



Institute of Health Policy, Management & Evaluation
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

Health Services Research (HSR) MSc/PhD Program: Graduate Student Supervision Webinar

Friday May 12th, 2017
10:00-12:00 PM

IHPME

www.ihpme.utoronto.ca

Today's Agenda

- Presentation
 - Background
 - Application processing and matching process
 - PAS Lead contact info
 - Admission criteria
 - Student funding
 - Your student has been admitted-now what?
 - Student & Supervisor responsibilities as set by SGS
 - Key milestones in your student's course of study
 - Thesis requirements
 - Problem solving
- Q & A

Background- Application review & selection process

- Applications were due November 15, 2016
 - Initial review & triage by Primary Area of Study (PAS) Leads in early December
- Triaged applicants (i.e. those that met admission criteria in terms of GPA and who were deemed to be of suitable quality as regards references and letter of application) referred to most likely faculty “matches” for review based on:
 - Applicant interests and/or identification of potential supervisors by name
 - Supervisor resources –capacity to take on additional students and ability to provide financial support
- In addition to those referred to them, potential supervisors were invited to review all eligible applications at <https://apply.sgs.utoronto.ca/gradadmin/Default.aspx> using their UTORID and to identify any students in whom they had an interest.

Background continued...

- From January to March/April:
 - Interviews between applicants and interested faculty take place and matches identified.
 - List of students for potential admission compiled by each PAS Lead
 - Admissions Committee which is composed of all the PAS Leads as well as the Graduate Coordinator and Program Director meet to review student list and rankings

PAS Leads

- **Organization & Management**
(Whitney Berta: whit.bertha@utoronto.ca)
- **Health Policy** (Fiona Miller fiona.miller@utoronto.ca on sabbatical 2017/2018 will be replaced from July 1, 2017 by Rob Schwartz: Robert.Schwartz@utoronto.ca)
- **Outcomes & Evaluation**
(Lusine Abrahamyan: lusine.abrahamyan@theta.utoronto.ca and Katie Dainty: daintyk@smh.ca)
- **Health Informatics** (Emily Seto: emily.seto@utoronto.ca)
- **Health Economics** (Audrey Laporte: audrey.laporte@utoronto.ca on sabbatical 2017/2018 will be replaced by Peter Coyte: peter.coyte@utoronto.ca)
- **Health Technology Assessment**
(Beate Sander: beate.sander@oahpp.ca and Wendy Ungar: wendy.ungar@sickkids.ca)

Admission criteria

- Not all applicants matched to a Faculty member are admitted
- **Selection is highly competitive and includes consideration of:**
 - Excellence of the applicant
 - Match with a faculty member with appropriate expertise to supervise the student in their area of interest
 - IHPME's budget for student funding
 - In the case of marginal candidates for admission consideration given to balance of admissions across PAS
 - Funding contributed by supervising faculty as this affects the overall number of applicants that can be admitted
 - Faculty stage of career and existing number of students—with some preference given to faculty in the early stages of their career

IHPME's funding obligation

- Students accepted to the full-time program receive full funding-1 year for MSc and 4 years for PhD
- The annual funding rate is \$15,000 base (\$20,530 for international student) plus \$7,030 tuition-base funding amount is expected to increase in the next academic year
- Funding may come from IHPME, a faculty grant or a combination thereof
- If a student receives an award (e.g. CIHR, SSHRC, etc.) it is applied toward the funding obligation but the student is given a \$5000 bonus
- Students in IHPME are not required to work as an RA or TA to receive funding package
- IHPME faces funding constraints related to volume targets which affect the available budget

Your student has been admitted –now what?

- You will be notified by the Graduate Assistant that a student(s) to whom you had been matched and had agreed to supervise in the coming academic year has (have) submitted a signed letter of admission (so that you know to expect them in September)
- You should then arrange to meet with the student either in person, by phone or by Skype to have an initial meeting in advance of the in-take meeting that will be scheduled with you, the student and the PAS Lead in Spring/early Summer.
- The PAS Lead will be in touch to arrange a time for the in-take meeting-usually with the student and then asking the student to connect with you to arrange a suitable time.

