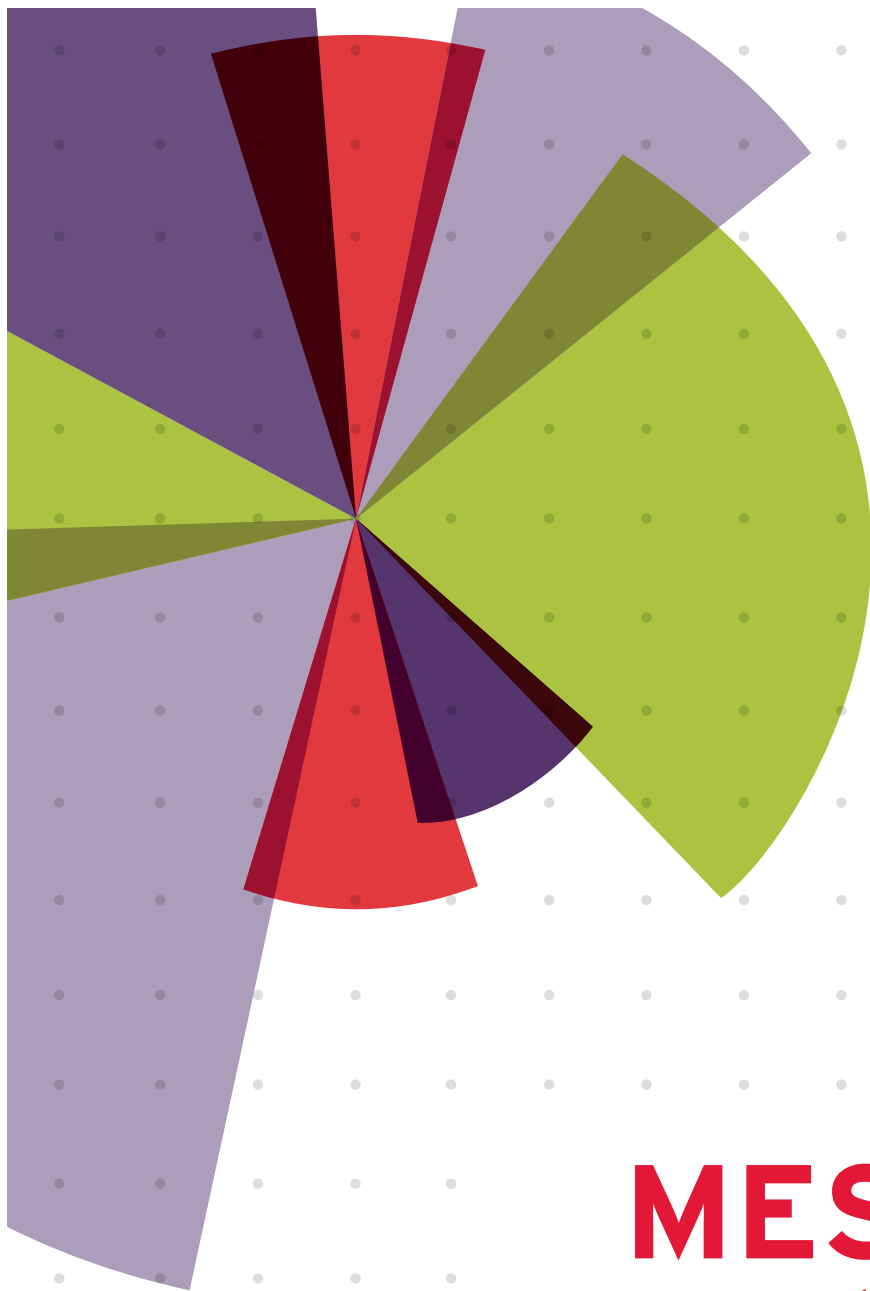


faculty of  
environmental  
studies



# MES student handbook

2011-2012

Challenge what is. Imagine what could be.

This Handbook is intended to assist students throughout the MES Program. This document should be read in addition to existing regulations governing the MES program available at <http://www.yorku.ca/fes/resources/acadreg/>

## IMPORTANT DATES—GRADUATE ACADEMIC CALENDAR 2011-2012

	Fall 2011	Winter 2012	Summer 2012
Registration and enrolment begins for all students	June 1/Mon	Nov 14/Mon	Apr 2/Mon
Opening day of term	Sep 1/Thu	Jan 1/Sun	May 1/Tue
Orientation for incoming graduate students	Aug. 29 - 31		
Course consultation, advising and enrolment	Aug 29-Sep 7	Dec 7 - 22	Apr 2-30
Registration and enrolment for incoming students	Aug 31/Wed		
Last date for all students to register & enrol in courses after which a \$200.00 late fee will be charged	Sep 7/Wed	Dec 22/Thu	Apr 30/Mon
FES graduate courses begin	Sep 7/Wed	Jan 3/Tue	May 2/Wed
Last date for students to change course enrolments	Sep 20/Tue	Jan 16/Mon	May 15/Tue
Automatic withdrawal from the Faculty of unregistered graduate students.	Sep 30/Fri	Jan 31/Tue	May 31/Thu
Last date for submission of incomplete course work from previous term	Oct 14/Fri	Feb 13/Mon	Jun 8/Fri
Block Week: no regular graduate classes	Oct 10-14	Feb 20-24	Jun 11-15
Last date for Course Directors to change grades of Incomplete from previous term (If a grade change is not submitted, the I automatically becomes a U.)	Oct 28/Fri	Feb 27/Mon	Jun 22/Fri
Incoming students' initial plan of study due to Advisor for review process.	Nov 8/Tue		
Application for award of MES degree for deposit of examinable Major Project, Major Paper (Note: if you are doing a Thesis please check deadline with OSAS as it is different).	Nov 30/Wed	Mar 30/Fri	Jul 31/Tue
FES graduate courses end – all course material due	Dec 6/Tue	Apr 2/Mon	Jul 31/Tue
Last date to hold General Examinations for all MES students	Dec 16/Fri	Apr 27/Fri	Aug 31/Fri
MES Final Examinations	Jan 20 & 27	Apr 30 & May 1	Aug 30 & Sep 4 and Sep 7 (if required)
Closing day of term	Dec 31/Sat	Apr 30/Mon	Aug 31/Fri
Course grades & evaluations due from Course Directors	Jan 6/Fri	May 4/Fri	Aug 31/Fri

