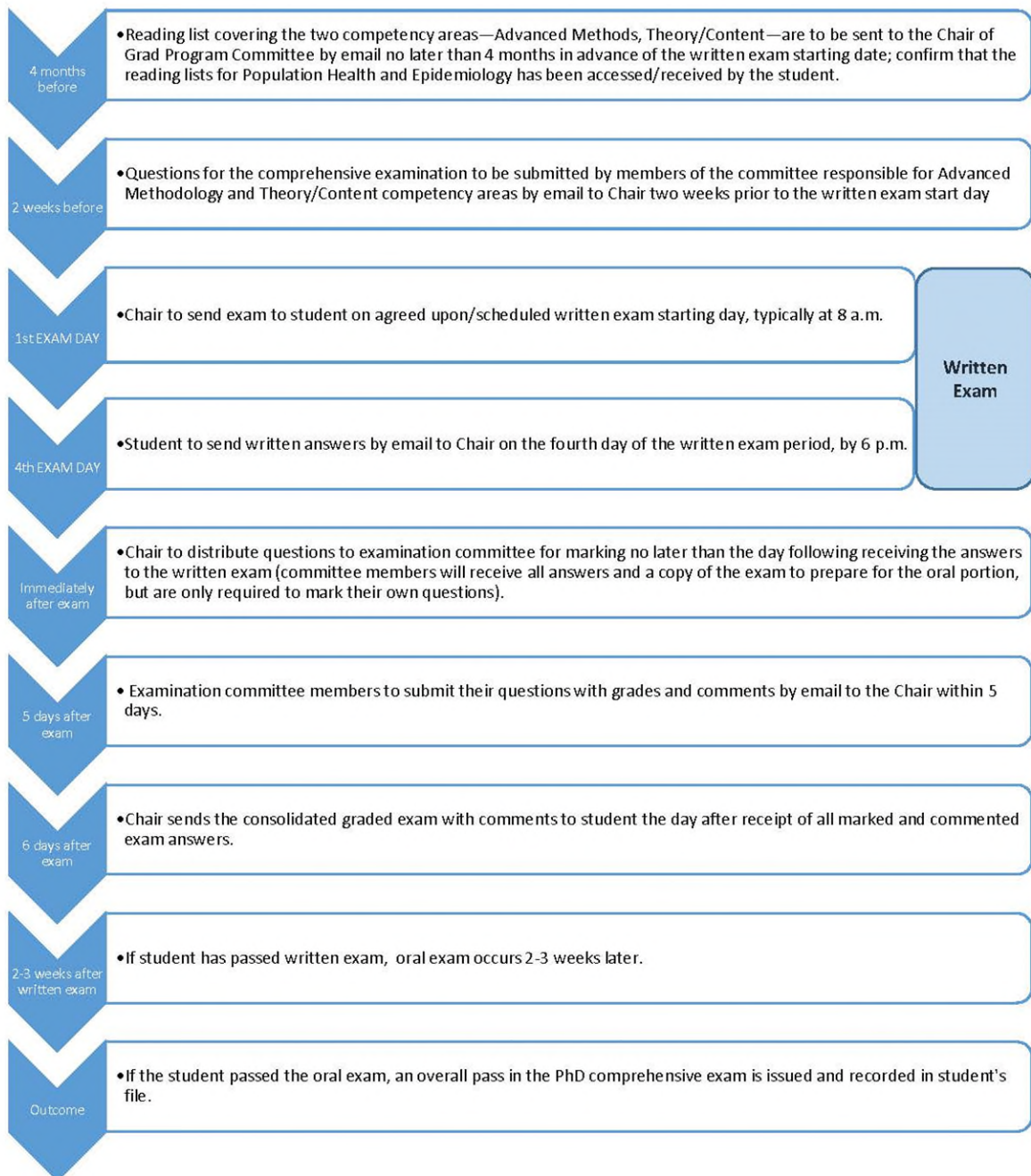


Figure 2. Typical PhD Comps Timeline

PhD Thesis

Overview

The degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) is granted only upon evidence of general proficiency and of distinctive attainment in Community and Population Health Sciences. In particular, the candidate must demonstrate an ability for independent investigation and original research. These abilities will be presented in a thesis with a degree of literary skill and by an oral examination wherein the candidate exhibits mastery of their field.

There are many potential thesis topics that fall within the scope of community and population health sciences; the appropriateness of the chosen project is decided by the thesis supervisor and advisory committee. Whatever the chosen topic, the thesis must be theoretically driven, demonstrate critical thinking, represent an original contribution to knowledge in the relevant literature, and must be of sufficient merit to be acceptable for publication. The thesis must be written according to a standard style acknowledged within the candidate's particular field of study and recommended by the unit, be lucid and well-written, and be reasonably free from errors of style and grammar (including typographical errors).

With the permission of the supervisor and advisory committee, a student may draft a traditional or manuscript-style thesis in a style approved by the academic unit. A manuscript-style thesis is a document that includes one or more scholarly manuscripts written in a manner suitable for publication in appropriate venues. Please refer to CGPS guidelines: <https://cgps.usask.ca/onboarding/thesis-roadmap/drafting.php>. The recommended length of the main body of a PhD thesis (traditional style) is between 150 and 300 pages.

Thesis Advisory committee

PhD students' thesis research is conducted under the guidance and mentorship of the thesis supervisor and thesis advisory committee.

At the PhD level, there is a minimum number of three committee members needed: the supervisor, an additional member, and a cognate member. The cognate member must be CGPS faculty but from a different principal academic unit (department/college/school) than the student and supervisor. Adjunct professors can be cognates but not professional affiliates; the graduate administrator can query CGPS faculty membership if needed. A Chair is not required for PhD regular committee meetings, but the graduate program chair will assign a committee chair to oversee the PhD comprehensives and defense. The graduate program chair, the department head or a member of the Graduate Committee may act as a non-voting committee chair for specific PhD milestone events if a neutral party is required.

The choice of committee members depends on the student's thesis topic and is decided through discussion with their supervisor. Your supervisor will approach and invite members of the thesis advisory committee. Once the committee is formed, it is the responsibility of the student to arrange meetings with the supervisor and the advisory committee.

Once you have a committee date/time confirmed, the student will send a calendar invite to the committee with a Zoom link if needed or will ask the Graduate Programs Assistant to book a room. If you are having problems scheduling the meeting, contact your supervisor. The supervisor ensures that meetings of the advisory committee are held at least once per year.

From the development of the pre-proposal to the thesis defense, the advisory committee will meet approximately six times, at the following points: (1) to give feedback on the pre-proposal (and to review the student's timeline, coursework and grades); (2) to plan the comprehensive exam; (3) to approve the proposal; (4) at some point during or just after data collection; (5) to give feedback on the first full thesis draft; and (6) to decide whether the thesis is ready for examination. The student should work closely with the supervisor between meetings.

Prior to committee meetings, students will often need to send out material to committee members for their review; **this material must be reviewed and approved by the supervisor before distribution to the rest of the committee.** The student should provide committee members with the material approximately 3 weeks prior to the scheduled meeting (more time will be needed for a full thesis draft).

Committee members are expected to provide their feedback to students at formal committee meetings and are not required to meet with students outside of these formal meetings. If the student requires additional help on thesis-related content beyond formal committee meetings, this should be discussed during the advisory meeting; if the committee member(s) agrees, parameters should be set. If the student requires assistance from a faculty member who is not part of the student's advisory committee, the request should come from the supervisor.

At each committee meeting, students are expected to start the meeting with a PowerPoint presentation (approximately 20-25 minutes) outlining their thesis and program progress to date, including a timeline to the comprehensive exam and thesis defense.

At each meeting, the supervisor prepares a progress report and minutes of the meeting to be submitted to the Graduate Administrator for the student file.