Initial Discussions (i.e. Pre Intake Meeting with PAS)-

- In initial supervisor/student discussions, you should also cover the following topics:
 - Expected/preferred frequency of contact
 - Preferred communication method (e.g., e-mail, voice mail, in person)
 - Timelines for each stage of the work (broad terms the milestones –see below)
 - Frequency of submission of draft work (in writing or through presentation), and lead-times that you require
 - Type & timing of feedback expected

Initial Discussions-continued

- Additional topics include:
 - Whether students work in the office or at home/library
 - Hours of work –i.e. the student should expect to be working between 40-60 hours per week while in the program
 - Monitoring, evaluation and reporting of progress
 - Annual progress meeting between supervisor, student and PAS Lead
 - Ongoing committee meetings
 - Additional training, courses, fieldwork requirements
 - Publications, conferences & availability of funding for travel and registration at conferences

In-take meeting

- All new students to the HSR Program and their supervisors meet with the PAS Lead in the Spring/early Summer – sometimes a bit later for the very large PAS such as Outcomes and Evaluation that have a large number of students.
- At that meeting, the student will be expected to bring along three forms which will have been sent to them via e-mail in advance of the meeting: 1) the Memorandum of Understanding (discussed below), 2) The Annual Progress Form <http://ihpme.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/HSR-Progress-Report-FILL-IN.pdf> and 3) Declaration of employment and awards form.

In-take meeting

- There will be a discussion about courses the student will take in the Fall, Winter and Spring of the upcoming academic year.
- The course plan will be recorded on the Annual Progress form and included in the student's file as well as key deadlines
- This form also contains a check-list so student and faculty can confirm that they are aware of the ethics and intellectual property guidelines and student supervisor responsibilities (MOU) etc.
- This form is completed at every subsequent annual meeting in order to document the student's progress and timelines to completion.
- The annual meeting serves as an added check that deadlines e.g. for transfer, proposal defense etc. are met and that the student is in compliance with program requirements

In-take meeting

- The student will be required to complete, sign and submit the declaration of employment and awards form each year.
- The funding provided to the student is conditional on the student not having outside income above \$24,000 per year.
- This form is their testament that they are in compliance with that rule-if they are not in compliance they forfeit the funding support.

IHPME Supervisor Responsibilities:

- Provide guidance and support throughout course of study
- Assist students in the selection of their courses and their thesis/dissertation topic
- Meet with their student and their PAS Lead annually
- Meet with their student a minimum of 6 times a year; at times this may include entire committee
- Provide ongoing mentoring on studies and career path
- Encourage presentations at conferences and preparation of manuscripts for publication in refereed academic journals

IHPME Supervisor Responsibilities

- In addition, Supervisors are expected to:
 - Provide timely feedback
 - Mutually agree on an appropriate time frame for materials reviewed (SGS specifies no longer than 2 weeks)
 - Ensure, with their PAS Lead, that there is a supervisory plan in place during any sabbaticals and/or leaves of absence
 - For additional tips see: <http://ihpme.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Teaching-Supervision-for-Faculty.pdf> and <http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/innovations/bestpractices/Pages/Section-4--Responsibilities-of-the-Student,-Supervisor,-and-Supervisory-Committee.aspx>

IHPME Student Responsibilities:

- Complete all program requirements (including GradSIS, annual PAS meeting and thesis committee meeting forms, proposal defence forms)
- Meet with their supervisor on a regular basis
- Stay in regular contact with their supervisor and ensure supervisor is aware of any events or difficulties that might impact degree completion
- Provide a reliable means of communication (through email, telephone, or other) throughout the degree program
- Observe agreed upon timeframes for the submission of draft work. Students must also commit to allowing their supervisor sufficient time for review of submitted material

<http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/innovations/bestpractices/Pages/Section-4--Responsibilities-of-the-Student,-Supervisor,-and-Supervisory-Committee.aspx>

IHPME Student-Supervisor MOU

- To assist, IHPME has developed a template for a Student-Supervisor Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to be signed by both parties
- The form summarizes the responsibilities outlined above
- It will be e-mailed to the student in advance of the in-take meeting
- The MOU will be signed at the in-take meeting and will be included in the student's file.