## SPECIAL DATES AND HOLIDAYS

### FALL TERM 2011

Labour Day	Sep 5/Mon
Thanksgiving	Oct 10/Mon
Fall Convocation	Oct 12-13
Christmas Eve	Dec 24/Sat
Christmas Day	Dec 25/Sun
Boxing Day	Dec 26/Mon

### WINTER TERM 2012

New Year's Day	Jan 1/Sun
Family Day	Feb 20/Mon
Good Friday	Apr 6/Fri

### SUMMER TERM 2012

Victoria Day	May 21/Mon
Convocation	June 8, 11-16
Canada Day	Jul 1/Sun
Civic Holiday	Aug 6/Mon

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## INTRODUCTION

The Masters in Environmental Studies (MES) Program in the Faculty of Environmental Studies (FES) is self-directed and interdisciplinary. In place of a fixed set of curriculum offerings, the MES approach to learning supports students' ownership and responsibility for their studies, fostering program coherence and depth through the plan of study. The plan of study anchors a student-centred learning model that allows students to define both substantive areas of study and approaches to learning with the support of their faculty advisor. Since its inception in 1968, FES has taken an interdisciplinary approach to the study of natural, social, and built environments. For this reason, the range of subject matter addressed in plans of study over the Faculty's history has been as diverse as students themselves.

This handbook is intended to assist students in defining their MES program and finding their path through each of its stages and transitions.

## 1. THE MES PROGRAM

The MES program has three progressive stages:

### **MES I** (term 1)

Preparation of the initial plan of study in parallel with coursework or other structured learning activities supporting the exploration of the area of concentration.

### **MES II** (terms 2-3)

Consolidation of essential knowledge within the area of concentration through coursework, field experience, and other learning activities, culminating in preparation of the final plan of study and major research proposal.

### **MES III** (terms 4-6)

Completion of the learning outlined in the plan of study and completion of the major research paper, project, portfolio, or thesis, demonstrating competence and mastery within the area of concentration.

Details of each stage are presented in the following Sections. A summary of the program stages is offered on the back cover of this handbook.

### **Credits towards the MES degree**

The MES degree requires 72 credits. Students accumulate these credits through several means: taking courses (typically 3 credits each or 6 credits for workshops); individual directed studies (typically 3 to 12 credits) or field experience placements (also 3-12 credits, no more than 24 credits in total); and MES III major paper, project, portfolio or thesis work (typically 12 credits in each of terms 5 and 6). 'Residual credits' are granted if a student completes all of his or her learning objectives with less than 72 credits. If applicable, a student should apply for residual credits at his or her MES II-III exam.

### **Timelines for degree completion**

The MES degree is designed as a full-time, six-term, two-year program. Graduate students should be registered (i.e., accepting fees) and be enrolled in courses during Fall, Winter, and Summer terms until completion of their program.

All incoming MES students must register as full-time students for Term 1. Students are expected to continue to be registered full-time (9 to 12 credits per term) throughout their program. Part-time study (3 to 6 credits per term) is possible only under exceptional circumstances – interested students must petition for this option at the Office of Student and Academic Services (OSAS). Students who require more than 6 terms (2 years) of full-time study automatically become part-time for the remainder of their program. Students may not accumulate more than 72 credits total.

### **MES advisor**

Every incoming MES student is assigned a faculty advisor. While matching students' interests and faculty members' areas of expertise is the goal, this is not always possible. Consequently, it is possible to change advisor, but only after the approval of the initial plan of study. To change advisor, students must complete

a 'Change of Advisor' form (available at <http://www.yorku.ca/fes/students/current/mes/MESForms.htm>), obtain the signature of the proposed new advisor, and submit the completed and signed form to OSAS. Later in the program, students will need a major research supervisor, who may be someone other than their advisor (see below for more).

### **Student dossiers**

A record of each student's MES studies is kept in a dossier filed in OSAS. The dossier includes the student's plan of study and its periodic updates, as well as records of all examinations of the plan of study in formal meetings with the advisor. It also contains the student's enrolment history, grades and qualitative evaluations from each course and learning activity. Students are welcome to review their dossiers in OSAS. Prior to the MES II-III exam, Graduate Student Program Advisor Peggy McGrath will meet with each student to review the dossier and check that the information is accurate and complete (grades, credits, etc).

### **Grading**

Graduate courses in the MES Program use a Pass/Unsatisfactory grading system to encourage interdisciplinary exploration and creativity. Students do not receive letter grades for their work and official York transcripts show grades of Pass (P), Withdrawn (W), or Unsatisfactory (U) only. A Pass grade is equivalent to a 'B' letter grade or better; anything less is Unsatisfactory.