Students who encounter difficulty with their supervisor are encouraged to try to approach him/her directly, describing the problem as specifically as possible. If this approach does not result in a satisfactory resolution, or the student feels unable to talk openly to the supervisor, the student has the option to approach either the chair for their milestone meetings (if their committee has a chair), the chair of the Graduate Program Committee, or the department head. A student who wishes to make a further appeal should contact the Dean of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

Thesis Pre-proposal

For this first thesis advisory committee meeting, you must prepare a 5-7 page pre-proposal. The pre-proposal should include a brief literature review, rationale, research questions, proposed methodology and some key references. The purpose of this pre-proposal is to provide your committee with the opportunity to give input into the refinement of your

research questions and make sure your project is feasible, given your timeframe and resources, before you develop a full proposal. The pre-proposal is also important for informing the comprehensive exam. To be approved by the advisory committee, the pre-proposal must be of sufficient detail and depth to clearly indicate the appropriate content/theory and advanced methods competencies that the student should be expected to master for the comprehensive exam. At this first meeting, the committee will: (a) give guidance for the development of a full proposal; (b) decide which, if any, additional electives should be taken to support the proposed research; (c) in conjunction with the student, set a target date for the completion of the full proposal; and (d) approve your program of studies. The meeting will start with your PowerPoint presentation which will include: 1) an overview of your pre-proposal; 2) a list of courses taken and grades received; 3) additional coursework needed; and 4) a timeline to the comprehensive exam and thesis defense.

Thesis Proposal

The proposal should provide a clear definition of the problem or issue to be addressed, a review of the pertinent literature, a description of the methods to be used, the data to be gathered or analyzed, and potential contributions to the field. This is a very important document that provides a roadmap for the thesis process, and helps to address problems at the planning stage rather than later phases of the research. The PhD thesis proposal should be approximately 30 pages in length, not including appendices and references.

The following is a typical outline for a quantitative thesis proposal.

- 1) Introduction
 - a) Statement of the problem
 - b) Purpose of the study
 - c) Theoretical perspective
 - d) Research questions/hypotheses
 - e) Definition of terms
- 2) Review of the literature
- 3) Methods
 - a) Type of research design
 - b) Sample, population, and participants
 - c) Data collection instruments and variables
 - d) Data analysis procedures
 - e) Knowledge translation
- 4) Anticipated ethical issues
- 5) Significance of the study
- 6) Appendices: Instruments, timeline, references

A qualitative research proposal usually has a slightly different format, as the following example shows.

- 1) Introduction
 - a) Statement of the problem (including relevant literature)
 - b) Purpose of the study

- c) Research questions
- 2) Procedures
 - a) Characteristics of qualitative research (optional)
 - b) Qualitative research strategy
 - c) Role of the researcher
 - d) Data collection procedures
 - e) Data analysis procedures
 - f) Strategies for validating findings
 - g) Narrative structure (i.e., the narrative forms that will be used to present the findings, e.g., a process model, an extended story, an analysis across cases)
 - h) Knowledge translation

Once a student has completed their full proposal and their supervisor agrees it is ready, circulate it to your advisory committee and arrange a committee meeting. At this meeting, the committee will provide the student with feedback on your proposal and either give approval to begin the study or indicate what needs to be done before they can approve the proposal (e.g., they may want another meeting or they may be willing to simply review the changes through email). When the proposal is approved, a departmental form is signed by committee members and placed in the student's file.

Thesis research must be approved by the appropriate University Ethics Committee. You should wait until your thesis proposal is approved by your committee before submitting your ethics application; but to speed up the process, you may wish to get the application ready as you are writing your proposal, so it can be submitted as soon as you've received committee approval. Please refer to the Ethics Office website for further information:
<https://research.usask.ca/rei/researchers/ethics/human-ethics.php>

Full Thesis Draft

[After considerable hard work and perseverance, the student will have completed a full thesis draft.](#) With the permission of the supervisor and advisory committee, a student may draft a traditional or [manuscript-style](#) thesis. A manuscript-style thesis is a document that includes one or more scholarly manuscripts written in a manner suitable for publication in appropriate venues. The recommended length of the main body of a PhD thesis (traditional style) is between 150 and 300 pages. It is the shared responsibility of the student and supervisor to ensure that the thesis is written in correct scholarly/scientific English, that it is free of errors in punctuation and typing, and that it respects academic standards and any conventions which are specific to the discipline.

Once the student has completed a full thesis draft and the supervisor agrees it is ready, circulate it to your advisory committee and arrange a committee meeting. The supervisor is responsible for ensuring, within reasonable limits, that the thesis presented to the advisory committee is of an acceptable standard and quality for the degree sought. In addition, the supervisor will ensure that the submitted thesis draft has been checked by them to ensure that the thesis meets the standards of academic integrity (i.e. it presents student's original work and no unattributed material is included). At this meeting, the committee will provide you with feedback and either give the student approval for defense or indicate what needs to be done before they can approve it – they may want another meeting or they may be willing to simply

review the changes through email). When the thesis is approved for defense, a departmental form is signed by committee members and placed in your file. At this final committee meeting, potential external examiners will also be discussed, narrowed down to three possibilities, and ranked. Care must be taken in proposing the names of external examiners to ensure any possibility of [conflict of interest](#), either personal or professional in nature. A university examiner will also be discussed who will read the thesis and participate in the defense as a voting member. The university examiner's role is to ensure that the quality of the dissertation and oral defense meet university standards. The university examiner will have an "arm's length" relationship with the PhD dissertation research and may be from within the unit, even having taught the student but may not have interacted with them in ways directly related to the dissertation research. Defense dates will also be discussed, and the supervisor will contact potential external and university examiners regarding availability.

The defense must be scheduled at a time when the student and all examiners are known to be available. Defenses may occur in-person on-campus; remotely through digital platforms; or, by a combination of both. The three most common scenarios for holding a defense are:

- External examiner participates remotely through a digital platform; candidate and all other examining committee members are in-person on-campus in a room equipped for high-quality video-conferencing.
- Candidate and all examining committee members are on-campus, in-person.
- Some members of the examining committee and/or candidate participate remotely through a digital platform; others are in-person on-campus in a room equipped for high-quality video-conferencing.

PhD defenses are "Open" meaning other students and faculty are invited to attend. If the defense is remote, the Chair will manage the technology during the defense.

Preparing for Defense

Once finalized, the supervisor will communicate to the Graduate Programs Assistant the defense date and time, format of the defense (on-campus, virtual, hybrid), the university examiner, the 3 recommended persons to serve as External Examiner, and the curriculum vitae of the first choice of External Examiner and a rationale for the choice. The Graduate Programs Assistant must notify CGPS of the intended defense a **minimum of six weeks** prior to the desired oral defense date.

It is the student's responsibility to:

- Ensure that all revisions required by the advisory committee were incorporated into the thesis.
- Prepare and assemble all materials for the thesis in accordance with University and CGPS regulations and to ensure that the thesis volume is complete and in good order.
- Provide the Graduate Programs Assistant with a PDF copy of the thesis a **minimum of six weeks** prior to the defense date which will be forwarded to CGPS with the request for the external examiner. CGPS provides the external examiner with the thesis.
- Make sure that all members of their advisory committee receive the same PDF copy which will be released the external. The student must deliver print copies to committee members if requested.

- Inform the supervisor at the time of scheduling the defense of a disability that could interfere with the ability to respond to questioning at an oral defense, which in turn will allow for appropriate accommodation.
- Ensure all requirements of the program of studies have been completed, registration is current, outstanding fees are paid, and University deadlines are respected in view of any particular convocation.

Oral Examination of the Thesis

It is the responsibility of the research supervisor to provide advice and support to the student in preparing for the oral defense.

The Chair of the defense will invite the student to make a brief oral presentation, highlighting the major issues dealt with in the thesis, the conclusions which have been reached, and the significance of the findings. This presentation should last 10-15 minutes; it must not be more than 20 minutes.

All members of the examining committee are expected to ask relevant and probing questions on the methodology/contents of the thesis, and/or on the research field. Candidates should respond to questions directly, in a manner which is informed by the contents of the methodology and contents of the thesis, and as concisely as is appropriate to the question. They should not hesitate to make clarification should they have the impression that the questions asked arise from misconceptions about the research material or the literature.

Students are judged on their ability to speak in an informed way about their research and to respond clearly and cogently to questions on the thesis (results and methodology) and on the thesis topic (knowledge of the academic field and related literature).