HPME Student-Supervisor MOU

- MOU highlights: *Supervisor*
 - The supervisor will ensure appropriate membership of the student's thesis committee
 - The supervisor will be available to meet regularly ...
 - The supervisor will facilitate funding from a research grant, if possible
 - The supervisor will ensure timely feedback to the student. Normally, written work should be returned within 10-15 working days

HPME Student-Supervisor MOU

- MOU highlights: *Student*
 - The student is responsible for keeping in touch with the supervisor and providing progress reports
 - The student is responsible for preparing and submitting the thesis research for relevant ethics approval
 - The student is responsible for submitting their work to their supervisor and committee
 - The student is responsible for indicating how advice and suggestions from the supervisor and committee have been integrated into the thesis work

IHPME Student-Supervisor MOU

- MOU highlights: joint discussion
 - Ownership and use of data
 - A plan for presentations and publications based on the thesis
 - Authorship protocols for presentations and publications
 - The MOU form can be found here:
<http://ihpme.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/memo-of-understanding-2011.pdf>

Intellectual Property

- Strongly advise that you visit SGS guidelines regarding Intellectual Property
 - According to SGS, “Intellectual property issues should be understood within the framework of research policies of the University of Toronto. It is the responsibility of every graduate student and graduate supervisor to be aware of these policies and to be sure that they are engaged in research in a manner that is consistent with them.”

<https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/currentstudents/Pages/Intellectual-Property-Guidelines.aspx>

A Few More Details

- Together, the Supervisor and Student:
 - Establish a thesis committee
 - Develop a plan for the thesis project
 - Organize the PhD proposal defense
 - Ensure that any substantive changes to the thesis proposal are discussed with, and approved by, the thesis committee
 - Develop a realistic timeline for thesis completion
 - Record of progress form must be **completed for each committee meeting** and submitted to the Program Assistant for inclusion in the student's file (see <http://ihpme.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/thesis-report-IHPME.pdf>)

Milestones – MSc*

* for the MSc/PhD Transfer Program timelines differ

■ Term 1

- Course work
 - Minimum of 6 half-year courses (2 primary area of study; 2 statistics/methods; 2 electives)
<http://ihpme.utoronto.ca/academics/rd/hsr-mscphd/hsr-degree-requirements/>
- Populate Thesis Committee *in consultation with your Supervisor* (min of 2 members including your Supervisor)
- Beginning in first Fall term, develop draft thesis proposal in consultation with your Supervisor and Thesis Committee (meet every other month)

■ Term 2

- Complete any remaining coursework
- Complete Thesis Proposal & obtain committee approval
- Seek approval from Ethics Review Board
www.research.utoronto.ca/for-researchers-administrators/ethics/human/

Milestones – MSc*

* for the MSc/PhD Transfer Program timelines differ

■ Term 3

- Collect & analyze data
 - Write Thesis
 - Review guidelines for “Producing your thesis” at <https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/currentstudents/Pages/Producing-Your-Thesis.aspx>
 - Defend Thesis
-
- Additional helpful details and resources are available at the School of Graduate Studies (SGS) website www.sgs.utoronto.ca/Pages/default.aspx

A Note about Transfer students

- Typically students that wish to enter the PhD program but have a non-thesis Masters degree (i.e. course based) or research experience in place of a Masters—IHPME has budgeted for these students as though they were PhD students –so account has been taken of the potential 4 year funding obligation
- On rare occasions, exceptional Masters students may be considered for transfer to the PhD -has implications for the budget as no a priori allowance made for the switch in terms funding obligation
- Transfer students enter as Masters students and are required to complete and perform well in 5 courses (B+ min and A- average overall)
- They must then complete a transfer application including a letter of support from their supervisor (<http://ihpme.utoronto.ca/academics/rd/hsr-mscphd/transfers/>).
- The application package is submitted for review and approval to the Program Director
- SGS requires transfer no later than April of the 2nd year **but IHPME guideline is that students will transfer within the first year of admission—the same expectation applies to part-time students**