Graduate students are expected to complete all course work by the last day of classes each term. If course work is unfinished at the end of the term, a student may request an extension from the course director and may receive a temporary grade of "Incomplete" (I) for the course. The student must complete the work by the due date specified in the FES Graduate Academic Calendar for the next term (see page 2). Students are not permitted to carry more than 3 credits of Incomplete into the next academic term.

If applying for external funding or to a PhD program that requires a letter grade, MES students may request a letter grade evaluation of a course from the course director, or of their entire dossier by contacting OSAS. The Awards and Academic Review Committee will review the student's dossier and assign an overall letter grade or Grade Point Average (GPA) for their work throughout the program, based on all evaluation forms.

### **Academic honesty**

All York students are subject to policies regarding academic honesty as set out by the Senate of York University and by the Faculty of Environmental Studies. Conduct that violates the ethical or legal standards of the University community may result in serious consequences. Students must complete the Academic Integrity Tutorial ([http://www.yorku.ca/tutorial/academic\\_integrity](http://www.yorku.ca/tutorial/academic_integrity)) and are encouraged to read the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty (<http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/legislation/senate/acadhone.htm>) in order to be very clear on the meaning of these rules.

## **2. ACADEMIC OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN THE MES DEGREE**

Students enrolled in the MES program have the additional options of pursuing a specialized graduate program in planning or law, or a graduate diploma in environmental/sustainability education, business and the environment, or another area.

### **Planning programs**

Planning in FES addresses the full range of urban, suburban, rural, regional, or global environments and scales. Planning students who want their degree professionally recognized need to declare their intent to apply for OPPI membership in the plan of study. The title of the plan's area of concentration must include the word 'planning.' At least one of the plan's components must focus on planning. Planning students are required to fulfill certain planning course requirements but are also expected to take courses from the wider MES course offerings. For the planning program handbook (and planning checklist), see <http://www.yorku.ca/fes/students/current/mes/docs/FESPlanningHandbook.pdf>

Upon obtaining an MES degree in planning, graduates may apply for provisional membership in the Ontario Professional Planners Institute (OPPI) and the Canadian Institute of Planners (CIP), and work on completing the requirements towards full membership in OPPI/CIP. For more information on OPPI and CIP, see <http://www.ontarioplanners.on.ca> and <http://www.cip-icu.ca>.

### **MES/JD joint program in Environmental Studies and Law**

This unique program brings together the leadership in interdisciplinary environmental studies of FES and the strength in social justice, environmental, planning and aboriginal law of Osgoode Hall Law School. The purpose of this joint program is to encourage the integration of these two critical fields of study and to prepare students for a range of opportunities in environmental affairs, law or planning.

The MES/JD joint program offers students the opportunity to complete both the MES and JD degrees in four years, approximately one year less than it would take to complete the two degrees separately. Graduates of the program have gone on to a variety of positions in government, private law firms, non-profit organizations, business, academia and other settings. For more information, see the MES/JD handbook available at <http://www.yorku.ca/fes/students/current/mes/docs/MESJDHandbook.pdf>

### **Graduate diploma in environmental/sustainability education**

The graduate diploma in environmental/sustainability education is offered jointly by the York University graduate programs in Education and Environmental Studies. It is designed to provide opportunities for graduate students and educators in schools, community organizations, cultural institutions and advocacy groups to develop expertise and to participate in research, theory, and practice in the field of environmental and sustainability education. For more information, see <http://www.yorku.ca/fes/students/current/mes/EnvironmentalSustainabilityEducation.htm>

### **Graduate diploma in business and the environment**

This diploma is offered jointly by FES and the Schulich School of Business. As part of either the MES or MBA degree, the diploma in business and the environment provides the perspectives, understanding, tools, skills and recognition for York graduates to become leaders in the field of business and sustainability. For more information, see <http://www.yorku.ca/fes/students/current/mes/BusinessAndTheEnvironment.htm>.

Other York graduate diplomas are also available to MES students. For more information, see <http://www.yorku.ca/web/futurestudents/graduate/programs/graduateDiplomas.html>

## **3. THE PLAN OF STUDY**

The plan of study forms the basis of the MES learning model. Each student's plan of study is developed in consultation with his or her assigned faculty advisor. The plan of study is a statement of intent and commitment that begins in an open and exploratory way and gradually becomes more detailed as students progress through the program. The plan of study is the basis for the student's selection of courses and other learning activities. In developing the plan of study, students decide on the focus of their MES program, establish what they need to learn, and propose their path to acquiring the desired knowledge, methods, skills, and perspectives necessary to complete the degree. Students can expect to produce several versions of their plan during their program. The plan of study is revised as necessary and its final version serves as the basis for evaluation in the student's MES II-III and final examinations. The plan acts as an 'agreement' between the student and the Faculty with respect to the requirements that must be fulfilled in order to obtain the MES degree.

While the content and approaches to plans of study vary considerably with each student, the basic structure is consistent across all students. Alternative forms of expressing the plan of study's requirements are encouraged, in discussion with the advisor. Although development of the plan of study is an individualized process, students at all levels can gain a great deal from interaction with others in the production and revision of their plans. Peer support will serve students best if they initiate it at the outset by forming or joining a learning group of three to five students. Peer support and collaborative learning complement individualized self-directed learning. Advising sessions can also be conducted individually or in small groups.

Guidelines for developing the plan of study are available at <http://www.fes.yorku.ca/students/current/mes/PlanOfStudy.htm>.

The structure of the plan of study is as follows:

**Title of area of concentration** (5 words or less, not counting articles or prepositions)

Planning students must have the word 'planning' in their title.

**Abstract of the area of concentration** (100 words maximum)

This briefly describes the area of concentration.