At the conclusion of the examination, the candidate shall withdraw while the examining committee decides by majority vote whether the thesis as submitted and the candidate's oral defense meet the requirements for the degree: https://cgps.usask.ca/documents/pnp_m_pdf

Procedures Following Thesis Defense

Following a successful defense and completion of all recommended revisions to the thesis the student is required to submit an [Electronic Thesis or Dissertation \(ETD\)](#) to the CGPS site. Students are also required to upload a completed and signed version of [GPS 404 – Final Thesis Confirmation Form](#) along with their thesis on the ETD site.

Thesis students should work closely with their advisory committee to ensure all necessary documents have been received in their academic unit and in the CGPS office. Following the thesis defense, students will receive a Convocation Checklist. Students are strongly advised to pay close attention to this useful information.

Applications to graduate must be submitted by the student online through PAWS on or before the last working day of March to receive their degree at Spring Convocation, or on or before

the last working day of August, to receive their degree at Fall Convocation. Students should apply to graduate even if they are uncertain they will make convocation deadlines.

Program Milestones: PhD (completion in four years)

	Milestones
YEAR 1 Term 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coursework, including preparatory classes if needed. Depending on academic preparation, students may be required to take a qualifying exam in their first term which consists of them taking required courses from term 1 and obtaining 80% or higher on each of their required courses. These courses will be in addition to the regular Ph.D course load. Additional courses may also be taken by PhD students on the recommendation of their supervisor. <p>Possible preparatory Classes:</p> <p>TERM 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHEP 821.2 (01): Introduction to Community and Population Health Equity: Sept 6-18_ CRN 90363 CHEP 822.2 (01): Introduction to Community and Population Health Research Methods: Sept. 20- Oct. 3_ CRN 90364 CHEP 823.2 (01): Introduction to Health Care and Public Health Systems: Oct. 5-18_ CRN 90365 CHEP 800.3 (02): Introduction to Epidemiology and Biostatistics: CHEP 800: Oct. 20-Nov. 9_ CRN 90366 CHEP 824.2 (01): Qualitative and Alternative Research Skills in Community and Population Health: Nov. 20-Dec 4 CRN 90367 <p>TERM 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHEP 805 Biostatistics (Pre-requisite is a statistics course. For a refresher/preparation a basic statistics course online is available at: https://www.coursera.org/learn/basic-statistics (CRN 26513) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required non-credit CHEP 996, 990, GPS 960, 961
Term 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other coursework & registration in CHEP 996, 990
Term 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advisory committee meeting to approve pre-proposal Registration in CHEP 996
YEAR 2 Term 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remaining coursework & registration in CHEP 996, 990. CHEP 817 (required) may be taken in the first or second year to prepare for the comprehensives Advisory committee meeting to approve proposal Advisory committee meeting to discuss comprehensive exam <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ thesis committee examiners identified ✓ relevant advanced method and content/theory identified ✓ plan to develop reading list in place
Term 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare for comprehensive exam Registration in CHEP 996, 990
Term 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensive exam Registration in CHEP 996
YEAR 3 Term 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ethics approval Registration in CHEP 996, 990
Term 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research and writing Registration in CHEP 996, 990
Term 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research and writing Registration in CHEP 996
YEAR 4 Term 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advisory committee meeting to review progress Research and writing

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registration in CHEP 996, 990.
Term 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and writing • Present at CHEP Student Research Day • Registration in CHEP 996, 990.
Term 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advisory committee to approve thesis for defense • Registration in CHEP 996 • Thesis defence

Guidelines for Supervisors, Committee Members and Students

Appointments and Responsibilities of a Thesis Supervisor

At the beginning of their relationship, the student and supervisor should meet to discuss expectations and how they want to work together. A [Student-Supervisor Agreement](#) should be completed within the first term and revisited yearly and potentially more often if needed with a copy of the agreement submitted to the Graduate Programs Assistant for the student record.

It is strongly encouraged that students identify a thesis research supervisor, thesis topic, or an area in which a thesis topic will be selected, at the time of enrolment. For PhD students having a thesis topic/area identified at the time of enrolment is required. As early in the program as feasible, the student will begin working with their supervisor to develop a pre-proposal. The student should discuss the composition of the thesis advisory committee (see below) with their supervisor; if necessary the supervisor and student may discuss potential members of the thesis advisory committee and composition of the committee with the Graduate Program Chair or the Department Head. It is the supervisor's responsibility to approach and invite members of the thesis advisory committee. When the full complement of the advisory committee is identified (a minimum of 2 for MSc students; a minimum of three for PhD students) the Graduate Programs Assistant needs to be informed. A chair for each advisory committee will not be required for regular advisory committee meetings. It is preferable to have a majority of thesis advisory committee members comprised of members drawn from within the core CH&E members.

The research supervisor must be either a faculty member, an associate, or adjunct member of the Department. If an associate or clinical member is chosen who lacks sufficient research or supervisory experience, there must also be a co-supervisor from the Department. We expect faculty who supervise PhD students to have already gained experience supervising in the role of sole-supervisor at least one Master's student to successful completion. It should be noted that at the time of writing this section, CGPS also has policies regarding supervisory privileges that are granted for non-PhD faculty; therefore, it is advisable that students check with the Graduate Program Chair or Department Head if they are interested in working with a non-PhD faculty. Students may also have co-supervisors if the thesis research demands combined expertise from more than one faculty member. It is important to note, if a student is supervised by two faculty members (co-supervision), for the purpose of the committee composition and for voting purposes within the committee deliberations, they would count as one member having one vote at the committee. Faculty members may redirect students elsewhere if they feel they are not suited to supervise the project or if their supervision load is full. Students who experience difficulties in finding a supervisor should contact the Graduate Program Chair.

Every supervisor should be familiar with the chronological sequence of events that occur at crucial stages throughout a student's program. As well they should be well-versed on the general policies, procedures of the Department and of the CGPS. Supervisors, members of advisory committees and students should be fully informed about the academic schedule in the current university calendars. They should be aware of important deadlines and should know and use the various official forms required by the College. Students, supervisors, and members of advisory committees are all responsible for ensuring that the regulations of the College are met. Supervisors, members of advisory committees, and students have a shared responsibility to ensure that there is adequate time to meet on a regular basis.

At the Master's or PhD level, the supervisor's responsibility should be that of a general academic tutor with a considerable emphasis on guidance, instruction, and encouragement of progress and productivity. The supervisor should be directly involved during the draft preparation stage of the proposal and the thesis, but not overly impose particular orientations on the student. Students can expect their supervisors to be critically helpful and encouraging without being dictatorial and without insisting that the student's thesis or thesis drafts, match precisely the supervisor's personal predilections including their personal views. Supervisors will also be responsible for ensuring that their student's thesis adhere to common standards of academic integrity (e.g. free of plagiarism, unattributed text including their own previously available work) throughout thesis development, and necessarily before the thesis is submitted for defense.

Students can expect their supervisors to ensure that adequate provision has been made for continued supervision during their own absence on leave of any kind, including sabbatical and administrative leave. All such arrangements will be communicated to the Graduate Chair and Department Head as well as the graduate administrator for the student file. The Department Head will confirm if these arrangements are not considered satisfactory by the Department. Faculty members should recognize that it is imperative to make an appropriate reduction in supervisory responsibilities prior to and during sabbatical and similar types of extended leave (six months or more). Students can expect their supervisors to recognize that the thesis or comprehensive examination is a crucial event in a student's program. Accordingly, faculty should plan to accommodate achieving these milestones even if they are on extended leave. In order that students can schedule their work appropriately, they should be informed well in advance about the supervisor's plans for forthcoming leaves or absences. Interim supervisory arrangements which have been made to cover a period of absence do not release supervisors from final responsibility for the adequate supervision of their students. If a supervisor finds him or herself unable to continue the responsibility of supervising a student, he/she will need to immediately inform the Department Head.

Supervisors will oblige their students to maintain a high academic standard and to use the best available research techniques. It is important to recognize that supervisors have a twofold responsibility; first, to assist students in the learning process, and second, to judge them in their performance. It is at this point that a supervisor and members of an advisory committee must be particularly careful not to influence the student's work to the extent that the thesis becomes something other than the creation of the author, the student. Supervisors and examiners should recognize that perfection is not a prerequisite for acceptance of the thesis as "partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree." Writing and defending a thesis is an academic exercise which, like all other exercises, can vary in quality from passable to outstanding.