Milestones – PhD

Years 1 & 2

- Course work

<http://ihpme.utoronto.ca/academics/rd/hsr-mscphd/hsr-degree-requirements/>

- Traditional versus Multi-paper thesis:

<http://ihpme.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/multipaper-thesis.pdf>

Minimum of 10 half-year courses

- HSR Program required courses (**NB: there are also PAS required courses**):

- HAD5772H - Intermediate Statistics for Health Services Researchers (or equivalent e.g. Biostatistics II or Health Econometrics I)
- Comprehensive Exam/Course
- HAD5011H - Canada's Health Care System
- HAD6760H - Introduction to HSR Theory and Methods
- HAD6770H - Applying HSR Methods Continuation of HAD6760H

Milestones – PhD

- Year 3
 - Defend Dissertation Research Proposal (early Fall; sometimes Summer Year 2)
 - Seek approval from Ethics Review Board
 - Begin data collection & analysis

- Year 4
 - Complete data collection & analysis
 - Write Dissertation
 - Consult with your Committee re: appropriate Internal & External Examiners
 - Defend Thesis

A note about course substitutions

- Any changes to the required course set –either through substitution with another course or by crediting a course previously completed must be reviewed and approved in the first instance by the PAS Lead and subsequently by the Program Director.
- The approvals must be obtained in writing and included in the student files along with the syllabi of the courses to be exchanged or credited.

What Makes for an Acceptable Thesis?

MSc Thesis

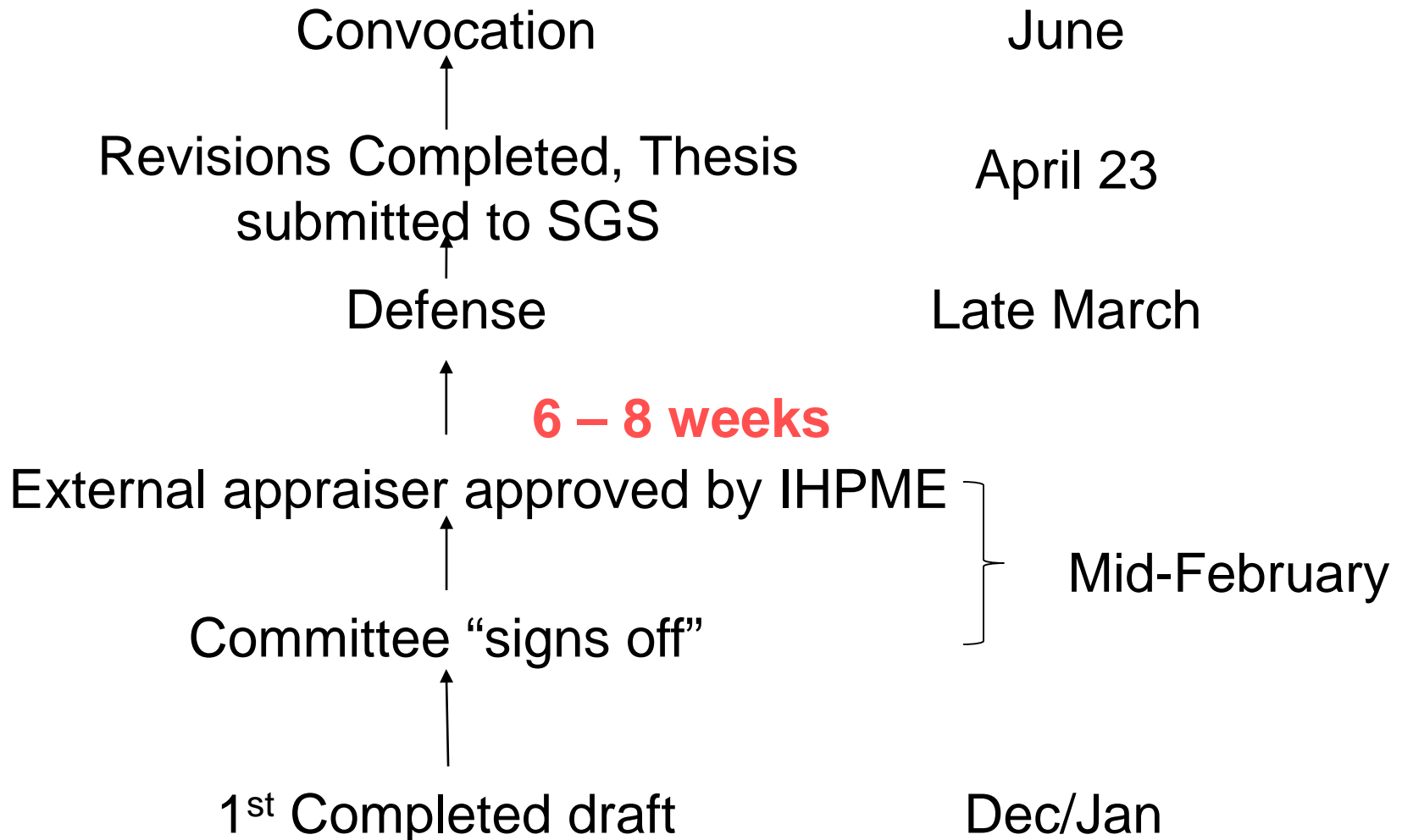
- Focus on HSR
- Proposal Approved by UofT ERB
- Grounded in extant theory & research
- Practical Implications
- Feasibly completed in 6 months -1 year