**Keywords** (10 words maximum)

**Personal statement** (200 words maximum)

Students are asked to present their background and how their previous experiences have led them to the MES program. Using an autobiographical narrative style, students are asked to recognize how their personal, professional and academic experiences, interests or passions contribute to their plan. Students can also discuss their beliefs, concerns, and priorities in order to articulate their motivations for undertaking the MES program.

**Main current of thought and practice** (1000 words minimum, 1500 words maximum in final version)

Students are asked to situate their interests within the relevant bodies of academic literature, theory, and practice. This section allows students to explain how their interests and area of concentration relate to broader academic conversations and to the practices of others. This section allows students to show how their particular area of study relates to the ideas, theories, frameworks and methodologies of other significant thinkers and actors.

**Area of concentration** (200-400 words maximum)

The statement of the area of concentration establishes the focus of the student's study area. In other words, the area of concentration is the particular environmental topic, issue, problem, or question that the student wishes to critically explore in her/his MES program. It generally synthesizes two to four components that comprise an interdisciplinary study focus in natural, built, and/or social environments. The area of concentration defines key concepts.

**Components of the area of concentration** (2-4 maximum, 100-200 words each)

The components are the interdisciplinary and interconnected parts that comprise the sum of the area of concentration. Components help define the various fields that contribute the student's program. Students usually set out components in order of importance, provide a clear description, and explain the logic that underlies their selection. In the initial plan of study, component descriptions are normally only a paragraph in length, but become considerably longer in subsequent plans as the student's knowledge about each component grows.

**Learning objectives** (200 words maximum)

A learning objective identifies the intended learning outcome that students want to accomplish in relation to their area of concentration or in relation to each component. Objectives articulate the breadth and depth of the student's proposed learning. For example, some objectives aim to acquire a broad overview of a particular subject while others aim to acquire more in-depth knowledge. Students should consider how success in reaching each learning objective will be assessed.

Objectives can be formulated to address each specific component or to address objectives for their program as a whole. Objectives are initially formulated in a future tense. As students progress through the program and meet their objectives, the verb tense changes from future to past to indicate how each objective has been met.

**Term by term list of courses and other learning activities**

Courses and other learning activities are actions taken to meet learning objectives. Examples of learning strategies include an established course within or outside of FES, individual directed study or field experience, a conference or workshop, or a non-credit course. The list of proposed courses and other learning activities covers all six terms of the program but is subject to revision in periodic meetings (general examinations) with the advisor.

## **Bibliography**

Students should compile a complete list of references (books, journal articles, reports, etc.) cited in and related to their plan. These should be presented in a standard bibliographic format.

## **Examinations**

There are different types of examinations for students progressing well through the program: the MES I to II exam, general examinations, the MES II to III exam, and the final exam.

The MES I to II exam is held after the submission of the initial plan of study in the first term. It is held with the student's advisor and, if required, with an additional faculty member who has read the student's plan. Its purpose is to ensure that the student's plan of study can adequately guide and orient the student's initial work during her/his MES program.

General examinations are advising sessions in which the student and faculty advisor discuss the substance, clarity, and conceptual grounding of each progressive iteration of the plan of study, as well as the student's learning activities for the upcoming term(s). Students need to submit an updated plan of study to the advisor in advance of each general exam, and come prepared with advising forms and other appropriate enrolment documents to be signed by the advisor and returned to OSAS. After each general exam, the advisor will fill in an exam report (green sheet) to summarize the discussion and record the outcome of the general exam, including a specific date for the next plan of study revision and examination. Enrolment will be blocked if the student does not submit the revised plan of study according to the schedule recorded on the green sheet.

The purpose of the MES II to III exam is to ensure that the student's final plan of study is satisfactory and complete, and that his/her proposal for MES III research (Major Paper, Project, Portfolio or Thesis) is an adequate articulation of and guide for the research required to complete the degree. The exam involves two faculty members: the student's advisor and the supervisor for her/his MES III research work (or another faculty member if the advisor and supervisor are the same person).

The final examination provides an opportunity for the student to synthesize and reflect on her/his overall program and MES III research with faculty members, who assess how the student has met his or her learning objectives as set out in the plan of study. It is held with the supervisor, advisor and a chair who is arm's length from the student's program.

A Dean's exam is a general exam held when a student's program is in serious difficulty. Normally, the examiners include the student's advisor, another faculty member knowledgeable about the student's program, and a Dean's representative, who chairs the exam. A Dean's exam may be called if a student receives an evaluation of Unsatisfactory in 3 or more credits of course work, does not have an approved plan of study in place, or has otherwise failed to meet program requirements as specified in the Academic Regulations. A Dean's exam will result in either withdrawal from the program or clearly defined steps and a timeline that the student must follow to address the particular conditions that led to the Dean's exam.

## **Submission of plan of study**

Students must submit one (1) copy of their initial plan of study to their advisor prior to their MES I-II exam. (For students entering the MES Program in 2010, this is due Tue Nov 9). At least two weeks prior to any subsequent general exam, students must submit two (2) copies (one for the advisor and one for their OSAS dossier). For the MES II-III exam, three (3) copies are required (copies for both examiners and one for the dossier). If a student is to have a Dean's exam, the documentation required will be specified in advance. A final exam requires three copies of the final plan of study (including the major research proposal) and the major research work. After the final exam (and following revisions if required), the student must submit two (2) final versions of the major research work to OSAS.

Paper copies of plans of study for general examinations and the MES II to III examination should be submitted two weeks before the exam to the adviser/supervisor/other examiner, unless an alternate means of submission is agreed upon in advance with the faculty members involved. MES I to II exams and final exams have fixed and firm submission deadlines (see calendar page 2).