Appointment and Functions of the Student's Thesis Advisory Committee

At the Master's level the advisory committee consists of the research supervisor and at least one other member. At the PhD level the advisory committee consists of the research supervisor, an additional member of CGPS faculty (or someone with a PhD credential can be recommended one-time membership) and a cognate member (from a different principal academic unit than the student and supervisor). Associate faculty members holding a secondary appointment in the unit are eligible, for example, to serve as the cognate member. Descriptions of advisory committees and recent changes for defense are described here <https://cgps.usask.ca/operational-info/policy-procedure/advisory-and-defence-changes.php>

As early as possible during the first year of the student's program, the advisory committee must meet with the student to approve their program of studies and the thesis topic. The minutes of this meeting will identify the student's research supervisor, all course work completed or to be completed for the degree program, and the general area of research (tentative thesis title). At this initial meeting, the student should present a 3-7 page description of the proposed thesis (the pre-proposal). Committee members will discuss this description and make clear any objections or required modifications. They must also agree on the courses already taken and yet to be taken and indicate these on the minutes. The minutes are then forwarded to the Graduate Programs Assistant who will post these to the student record in PAWS. At this meeting, a date should be set for the completion of the full proposal (within 3 months on average). After reading the full proposal, the committee should meet again to approve it.

Thereafter, the committee should meet at least once a year to review the student's progress in both course work and research. It is expected that the committee meets to review research results prior to write up of thesis. The advisory committee reads the completed thesis and signifies approval before it is deemed ready for defense. The Graduate Program's Assistant requires membership and details for the defense at least 6 weeks prior to a PhD defense and 3 weeks prior to a MSc defense.

Responsibilities of the Supervisor as Chair of Advisory Committee

The student is responsible for convening the initial meeting where the program of studies is discussed, and the subsequent meeting to approve the full thesis proposal. If any difficulties are encountered, the assistance of their supervisor should be sought.

The supervisor ensures that meetings of the advisory committee are held at least once per year. Minutes should be kept at these meetings and a copy should be kept in the students file and attached to the Graduate Student Progress Report (form GPS 210). This form should be completed at least once during each 12-month period, usually by 31 August, and provided to the Graduate Programs Assistant who enters these on the student record in PAWS. Please note that chairs are not required for regular committee meetings but can be put in place for the MSc student defense and are required for the PhD defense. Chairs, if required are selected from the graduate advisory committee, or may be the Department Head or Graduate Chair. While chairs are not required, a chair can be requested by the supervisor if they have not yet completed 1-2 MSc students or 1 PhD student in the department. A chair can also be requested from the Graduate Committee if a neutral party is required. To request a neutral party chair, please contact both the Graduate Chair and Department Head.

In lieu of having chairs for committee meetings, a Student Annual Progress Report is requested from each student in Spring (May) to be returned to their supervisor with a c.c. to the Graduate Program Assistant. The supervisor can review and complete a Graduate Student Progress Report form (GPS 210) with the student if one has not recently been submitted, can return after a summer committee

meeting, or can simply reply to the Student Annual Progress Report indicating their comments which can be entered as a progress report on the student file.

In the meeting to approve the defense, the committee will consider appropriate external examiners. For PhD students, an appropriate university examiner will also be discussed. The supervisor will contact prospective externals in the order that they were ranked and will contact university examiners (for PhD defenses). University examiners can be from within or outside the academic unit, can have taught the student or interacted with them, but must have an “arm’s length” relationship with the PhD dissertation research. The supervisor advises the Graduate Programs Assistant about the composition of the examining committee. The Committee’s decision about the thesis and its oral defense are communicated to the Graduate Programs Assistant who completes appropriate forms for the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

Leave of Absence

If a student requests a leave of absence, it should be requested in writing, to the Graduate Chair and to the supervisor, giving the reason and the period of time. Requests should be made before the beginning of the leave. [Leaves of absence](#) are available to graduate students under the following categories: personal or health; maternity/parental; professional; and leave to pursue an additional program of study. The leave period is not included in the time for completion of the degree, and tuition is not assessed during the leave. Typically, nominal student fees are assessed during the leave period. While a student is on leave, all advisory and supervisory processes and progress on academic and research work are paused, and students cannot hold graduate student funding.

If students have questions about a leave, they can speak with their supervisor, the Graduate Chair or the graduate assistant and international students are advised to contact the [International Student and Study Abroad Centre \(ISSAC\)](#) if they have questions about leaves while on travel authorizations.

Grievances

University procedures concerning student conduct including academic integrity and information for student appeals is provided by the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies in their [Policies and Procedures Manual](#). Certain problems unique to graduate students are outlined by CGPS and may be encountered. Many of these problems have to do with the student-supervisor relationship or advisory committees. In these cases, we suggest the following procedure for dealing with grievances:

Students who encounter difficulty with their advisor or supervisor are encouraged to try to approach him or her directly, describing the problem as specifically as possible. If this approach does not result in a satisfactory resolution, or the student feels unable to talk openly to the advisor or supervisor, the student has the option to approach the chair of the advisory committee, if the committee has a chair, or the chair of the Graduate Committee provided the chair is not the supervisor, or the department head, depending on the student’s preference. A student who wishes to make a further appeal should contact the Dean of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, and/or the Graduate Students’ Association.

Student Academic Integrity

The Department and the University expects and upholds the highest of standards in terms of academic integrity in its various constituencies, and this includes graduate students. The

policies of the University are articulated in the Office of the University Secretary website and in the [CGPS Policies and Procedure Manual](#).

Students shall perform their academic work with honesty and integrity. Academic work includes, but is not limited to thesis research and writing, in-class participation, examinations, assignments, patient care and other duties. Every student must perform his or her own work.

Student misconduct includes: cheating; plagiarism; forgery; fabrication; theft of instructional material or tests; unauthorized access to or manipulation of laboratory or clinical equipment or computer programs; alteration of grade books, clinical records, files or computer grades; misuse of research data in reporting results; use of personal relationships to gain grades or favours or other attempts to obtain grades or credit through fraudulent means; unprofessional conduct related to patient care; threats to university personnel; and other conduct inconsistent with academic integrity. Students' own material that has been previously reported without proper attribution also constitute academic misconduct.

University of Saskatchewan Council has approved a document entitled "The Guidelines for Academic Conduct", available at: <https://governance.usask.ca/governance/guidelines-for-academic-conduct.php>

Plagiarism

There is an onus on every student to become informed as to what does or does not constitute plagiarism. Ignorance of applicable standards of ethical writing is not an acceptable excuse. The critical consideration is the impression created in the mind of the others, not the subjective intent of the student. This determination involves an objective evaluation of the manuscript. No intent to deceive is required to establish plagiarism.

Plagiarism is the theft of the intellectual creation of another person without proper attribution. It is the use of someone else's words or ideas or data without proper documentation or acknowledgement. Quotations must be clearly marked, and sources of information, ideas, or opinions of others must be clearly indicated in all written work. This applies to paraphrased ideas as well as to direct quotations. A student must acknowledge and fairly recognize any contributions made to their personal research and scholarly work by others, including other students and self.

To protect the reputation of the high quality of the degrees offered at the University of Saskatchewan, the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies takes very seriously cases of plagiarism where there is clearly an attempt to pass someone else's work off as one's own, such as copying other's work without using quotations, or paraphrasing someone's work, without citing the source in a footnote or in a reference section.

An excellent source of information about plagiarism (what it is, how to avoid it) can be found at: <http://libguides.usask.ca/citation/whycite> Questions about this matter which cannot be answered by visiting this site should be directed to your supervisor, Graduate Chair, Department Head or the Dean of the CGPS.

Consequences

Informal Procedures

Many cases of alleged academic misconduct on the part of students result from misunderstanding or carelessness. When an infraction is suspected, the instructor or invigilator may, at his or her own discretion, speak informally with the student(s) to discuss the matter and to consider an appropriate remedy.

If the student concedes having committed academic misconduct, and if the infraction is deemed by the instructor to be minor enough not to warrant a formal hearing, then the instructor and student may agree on an appropriate remedy.