PhD Dissertation

- Focus on HSR
- Proposal successfully defended and approved by UofT ERB
- Grounded in extant theory & research
- May adhere to traditional format, or 3-paper format
- Strives to make both Practical & Theoretical Contributions
- Feasibly completed in 2 years
- To see sample dissertations go to T-space and search on Institute for Health Policy Management and Evaluation:

<https://tspace.library.utoronto.ca/handle/1807/9945>

Preparing for Thesis Defense



Preparing for defense-detailed process

- For Masters students:
- http://ihpme.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Top13Questions_MSc_students_2017.pdf
- For doctoral students:
- http://ihpme.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Top14Questions-PhD_students_2017.pdf

Problem Solving

- According to SGS:
 - Take early action. ... it is all too easy to avoid confronting difficult situations and hope things will get better. ...
 - Try to be objective and rational. Find the root cause of the problem—it may not be what is obviously being presented.
 - ... solutions often need compromise and flexibility.
 - Someone else has undoubtedly had a similar problem: don't feel alone. Communicate, seek advice, and take advantage of others' experience.
 - Seek resolution at as low a level as possible ... going higher generally means more time, complexity, and cost.
 - Remember that there is a real power imbalance in the supervisory relationship: students may not feel able to speak freely ...
 - If a problem cannot be resolved between student and supervisor, either or both can consult committee members, the graduate coordinator of the program, the chair or director of the graduate unit, and SGS staff ...

Student support

- The University of Toronto offers a wide array of support services for students including writing workshops, health and wellness, counselling and accessibility services:
- <http://www.future.utoronto.ca/current-students/student-services-campus-life/student-services-support>
- <http://writing.utoronto.ca/support/english-language-support/>

*******The Handbook*******

- The HSR Handbook is an absolutely vital resource for you and your students:
<http://ihpme.utoronto.ca/academics/rd/hsr-mscphd/handbook/>
- It contains information about degree requirements, all the required forms and key deadlines etc. etc.
- Although students are told about the Handbook at orientation, it is helpful to have that message reinforced by supervisors.

Your questions?

For your convenience, this webinar presentation is available for download on the [IHPME Faculty Handbook](#) webpage:

<http://ihpme.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/HSR-supervisor-webinar-May-12-2017-rev.pdf>