#### **4. MES I STAGE: INITIAL PLAN OF STUDY**

As part of the course ENV5 5100 Interdisciplinary Research in Environmental Studies, students will meet with their advisors to discuss and receive feedback on the different elements of the plan of study. Students are expected to provide a draft version of each section of the plan well in advance of each advising session so that the advisor can review and prepare comments on it. Advising sessions can be individualized or in a group. After a student has worked through several drafts of his/her plan of study with feedback from the advisor, s/he will submit a final version to the advisor by Tue Nov 9. The advisor will review the initial plan and pass it along to a second reader appointed by the Graduate Program Director to ensure that the plan meets the interdisciplinary standards of FES.

If the advisor and the second reader agree that the plan is satisfactory, then the advisor schedules a MES I-II examination with the student. If the advisor or the second reader has substantial concerns about the plan, a general examination will be held with both faculty members to provide the feedback necessary for the student to rework the plan. Once the initial plan of study is accepted by the advisor and second reader, and approved by the MES Coordinator, the student officially moves from MES I to MES II and receives a Pass (P) for ENV5 5100. Students are expected to advance to MES II by the end of the first term.

If a student does not complete the first plan of study on time or the initial plan is assessed by either the advisor or the reader as NOT ready for MES II, the grade for ENV5 5100 will be Incomplete (I). This assessment will trigger a general exam attended by both the advisor and the second reader. There are two possible outcomes of this examination:

- 1) The faculty members are persuaded that the student will be able to produce an acceptable plan of study during the second term. If so, the student will be allowed to continue in the program but must make specific revisions and meet specific timelines for re-submission of the plan. If these requirements are not strictly adhered to, the student will be withdrawn from the program. If an acceptable plan is produced, as required, the grade for ENV5 5100 is changed from an Incomplete (I) to a Pass (P); or
- 2) The faculty members are not persuaded that the student will be able to produce an acceptable plan of study during the second term. If so, the student will be withdrawn from the MES Program. The grade for ENV5 5100 is then changed from Incomplete (I) to Unsatisfactory (U).

#### **5. MES II STAGE: DEVELOPING THE FINAL PLAN OF STUDY AND RESEARCH PROPOSAL**

In the MES II stage, students take courses and continue to implement their learning objectives, revise their plan of study, and develop a proposal for their major paper, project, portfolio, or thesis research. At the end of the MES II stage, students will have an MES II-III exam to assess both the final plan of study and the research proposal.

As students pursue their programs, elements of the plan of study become more specific and detailed. Particularly suitable methods of inquiry become evident; learning objectives evolve to express more specific aims and means of actualization; and the main currents of thought and practice section expands to reflect new learning. Students may find that their intent and focus change as they move through the program. Students may discover a new interest, another angle or a different way of looking at issues. Changes in focus and direction should be discussed with the advisor at a general exam and will be reflected in revisions to the plan of study.

In working towards the final plan of study, it is recommended that students review each section of their plan. Students should be confident that their main currents of thought and practice section is updated to reflect their new learning about key literature and practices that inform their area of concentration. Students should ask themselves if their learning objectives accurately reflect what they have learned and, if not, revise them. At the time of the MES II to III exam, most of the learning objectives should be met and, consequently, described in the past tense, leaving only those pertaining to the MES III research in the future tense.

Students must meet with their advisor during the MES II stage in order to review their program and progress on their plan of study. A general exam near the end of each term allows students and advisors to review

the work completed, to discuss appropriate changes and course selection, and to complete enrolment paperwork for the following term.

### **Selection of a supervisor**

MES students are required to identify their Major Research supervisor by the beginning of their second year and to submit the 2-page Preliminary Research Proposal and signed Request for Supervision form available at <http://www.yorku.ca/fes/students/current/mes/MESForms.htm>.

All full-time and joint-appointed members of FES are eligible to supervise students at the MES III level -- depending on their availability. In any given term, a number of faculty members will be unavailable due to sabbatical and other leaves or for workload reasons, or they may have already taken on their full allocation of MES III supervisees. If a student would like to ask a professor from outside FES or an individual who does not hold a university appointment to supervise his/her MES III work, this should be discussed with the advisor and with the Graduate Program Director to ascertain the person's suitability and the procedure to be followed for their appointment as supervisor.

The main role of the supervisor is to offer substantive comment and advice on the form and content of the MES III research. Neither the supervisor nor the FES writing tutor is an editor. If a student requires assistance in editing his/her major research work, s/he will need to find someone to act in this role and must fully acknowledge the person(s) who provided editorial assistance in the Acknowledgements section of their final paper, thesis, or report.

### **Major research options**

There are four options for MES III major research work: major paper, major project, portfolio, or thesis. Typically students take 12-24 credits (out of the 72 total necessary for the MES degree) in MES III. FES policy establishes a maximum length for major papers (25,000 words), major project or portfolio reports (10,000 words) and theses (35,000 words). These word limits exclude the bibliography, tables, charts and appendices. A database of titles of MES major papers, major projects, portfolios and theses is available at <http://www.yorku.ca/fes/wa/MesPapers/app/Search.asp>. A selection of major papers and projects selected for the FES Outstanding Graduate Student Paper Series is available at <http://www.yorku.ca/fes/research/OutstandingPaperSeries.htm>.

MES students are strongly encouraged to conceive of their major papers as publishable-quality articles and to design their research proposals accordingly at the MES II to III stage. After the requirements of the MES program are met, these papers may be further refined and submitted to an academic or professional journal by the MES graduate alone or in collaboration with their supervisor. Details of collaboration and co-authorship need to be negotiated in advance. This consideration for publishable-quality major research work applies predominantly but not exclusively to major papers.