Remedies available to an instructor are limited to the following:

- (a) The grade on the work that is the subject of the infraction may be reduced to a failing grade or a zero, or by a percentage appropriate to the degree of the academic misconduct; or
- (b) The student may be asked to resubmit or re-write the examination, assignment or other work.

The instructor must inform the student in writing of the nature of the remedy to be imposed. Remedies applied pursuant to above are considered to be informal measures and do not result in a permanent record of academic misconduct.

If it appears that the academic misconduct was of a more serious nature and therefore that a formal hearing is warranted, or if the student disputes the charge of academic misconduct or the remedy proposed pursuant to above, then either the instructor or invigilator, or the student, may request a formal hearing. Where the appeal is by the student following imposition of informal measures above, the appeal must be made within 14 days of notification of the penalty. Such a request should be made to the office of the Dean or designate in the College responsible for the course in which the alleged infraction occurred or, if the matter falls outside the responsibility of a College, to the Provost and Vice-President Academic. Such a request will be subject to the procedures outlined below.

Formal Procedures

The formal procedures for allegations of misconduct shall be followed for all allegations serious enough to require a hearing, or for those situations which it has not been possible to resolve at the informal level. It is the responsibility of the person who makes an allegation (the complainant) to provide a rationale for the allegation and to present the evidence in support of it. The allegation shall be specific with the pertinent details of the incident and shall be filed as soon as is possible after the occurrence or discovery of the incident.

The formal procedures are designed so that both the complainant and the respondent can present their respective arguments before an impartial board of decision-makers, and the consequences can be both meaningful and appropriate.

Department Resources for Students

The Department of Community Health and Epidemiology has a large and vibrant graduate program that aims to produce researchers that will conduct excellent interdisciplinary and trans-disciplinary research in population and community health. To that end, much of our coursework is oriented toward fostering collaborative and team learning. Student thesis research spans a range of approaches from team-based to individual. We currently have excellent space for students to work quietly and on their own via hot desking. (Hot desking is a workspace sharing model in which students outnumber desks. Hot desking is useful for improvement of communication and collaboration.) In the health sciences E wing, **office space is available in 3231.**

Student Space Assignment

Student spaces are assigned each fall by completing a “CH&E Space Request Graduate Student form”. Students will be provided with a locker space and key/padlock for securing their personal belongings and be required to pay a \$20 refundable deposit for keys. Contact the Graduate Programs Assistant.

At least two desk top computers with programs (e.g. SAS, SPSS) installed for student use are available in room 3231. Computer access is currently on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Locking Filing Cabinets

Room 3231 contains a filing cabinet with individual locking file cabinet drawers. If your research requires storage of confidential study data, please note this on your “CH&E Space Request Graduate Student form” and a key will be made available for your use.

Student Mail

Communication is increasing by email but if you receive mail, the Graduate Programs Assistant will alert you to pick it up.

Thesis Libraries

Former students’ theses are an excellent resource. A library of hard covered theses are available for viewing in Room 3231. Since 2005, however, the University of Saskatchewan has published electronic theses and dissertations (ETDs). More than 700 print theses published before 2005 have been digitized and added to the collection as well. ETDs can be accessed from this site: <https://harvest.usask.ca/handle/10388/381>

[CH&E Theses and Dissertations](#) are listed in Harvest. To order by most recent you can click the settings gear and choose “Issue Date Desc”.

Photocopying

U of S provides Student Printing and Photocopying (CPAS). Students can easily print, scan, and photocopy documents at university provided printers located in the libraries or in student

computer labs. Students can add printing credits as any of the libraries. Using PAWS, students can easily: transfer printing credit, check account balance, check transaction history and check printing history. Students required to print through faculty funded research must have their supervisor request printing access for the student and a fund number for billing.

Lunchroom

You are welcome to use the lunchroom (Room 3243). Our lunchroom is a shared space open to all who work in E wing.

Cupboards have dishes and cutlery as well as two fridges, two microwaves, a toaster oven and kettles for boiling water. Staff and students are required wash their own dishes and place them back in the cupboards. If you store food in the fridge, you are encouraged to be diligent in disposing of it in a timely manner.

Food garbage is to be disposed of in the kitchen garbage bin. Please do not leave garbage in student spaces or in individual offices.

Recycling Waste Containers

With the university's move to an all-encompassing recycling program it is easier to recycle more of the materials that previously went into the waste containers. Each office will have the usual full size blue recycling bin with a small black waste container that clips onto the side. There will be no larger waste bins provided.

For complete information on what can be recycled in the blue bins, please see the following URL: <https://sustainability.usask.ca/programs/recycling.php#RecyclingBinsandContainers>

Custodial staff will collect both waste and recycling from offices on a weekly basis. If your garbage fills up before the scheduled pick up day please empty the container into one of the larger containers in the office suites, washrooms, or hallways which are emptied daily. We also ask that you continue to dispose of any food products in the larger waste containers in the same areas so this can be disposed of daily.

Local Emergency Response Plan

Information on the Health Sciences Building, Health and Safety, including Emergency Response Plans are available at: <http://healthsciences.usask.ca/building-operations/building-health-and-safety.php>

APPENDIX A – PhD Comprehensive Exam Policies and Procedures

Purpose

"The purpose of the comprehensive exam is to determine whether the student has a mature and substantive grasp of the field as a whole. Normally this examination is scheduled after the student has completed all course requirements and before beginning the doctoral research and thesis. The exam is on topics cognate to the candidate's field of research. A student passing the comprehensive exam is deemed a PhD Candidate." [6.3.2 CGPS Policies and Procedures Manual](#) (2006, with December 2010 revisions).

Synopsis

The CHE comprehensive exam process is structured to reflect the general goals of the Community & Population Health Sciences Program as well as the individualized nature of each student's program of studies. The examination is therefore a collaborative undertaking of both the Department and the Thesis advisory committee with representatives from both forming a student's comprehensive examination committee.

*** Note that some changes to comprehensives are in discussion and will be complete in Fall 2023. All students who have taken CHEP 817.3 prior to Fall 2023 will follow the process below:*

The exam consists of eight (8) questions across four (4) competency areas; two in each area. The areas are: 1) Community & Population Health (drawn from material covered in CHEP813 and CHEP817, among others); 2) Epidemiology (classical and conceptual as is covered in CHEP800, among others); 3) Advanced Methodology (e.g. biostats, mixed methods, specific qualitative methodologies—conceptual and practical); and 4) Theory/Content (as relevant to the thesis research area). The student is required to respond to four (4) questions, one in each area. Responses will first be provided in a written format, completed over four consecutive days. If the student passes the written portion, they will proceed to the oral portion of the comprehensive exam, scheduled 2-3 weeks after receiving feedback on the written exam. Please see Figure 1, Comprehensive Exam Decision Tree.

Timing

PhD students generally take the comprehensive exam once their required coursework is complete, and before they begin their doctoral research, usually in their second year of program. The timing is discussed with the supervisor and communicated by the supervisor to the graduate program chair. A requirement of proceeding to the comprehensive exam is that the thesis advisory committee has been struck, the minimum 12 credit units of required coursework are complete with an average of 70% or better, and a pre-proposal for research has been approved.

Content

The exam consists of 8 questions, from which the student selects 4 to answer; one in each area of competency as described in the synopsis above. Areas 1 and 2 are the responsibility of the Department and cover general competencies all PhD students should have. Areas 3 and 4 are the responsibility of the student's thesis advisory committee and cover competency areas

specific to the student's proposed thesis research, but covering a broader knowledge base than that specifically required for the thesis research.

Structure & Process

Please see Figure 2, Typical PhD Comprehensive Exam Timeline.

The comprehensive exam consists of two parts: a written paper and an oral exam. The Comprehensive Examination Committee develops the examination questions. The committee typically consists of 5 members, as required to appropriately represent the competencies being examined. Generally there are 2 department members and 2 thesis advisory committee members (**one of whom is the thesis supervisor**). The Graduate Program Chair, or a designate, is the 5th member of the comprehensive exam committee and has the responsibility of ensuring process and procedures are appropriately followed.