### **MES major paper (ENVS 7899)**

The major paper synthesizes the area of concentration or explores one or more of its components in depth. The major paper is expected to contribute to a student's knowledge and may also make a contribution to knowledge in general. Guidelines for MES major paper proposals are available at <http://www.fes.yorku.ca/students/current/mes/PlanOfStudy.htm>. The required information in the proposal includes:

- working title of the major paper;
- name of the supervisor;
- research keywords;
- role of the major paper in the plan of study (brief);
- research topic;
- research context (including relevant theoretical framework);
- research question (thesis or argument);
- research design and methodology;
- research timeline;
- tentative section-by-section outline;
- bibliography;
- and human participants research and risk assessment forms (if applicable)

**MES major project (ENVS 7799)**

A major project represents an applied activity. The output or representation of a major project will be determined by the nature and form of the activity; it may be written, oral, performed or graphic. A major project report accompanies the activity and reiterates the activity's objectives, describes the problems or issues addressed, outlines what was done and learned, and connects back to fulfilment of the plan of study. A major project is expected to make a contribution to knowledge similar to that of a major paper. Guidelines for a MES major project proposal are available at <http://www.fes.yorku.ca/students/current/mes/PlanOfStudy.htm> and the sections include:

- working title of major project;
- name of supervisor;
- research keywords;
- role of the major project in the plan of study (brief);
- research topic;
- research context (including relevant theoretical framework);
- research question or project objectives;
- research design and methodology;
- research timeline;
- tentative outline of project report;
- bibliography;
- and human participants research and risk assessment forms (if applicable).

**MES portfolio (ENVS 7798)**

The portfolio option in MES III is a compilation of works (written and/or other media) that are integrated into a coherent whole. It offers students the opportunity of producing pieces (normally 2 to 4) in different media or for different audiences. A portfolio can include any one of a number of possible combinations, for example:

- a series of academic essays initially produced for courses, but developed into cohesive aspects of an overall theme;
- a combination of material produced for a popular audience (e.g., a manual or a narrative) as well as for an academic audience (e.g., the theoretical foundation of the manual);
- a combination of visual media, such as a video and a complementary academic paper;
- a combination of academic paper and performance-oriented work;
- a series of articles aimed at publication in specific journals or presentations at specific conferences.

The components of the portfolio are introduced through a brief synthesis paper, which reflects their interrelationship and relationship to the plan of study. Guidelines for a MES portfolio proposal are available at <http://www.fes.yorku.ca/students/current/mes/PlanOfStudy.htm> and the sections include:

- working title of major project;
- name of supervisor;
- research keywords;
- role of the portfolio in the plan of study (brief);
- research topic;
- research context (including relevant theoretical framework);
- research question or portfolio objectives;
- research design and methodology;
- research timeline;
- tentative outline of synthesis essay;
- bibliography;
- and human participants research and risk assessment forms (if applicable)

**MES thesis (ENVS 7999)**

Like the major paper option, the thesis synthesizes the area of concentration or explores one or more of its components in depth. The thesis is expected to contribute to a student's knowledge and must also make a contribution to knowledge in general. The requirements for a thesis are

different than a major paper, major project or portfolio because a thesis proposal is submitted to both FES and the Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS). An initial thesis proposal must be submitted, as part of the final revision of the plan of study, by the end of the third term (i.e., at least 12 months before the student's expected time of completion).

A thesis supervisory committee is made of a minimum of two faculty members, at least one of whom must be from FES. Supervisory committee members are recommended by the FES Graduate Program Director to FGS for approval. For more information on the Thesis process and guidelines, visit <http://www.yorku.ca/grads/thesis/index.htm>.

Guidelines for a thesis proposal are available at <http://www.fes.yorku.ca/students/current/mes/PlanOfStudy.htm> and the sections include:

- working title of thesis;
- proposed supervisory committee;
- research keywords;
- role of the thesis in the plan of study (brief);
- research topic;
- research context (including relevant theoretical framework);
- research question (thesis or argument)
- research design and methodology;
- research timeline;
- tentative section-by-section outline;
- bibliography;
- and human participants research and risk assessment forms (if applicable).

### **MES II-III examination**

Prior to the MES II-III exam, Peggy McGrath, Graduate Student Program Advisor, will meet with each student to review their dossier and check that the information is accurate and complete (grades, credits, enrolment, etc.).

The MES II-III examination considers the substantive aspects of the final plan of study, including the proposal for the MES III research. Students are expected to demonstrate a substantive command of the area of concentration, achievement of most learning objectives, and a solid understanding of the major issues and main currents of thought and practice related to the area of concentration. The intent of this exam is to ensure that the student is ready to tackle the final research stage of his/her program, and can adequately explain the relationship between the proposed research and the student's learning objectives and main currents of thought and practice. After a student's final plan of study and research proposal are approved, s/he will enrol in the specific course indicated by the form of major research chosen (ENVS 7799, 7899, 7798 or 7999).

The MES II to III examiners are generally the MES II advisor and the MES III supervisor. After the MES II-III exam, the supervisor normally acts as the student's MES III advisor. If the advisor and supervisor are the same person, a second faculty member must participate in the MES II-III exam. If the supervisor is not a FES faculty member, the student's MES II advisor will continue in that role during MES III. If students are having difficulty finding a supervisor, they should discuss this issue first with their advisor, and then with the Graduate Program Director, if needed.

## **6. MES III – RESEARCH AND PROGRAM COMPLETION**

Normally students are enrolled in MES III in terms 4, 5 and 6 of their program (or as early as term 3). Students must complete their major research work by the end of Term 6. Because faculty members often travel to conferences, do research, and go on holiday in the summer term, students should set up a schedule of meetings (virtual or in person) with their supervisor for submitting drafts and getting feedback on their work. Supervisors must be allowed two weeks for reading drafts, excluding their vacation time. Students need to allow sufficient time for revisions, as well. Students should submit a final draft at least one month prior to the deadline. Students can file their major research work with OSAS anytime during the term, but the final deadlines in 2010-11 are Tue Nov 30 in the fall term, Thu Mar 31 in the winter term and Fri Jul 29 in the

summer term. These dates are set to give students the maximum time to complete their work while also allowing the GPD and OSAS time to set up final exams.

The title page of the major research work must contain specific information: the title of the major paper, major project or portfolio; the name of the student; the date of submission; the statement "A Major Paper submitted to the Faculty of Environmental Studies in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master in Environmental Studies, York University, Toronto, Ontario, Canada," and a signature line for both the student and the supervisor (indicating approval of the major research work). The MES major paper, major project, or portfolio must contain an abstract (500 words maximum) and a foreword that explains the nature and role of the major research work in fulfilling the requirements of the MES degree. Numerical pagination starts on the first page of the introduction; every page before shall receive a roman numeral. Thesis requirements and guidelines are available at <http://www.yorku.ca/grads/thesis/index.htm>.

### **Final examination**

FES students must pass a final oral examination that addresses the totality of their program. The major research work constitutes a written submission for the final exam. (A thesis is examined separately, as outlined below). The final exam will be scheduled only after the submission of 3 copies of the plan of study (including the proposal) and of the major paper, or major project, or portfolio. The cover page of the major research work must include the signature of the supervisor that certifies that the paper, project report or portfolio is ready for examination.

The examining committee will consist of 3 faculty members, including the supervisor and a chair appointed by the Graduate Program Director. A final exam takes a minimum of one hour. Its purposes are to evaluate the student's general understanding in environmental studies along with her/his substantive competencies in the area of concentration. The final exam also pays considerable attention to the major paper, major project, or portfolio. A thesis is defended and examined separately, according to FGS procedures, usually immediately prior to the FES final exam but no earlier than five weeks after the final version is submitted to OSAS.

At the final exam, students have the option to make a short opening statement (10 minutes maximum) stating how they have completed the learning objectives set out in the plan of study, and how the major research work has contributed to consolidation of their area of concentration. The opening statement should not be a summary of the plan or the major research work but rather a synthesis and reflection on the successes and challenges of the student's overall program.

To prepare for the final examination, students should review their plan and try to anticipate questions about their learning objectives, the key concepts in their area of concentration, and key authors in the main currents of thought and practice. They should also review their major research work and be ready to answer epistemological, conceptual and methodological questions. Unless requested otherwise by the student, final exams are open to the public.

At the final exam, the chair ensures that the student is familiar with the Faculty Regulations governing final exams either by reviewing these or simply by asking if s/he has any questions regarding these. The student then briefly leaves the room while the examiners review the student's dossier and determine the nature and order of questions on the plan of study and major research work. Questioning (first on the plan and then on the major research work) continues until the examiners have sufficient information to make their decision. Once examiners agree that no further questions are needed, the chair will ask the student to leave the room while the committee deliberates.

The final exam requirement is met when the majority of members of the examining committee agree that the student has satisfactorily completed the requirements of the MES program. When the committee is ready, the chair will call the student back into the room and read the committee's decision from the examination report. The chair's report, signed by the other committee members, is forwarded to OSAS. The committee may require minor revisions typically to be submitted to OSAS within 2 weeks. The committee may recommend that exceptional research work be published in the web-based FES Outstanding Graduate Student Paper Series. However, if the final exam committee's decision is unfavourable, there are two potential next steps (see Faculty regulations 3.30 to 3.33):

Recess: If the additional work required to meet MES Program standards is relatively minor and deemed manageable by student, the exam will be recessed for a period not exceeding four

weeks. A date will be set for the reconvened exam. The committee will specify in writing why the exam was recessed and the conditions that must be satisfied by the student before the final exam resumes.

Adjournment: Either the student or the committee may adjourn the exam. The student then has eight months to apply for reconvening of the final exam. This may involve another general exam to revise the plan of study and to identify further, more significant work required. The final exam will be reconvened no later than one month after the student's re-application.

Recessing and adjournment of final exams are rare occurrences. While it is also possible to fail a final examination, failure at this stage is *extremely* rare. Faculty regulation C3.33 provides for student appeals to decisions of final exam committees. An appeal can be based only on procedural irregularity, i.e., students cannot appeal simply because they disagree with the committee's decision.

## **7. HUMAN PARTICIPANTS RESEARCH (HPR) REVIEW AND RISK ASSESSMENT**

The Faculty of Environmental Studies is governed by the York University Senate policy for the *Ethics Review Process for Research Involving Human Participants*. Students undertaking research that involves human participants are required to submit an application and receive approval prior to undertaking such research. This review applies to research conducted in graduate courses, individual directed studies, and/or MES major research work (paper, project, thesis, or portfolio). If a student's MES III research work is unfunded and if it involves human participants, s/he must submit the proposal for human participants research review, along with consent forms and specific research protocols (e.g. interview questionnaires and list of interviewees), if applicable. Students are also required to complete the Tri-Council Policy Statement tutorial, available at <http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/english/tutorial/> and to print the record of completion. This record must be attached to the ethics review package and research proposal. Typically, students bring a draft HPR application to their II-III exam, after which it is finalized and submitted for approval. Unfunded research is approved within FES, while funded research projects must be approved by the York Research Ethics Board.