The comprehensive committee for each student is struck approximately 6 months previous to the administration of the exam to a qualified student. There is flexibility in the time frame, however, it is important that the qualified student have a full reading list for each of the competency areas 3-4 months ahead of the administration of the exam to allow for adequate preparation. Prior to the committee being struck, the student will have had a full thesis advisory committee meeting, at which the comprehensive exam is on the agenda. Once it is agreed that the student may proceed to the comprehensive exam, consensus should be reached on the general topics to be examined in competency areas 3 and 4. Two members of the thesis advisory committee will sit on the comprehensive examination committee, one of whom must be a supervisor or co-supervisor. A document, signed by the advisory committee and the student, detailing the approval to proceed to the comprehensive exam and naming the thesis advisory members who will sit on the comprehensive examination committee will be copied to the Graduate Program Chair to signal the request to set the comprehensive exam.

The Graduate Program Chair will strike the remainder of the committee from among department members, including a chairperson (the Graduate Program Chair or designate). The Comprehensive Committee Chair will guide the remainder of the process for the student. Department representatives on the committee will develop the questions in the areas of community & population health and epidemiology (2 for each competency area), including a list of suggested readings. At the same time, the thesis committee will, in the absence of the student, develop questions (2 for each area of competency to be examined) and a suggested reading list to accompany each. The student is expected as part of their preparation for the exam to expand on the suggested readings identifying additional material.

All questions, as well as reading lists specific to each competency area, are submitted in writing to the Comprehensive Examination Chair according to an agreed-upon timeline managed by that Chairperson. The Chair will provide the reading list in the four areas to be examined to the student, copying the thesis supervisor, the examination committee, and the Graduate Program Chair (in the case where the Comprehensive Chair is not also the Graduate Program Chair). At this point the student will have at least 3-4 months to prepare for the exam.

The scheduling of the exam is conducted in consultation with the student (working with their thesis supervisor) and the examining committee. The Comprehensive Exam Chair will produce the full exam document (following a template provided by the Graduate Program Chair), administer the written exam to the student, manage the assessment process for both the written and oral components, and ensure appropriate scheduling of the tasks associated with the comprehensive exam process. The final result will be communicated to the Graduate Program Chair, where the comprehensive exam chair is not also the Graduate Program Chair. The Graduate Program Chair will formally communicate the final result to the student, supervisor, and the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, copying the examination committee and the Department Head.

The Exam

Written Component

In the written paper each candidate will answer four (4) of the eight (8) questions they are given. There are two questions per area of competency and the student will answer one in each area. Each student has the choice to write the exam anywhere he/she wants. The exam is open book, but the student may not contact nor receive any assistance from anyone. The exam must be completed independently.

Students receive their exam questions from the comprehensives committee chair by e-mail at 8AM on the designated day. The student then has 4 consecutive days to produce a written response to all four questions. Unless otherwise indicated, answers should be provided in essay format, referenced using the Vancouver style. The typical length of each essay is 1500-2000 words. The responses must be e-mailed back to the chair by 6PM on the fourth day (for example, if the exam is sent at 8AM on Monday the completed exam with responses is due on Thursday of the same week at 6PM), with the following text included in the body of the e-mail:

"With this e-mail, I, [INSERT FULL NAME], am submitting my answers for the CHE comprehensive exam. The work I am submitting is mine and follows the CGPS guidelines for academic honesty. In addition, I have received no assistance in drafting or reviewing my responses during the period in which I was writing the exam."

If, during the written exam, students have a valid and relevant query about an exam question, it should be e-mailed to the comprehensives committee chair, who will contact the appropriate committee member for a response, which that person will e-mail to the student and copy to the chair.

Comprehensives committee members read all responses. Assessment of each individual response will be the responsibility of two readers; the first reader will be the individual who represents the area of expertise/competency on the committee. The second reader will be assigned by the chair and will have at least some familiarity with the competency area. Each response is assigned a grade, achieved by consensus of readers one and two. Each answer will be weighted equally towards an overall assessment for the written submission, however no single question may receive a grade of less than 70%¹. In addition, an average of 75% is

required to achieve a pass. The committee will meet to reach consensus on questions that fall within 3% below the 70% required to pass any one competency area, and on written exams that fall within 3% below the 75% required to achieve an overall pass. The mark will be reflected as a pass or fail. The Chair coordinates written feedback for each candidate on his/her performance. Candidates will receive the committee response within 2 weeks of submission, so that they may prepare for their oral examination. Students must pass the written component in order to proceed to the oral component.

Oral Component

The oral will be scheduled for approximately 2 weeks after students have received comments from the committee on their written work, and will focus only on those questions the student has chosen to answer. Students will not be required to give a presentation as part of the oral exam. The first and second readers for each of the written responses will typically lead the questioning for that response, however, all committee members are free to ask the student questions related to their written responses in each competency area. The duration of the oral exam for each candidate is approximately 2 hours (divided equally among the 4 competency areas) and all committee members are present. With the exception of the chair, all committee members participate in assigning a consensus grade for each competency area in the oral component, independent of the written grade. As with the written component, no one competency area may receive a grade of less than 70% and an overall grade of 75% or higher is required to achieve a pass on the oral exam. The committee will meet to reach consensus on questions that fall within 3% below the 70% required to pass any one competency area, and on oral exams that fall within 3% below the 75% required to achieve an overall pass.

Final Pass/Fail Assessment

Performances in both the written and oral components of the exam are weighted equally in assigning an overall pass or fail grade for the comprehensive exam. The committee will meet to reach consensus on exams that fall within 3% below the 75% required to pass. At the end of the whole examination process (written and oral) the student is provided a pass/fail assessment accompanied by a brief commentary of his/her performance. This final assessment will be copied to the student's file, members of the comprehensives committee, the student's supervisor, and to the Graduate Program Chair, as appropriate. It will be the responsibility of the supervisor to communicate the results to committee members. The Graduate Program Chair will send a simple pass/fail memo to the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, copied to the Department Head and the student file.

Failure and Appeals Process

"A student failing a Qualifying or Comprehensive Examination is permitted a second Examination with permission of the Dean of the CGPS or designate. A second failure automatically disqualifies the student from further work for that particular PhD degree. This failure may be appealed to the Graduate Academic Affairs Committee on substantive or procedural grounds." [6.3 CGPS Policies and Procedures Manual](#)

¹ Academic standard for a pass in each competency area follows the minimum CGPS standards for a PhD level graduate class, where an average of 70% or greater is considered a pass, and a grade below 70% is considered a fail.

APPENDIX B— MSc-CPHS (Community & Population Health Science) Planner

Department Community Health & Epidemiology 2-year Study Plan

Name:

Student#:

POS start date:

end date:

Supervisor:

"MSc students are required to live locally until core program requirements have been met, including thesis committee approval of pre-proposal, completion of required courses."

Year 1_ August

- Meet with supervisor re: research interests/courses.
- Student-Supervisor Agreement to be discussed and completed in first term.

A minimum of 18 credit units are required for program:

Five Required Courses offered in sequence. (11 cu's) Expected dates:

	Term	CRN	Year taken
CHEP 821.2 (01): Introduction to Community and Population Health Equity: Sept 6-18	1	90363	
CHEP 822.2 (01): Introduction to Community and Population Health Research Methods: Sept. 20- Oct. 3	1	90364	
CHEP 823.2 (01): Introduction to Health Care and Public Health Systems: Oct. 5-18	1	90365	
CHEP 800.3 (02): Introduction to Epidemiology and Biostatistics: Oct. 20-Nov. 16	1	90366	
CHEP 824.2 (01): Qualitative and Alternative Research Skills in Community and Population Health: Nov. 20-Dec 4	1	90367	

ONE research methods* course (3c.u.). Select from:

CHEP 805 Biostatistics (Pre-requisite is a statistics course. For a refresher/preparation in basic statistics an online course is available at: https://www.coursera.org/learn/basic-statistics)	2	26513	
CHEP 816.3 Population Health Intervention Research (PHIR)	1	86035	MSc in 2 nd yr
CHEP 818.3 Advanced Qualitative Health Research Methods in Population and Public Health	2	27155	
CHEP 820.3 An Introduction to Critical Realism its Methodology and Practice	3	TBA	Expected Spr 24

*other research methods courses need pre-approval from Graduate Chair

4 credit units of elective graduate-level courses (A 400-level undergraduate course may be taken with approval of the Graduate Program Chair). A one credit unit course may be used in addition to a three-credit unit class to meet the minimum elective requirement.

Department elective choices (may not be offered each year):

Term 1:

- CHEP 806.3 (crn84192) Applied Statistical Methods for Follow Up Data (expected fall 2024)
- CHEP 810.3 (86549) Advanced Topics Clinical Trials

- 1 c.u. skills courses:

CHEP 898.1: SAS_CRN # 90406	Sept 12, 14, 19	1-4 p.m.
CHEP 898.1: Data Mgmt_CRN #90408	Sept 26, 28, Oct 3	1-4 p.m.
CHEP 898.1: SPSS_CRN #90409	Oct. 10, 12, 17	1-4 p.m.

Term 2 :

- CHEP 801.3 (31001) Epidemiology II
- CHEP 805. 3 (26513) Biostatistics
- CHEP 818.3 (27155) Advanced Qualitative Health Research Methods in Population and Public Health
- CHEP 819.3 (283415) Colonization and Its Impact on Indigenous Peoples' Health and Healing
- CHEP 898.3 (26905) Environment and Community Health

- 1 c.u. skills courses:

CHEP 898: STATA_CRN # 31186	Jan. 16, 18, 23	1-4 p.m.
CHEP 898: NVivo_CRN# 31187	Feb. 6, 8, 13	1-4 p.m.
CHEP 898: Data Mgmt_ CRN # 31188	March 5, 7, 12	1-4 p.m.

Term 3: Spring Term (April, May, &/or June)

- CHEP 815.3 Food Systems and Community Health (next expected spring 2025)
- CHEP 820.3 An Introduction to Critical Realism its Methodology and Practice (expected Spring 2024)
- CHEP 898: Epidemics and the Politics of Global Health (TBD)

Term 3: Summer Term (July &/or August)

- TBD

CHEP 990 Seminar (terms 1 & 2)	1	81490	
* MANDATORY throughout program. Web sections available if residency met.	2	21507	
CHEP 994 Research – Thesis (terms 1, 2, spr-sum)	1	81439	
*MANDATORY registration each term of program	2	21481	
	spring	40143	
	Su	60109	
GPS 960 Ethics and Integrity (on-line pass)	1	86803	
	2	27247	
GPS 961 Human Research (on-line pass)	1	87606	
	2	27248	

***Attend (& present at least once) in CHEP Research Day (February) & CoM Life Science poster day.**

MSc Program Milestones (completion in two years)

	Milestones
YEAR 1	
Term 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required CHEP classes: 821, 822, 823, 800, 824. • Required non-credit CHEP 994, 990, GSR 960, 961 • Advisory committee meeting to approve pre-proposal (this may occur next term)
Term 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required Research methods course: CHEP 805, 816, 818, or 820 this term or Term 3 • Registration in CHEP 994, 990 • 4 credit unit electives: A one credit unit course may be used in addition to a three-credit unit class to meet the minimum elective requirement; or this can be taken over spring/summer or in second year • Advisory committee meeting to approve proposal • Ethics approval
Term 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registration in CHEP 994 • Elective (if not already taken) • Research and writing
YEAR 2	
Term 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registration in CHEP 994, 990 • Elective (if not already taken) • Research and writing • Advisory committee meeting to review progress/'permission' to finish thesis draft
Term 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registration in CHEP 994, 990 • Research and writing • Present at CHEP Student Research Day • Advisory committee meeting to approve thesis for defence
Term 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registration in CHEP 994 • Thesis defence

Support for Graduate Student Progress:

- **Student-Supervisor-Agreement** & the **CH& E Graduate Student Handbook** located on the CH&E Department Website at: <https://medicine.usask.ca/departmentschools-divisions/cbe.php#CurrentStudents>
- College of Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies: <https://cgps.usask.ca/policy-and-procedure/index.php>
- To review courses offered by other depts' please search "Registration" in PAWs.

APPENDIX C— PhD-CPHS (Community & Population Health Science) Planner

Department Community Health & Epidemiology Individualized 4-year Study Plan

Name:

student#:

POS start date:

end date:

Advisor / Supervisor:

"PhD students are required to live in Saskatoon until core program requirements have been met, including thesis committee approval of pre-proposal, completion of required courses, and completion of the comprehensive exam."

Year 1_August

* Meet with supervisor to discuss research interests/courses.

* Student-Supervisor Agreement to be discussed and completed in first term.

A minimum of 12 credit units are required for your program. Coursework is chosen in consultation with your supervisor and will include the requirements below. If preparatory classes are required, discuss this with your supervisor and graduate chair - see description of Milestones for Year 1 (over).

ONE Required course (3 cu)		Term	CRN	Year taken
CHEP 817 Advanced Research Seminar in Population Health			TBD	YR 1 or2
ONE Required Advanced research methods course (3 cu): quantitative (CHEP 801, 806 or 808 or equivalent) or qualitative (CHEP 818 or equivalent). Approval by Graduate Program Chair required. CHEP Advanced research courses (some are not offered each year):				
CHEP 801 Epidemiology 2		2	31001	
CHEP 806 Applied Statistical Methods for Follow Up Data		1	84192	
CHEP 808 Complex Survey Data Analysis			TBD	
CHEP 816 (86035) Population Health Intervention Research*		1	86035	
CHEP 818 Advanced Qualitative Health Research Methods in Population and Public Health		2	27155	
CHEP 820.3 An Introduction to Critical Realism its Methodology and Practice*		3	TBA	
*One of these courses can be taken as your advanced methods course if you have already taken a graduate level biostatistics or qualitative methods course and your supervisor agrees.				
TWO Electives Supporting your Research Area (6 cu). Dept. choices (may not be offered each yr.):				
Term 1:		Term 2 :		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">CHEP 806 (84192) Applied Statistical Methods for Follow Up DataCHEP 810 Advanced Topics Clinical Trials (expected fall 2024)CHEP 816 Population Health Intervention Research		<ul style="list-style-type: none">CHEP 801.3 (31001) Epidemiology IICHEP 805. 3 (26513) BiostatisticsCHEP 818 (27155) Advanced Qualitative Health Research In Population and Public HealthCHEP 819 (283415) Colonization and Its Impact on Indigenous Peoples’ Health and HealingCHEP 898 (26905) Environment and Community Health		
Term 3: Spring Term (April, May, &/or June)				
<ul style="list-style-type: none">CHEP 815 Food Systems & Community Health (Spring 2025)CHEP 820.3 An Introduction to Critical Realism its Methodology and Practice (TBD)CHEP 898: Epidemics and the Politics of Global health (TBD)				
CHEP 990 Seminar (terms 1 & 2)	1	81490		
*MANDATORY throughout program. Web sections available if residency met.	2	21507		
CHEP 996 Research - Thesis (terms 1, 2, spr-sum)	1	81126		
*MANDATORY registration each of these terms.	2	21081		
	Spring	40203		
	Su	60165		
GPS 960 Ethics and Integrity (on-line pass)	1	86803		
	2	27247		
GPS 961 – Human Research (on-line pass)	1	87606		
	2	27248		

*Annually attend (& participate at least once) in CHEP Research Day (Feb) & CoM Life Science poster day.

Program Milestones: PhD (completion in four years)

	Milestones
YEAR 1 Term 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coursework, including preparatory classes if needed. Depending on academic preparation, students may be required to take a qualifying exam in their first term which consists of them taking required courses from term 1 and obtaining 80% or higher on each of their required courses. These courses will be in addition to the regular Ph.D. course load. Additional courses may also be taken by PhD Students on the recommendation of their supervisor. <p>Possible preparatory Classes:</p> <p>TERM 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHEP 821.2 (01): Introduction to Community and Population Health Equity: Sept 6-18_ CRN 90363 CHEP 822.2 (01): Introduction to Community and Population Health Research Methods: Sept. 20- Oct. 3_ CRN 90364 CHEP 823.2 (01): Introduction to Health Care and Public Health Systems: Oct. 5-18_ CRN 90365 CHEP 800.3 (02): Introduction to Epidemiology and Biostatistics: CHEP 800: Oct. 20-Nov. 9_ CRN 90366 CHEP 824.2 (01): Qualitative and Alternative Research Skills in Community and Population Health: Nov. 20-Dec 4 CRN 90367 <p>TERM 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHEP 805 Biostatistics (Pre-requisite is a statistics course. For a refresher/preparation a basic statistics course online is available at: https://www.coursera.org/learn/basic-statistics (CRN 26513) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required non-credit CHEP 996, 990, GPS 960, 961
Term 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other coursework & registration in CHEP 996, 990
Term 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advisory committee meeting to approve pre-proposal Registration in CHEP 996
YEAR 2 Term 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remaining coursework & registration in CHEP 996, 990. CHEP 817 (required) may be taken in the first or second year to prepare for the comprehensives Advisory committee meeting to approve proposal Advisory committee meeting to discuss comprehensive exam <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ thesis committee examiners identified ✓ relevant advanced method and content/theory identified ✓ plan to develop reading list in place
Term 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare for comprehensive exam Registration in CHEP 996, 990
Term 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensive exam Registration in CHEP 996
YEAR 3 Term 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ethics approval Registration in CHEP 996, 990
Term 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research and writing Registration in CHEP 996, 990
Term 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research and writing Registration in CHEP 996
YEAR 4 Term 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advisory committee meeting to review progress Research and writing Registration in CHEP 996, 990.
Term 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research and writing Present at CHEP Student Research Day Registration in CHEP 996, 990.
Term 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advisory committee to approve thesis for defence Registration in CHEP 996 Thesis defence

Supports for Graduate Student Progress:

- **Student-Supervisor-Agreement** & the **CH& E Graduate Student Handbook** located on the CH&E Department Website at: <https://medicine.usask.ca/departments/schools-divisions/che.php#CurrentStudents>
- College of Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies: <https://cgps.usask.ca/policy-and-procedure/index.php>
- To review courses offered by other depts' please search "Registration" in PAWs.

Additional Skill building one credit unit courses (below) and workshops are offered by Clinical Research Support Unit (CRSU):

Term 1:			Term 2		
CHEP 898.1: SAS_CRN # 90406	Sept 12, 14, 19	1-4 p.m.	CHEP 898: STATA_CRN # 31186	Jan. 16, 18, 23	1-4 p.m.
CHEP 898.1: Data Mgmt_CRN #90408	Sept 26, 28, Oct 3	1-4 p.m.	CHEP 898: NVivo_CRN# 31187	Feb. 6, 8, 13	1-4 p.m.
CHEP 898.1: SPSS_CRN #90409	Oct. 10, 12, 17	1-4 p.m.	CHEP 898: Data Mgmt_CRN # 31188	March 5, 7, 12	1-4 p.m.



UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

College of Medicine

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY
HEALTH AND EPIDEMIOLOGY
MEDICINE.USASK.CA

Media Release Consent Form

I hereby grant the Department of Community Health and Epidemiology (CH&E) in the College of Medicine at the University of Saskatchewan permission to use images and/or recordings of me for educational or promotional purposes. I understand images and/or recordings of me may be edited, copied, exhibited, published, posted, stored, or distributed in any of the wide variety of formats and media available to CH&E. I further understand images and/or recordings of me may be used within an unrestricted geographical area.

This permission includes the right of CH&E to provide images and/or recordings of me to a third party for the purpose of marketing CH&E programs or for use in annual reports. The third party has the right to edit and publish such images in promotional materials.

I waive the right to inspect or approve the finished product wherein my likeness appears. Additionally, I waive any right to royalties or other compensation arising from related use of images and/or recordings of me.

Personal Information (* = required)

First and Last Name*	Email Address*
Phone	I am a: <input type="checkbox"/> Student <input type="checkbox"/> Staff member <input type="checkbox"/> Faculty member Other _____

Publication of Names

In certain circumstances, such as the department newsletter or announcing successful defenses on social media, names may accompany the images and/or recordings.

Options for publication of names (choose one)*:

- ☐ Use of full name (first and last) ☐ Use of first name, last initial ☐ Please do not use my name

Media Permissions

I understand images and/or recordings of me may be used for:

- *Internal media purposes* - department newsletter, educational presentations or courses, posters
- *External media purposes* - website, brochures, conference or informational presentations, videos (YouTube), annual reports, and/or social media in connection with the activities of CH&E or for promoting, publicizing, or explaining CH&E or its activities.

Options for media permissions (choose one from each category)*:

Internal:

- ☐ I grant permission for use of images and/or recordings of me for internal media purposes as outlined above.
☐ I do not grant permission for use of images and/or recordings of me for internal media purposes as outlined above.

External:

- ☐ I grant permission for use of images and/or recordings of me for external media purposes as outlined above.
☐ I do not grant permission for use of images and/or recordings of me for external media purposes as outlined above.

I certify that I am of legal age (18) and have the right to contract in my own name. I acknowledge I have read and fully understand the above authorization, release, and agreement prior to its execution. I hereby release any and all claims against CH&E and its employees utilizing this material for educational or promotional purposes.

Signature*	Date*
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1. **To access medical care, a student needs to apply/register for a provincial health card.**
 - Eligibility for health benefits: <https://www.ehealthsask.ca/residents/health-cards/Pages/Eligibility-for-Health-Benefits.aspx>
 - How to apply: <https://www.ehealthsask.ca/residents/health-cards/Pages/Apply-for-a-Health-Card.aspx>
 - Online application link: <https://skhealthcard.health.gov.sk.ca/>
2. **What documents are needed to apply for a health card?**
 - Supporting documents needed:
<https://www.ehealthsask.ca/residents/Documents/Supporting%20Documentation%20Required%20to%20Accompany%20Your%20Health%20Card%20Application.pdf>
3. **What medical care is completely covered with a health card?**
<https://students.usask.ca/health/health-plans.php#AccessinghealthcareinSaskatchewan>
4. **What medical services are not free?**
<https://students.usask.ca/health/health-plans.php#AccessinghealthcareinSaskatchewan>
Note: They may be partially covered through your health plan.
5. **Where can medical records be viewed after investigations/tests are done?**
 - Sign up for MySaskHealthRecord: <https://www.ehealthsask.ca/Pages/default.aspx>
6. **How does one get health insurance?**
 - The Graduate Students' Association (GSA) has partnered with the health and dental insurance provider [Studentcare](#) to offer graduate students health and dental insurance coverage.
 - Office located in Place Riel.
7. **Is it important to have a family doctor?**
 - <https://www.thestar.com/life/2020/02/14/many-millennials-rely-on-walk-in-clinics-but-is-it-important-to-have-a-family-doctor.html>
 - <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/new-immigrants/new-life-canada/health-care/find-doctors.html>
8. **Where can one access care at the university?**
 - Student Wellness Centre: <https://students.usask.ca/health/centres/wellness-centre.php>
 - Nursing services at Student Wellness Centre: <https://students.usask.ca/health/nursing-services.php>

9. Can one access services at the Student Wellness Centre even if they do not have a health card?

- Yes, however there may be a charge for your visit with a physician (\$30.00) and if you require any lab tests (blood work/urine sample) you will incur a charge for this. You may be able to submit your receipts to your personal health insurance plan.

10. How does one access care over weekends/when the university is closed?

- Urgent care: <https://bridgecitymediclinic.com/> (Provided on the Student Wellness website: If you need to see a doctor after hours, the Mediclinic, located at 3333 8th Street is able to provide urgent care for our Student Health Services patients on a walk in basis. Open until 10 p.m. on weekdays and 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. on weekends and holidays.)
- Other emergency contacts on Student Wellness Centre website:
<https://students.usask.ca/health/nursing-services.php>
- Emergency departments (locations):
<https://www.saskatoonhealthregion.ca/patients/Pages/Emergency-Care.aspx>
- Counselling services:
https://www.studentcare.ca/rte/en/UniversityofSaskatchewangraduatestudentsGSA_EmpowerMe_EmpowerMe

11. How does one apply for a provincial (non-driver) photo ID?

- <https://sgi.sk.ca/photo-id>