FES also requires students to provide evidence of proper preparation for field study or risk assessment and mitigation. Risk in field study includes, but is not limited to, risks to physical health, emotional well-being and personal safety. Risk may arise because of the nature of the research itself; or from the climate, the political, social, economic and cultural environment in the field study location; from the race, gender, religious or cultural background of the researcher; or from the travel, living and working conditions required for the field study. FES may require the student: to agree to follow certain field study risk assessment, mitigation, and approval procedures; to abide by guidelines for behaviour in the field; to take specified training or undertake preliminary research; to undergo immunization; to obtain accident and health benefits insurance, as well as necessary or desirable travel documents; and to sign (with a witness) a waiver of liability.

Human participants research review and risk assessment applications must be submitted to the FES Governance office at least two months prior to the beginning of the research. Incomplete or missing documentation will delay processing. Forms and procedures related to human participants research review and risk assessment are available at <http://www.yorku.ca/fes/students/current/mes/MESForms.htm>. Students writing a thesis must also complete the FGS research ethics requirements and forms available at <http://www.yorku.ca/grads/policies/ethics.htm>.

## **8. REGISTRATION AND ENROLMENT**

MES students are expected to register (i.e., to accept fees) and to enrol in courses for each term of the program. Students register and enrol in courses during Fall, Winter and Summer terms. Course offerings are limited in the summer term and so summer registration typically involves Individual Directed Study and/or Field Experience credits (see next section for Course Options). Students must also register and enrol in the appropriate courses at the MES III stage, i.e. major research papers, projects and portfolios.

Registration is done using the Passport York online system. Enrolment involves completing a 'Graduate Course Advising' form that indicates all the courses the student is intending to take in the upcoming term, which is signed by both the student and the advisor. By accepting their fees each term, students are deemed to have registered for the term of study. It is the responsibility of the student to submit all the enrolment forms (and any additional paperwork required) as one package to OSAS, prior to the registration deadline. A \$200 fee applies to late registration (see calendar page 2).

### **Changes in course enrolment**

Before the deadline to change enrolment each term, students can change the courses they are enrolled in by completing the 'Change in Graduate Course Enrolment' form. It must be signed by the student's advisor and returned to OSAS. Students can also drop and add courses, using Passport York, before the deadline. In order to drop or add a course after the deadline has passed, students must use the 'Petition: Other' form. This form must be signed by both the course director and the advisor, and returned to OSAS. Students will be contacted if their petition is not approved. A grade of Withdrawn (W) will be assigned for courses dropped after the deadline. Forms are available at <http://www.yorku.ca/fes/students/current/mes/MESForms.htm>.

### **Registration and enrolment block**

A student's registration and enrolment may be blocked if the student requires a general exam. The student may also be blocked because of financial debt, an admissions requirement, or a problem with enrolment paperwork from a previous term. Students may inquire about the reason for a block by contacting OSAS.

### **Withdrawal and leave of absence**

Students may withdraw or be withdrawn from the program at any time. If a student voluntarily withdraws and her/his academic record is in good standing, it is relatively easy for him or her to re-enter later to finish the program. If a student is withdrawn or is required to withdraw because of academic problems, such as failure to maintain academic standards, his/her ability to come back into the program will depend on the reason for the withdrawal, the student's ability to demonstrate that s/he is now ready to complete the program, and a re-admission process involving the Faculty of Graduate Studies. It is extremely rare that students withdrawn for academic reasons are allowed to re-enter the program.

Under some circumstances, students may petition to take a leave of absence. There are two types of leaves: compassionate and elective. A compassionate leave of absence can be taken anytime after the first term of study for reasons of ill health, personal or family crisis. A leave of absence form (from FGS) and an explanation of the circumstances are required, as well as a medical doctor's note in the case of an illness. An elective leave can be taken for one term only following the first term of study and prior to Term 5 of the MES program. Completion of an elective leave of absence form is required. For the elective leave of absence students cannot have any incomplete grades or outstanding course work from previous terms. Students must be actively registered for the term prior to the term of completion.

## **9. COURSE OPTIONS AND ENROLMENT PROCEDURES**

Lists and descriptions of regular course offerings are available at <http://www.yorku.ca/fes/students/current/mes/CreditsGradesAndCourses.htm>. While most courses are offered every year, some specialized courses are offered only in alternate years, and a few are offered one-time-only. It is also possible for students to enrol in a course outside of FES, to take an existing FES course for extra credits, or -- when the necessary course does not exist -- to design their own course (individual directed study). Various forms listed below are available at <http://www.yorku.ca/fes/students/current/mes/MESForms.htm>. All enrolment forms should be submitted as a complete package to OSAS. Incomplete enrolment forms or packages will delay processing and may be returned to the student for more information.

### **York courses outside of FES**

Students can take courses in other graduate programs at York. To enrol in a graduate course outside of FES, students must fill out a 'Request to Take Courses in Another Graduate Program at York for Credit' form. Students also have to request permission to enrol from the host program, Department or Faculty after they have permission from FES.

To enrol in a non-FES graduate course, students must list the course on their advising form (to be signed by the advisor) and attach the required 'Request' form. Forms are submitted to OSAS to be approved by the Graduate Program Director (and returned to the student's mailbox). The student must take the 'Request' form to the graduate program in which s/he wishes to take the course and obtain their signature as well as their electronic permission to enrol in the course. Upon approval, the student can enrol online.

### **Courses in other universities**

In order to take a course at another university, a student must apply to the Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS) to be an 'Ontario Visiting Graduate Student' (OVGS). Students may take a maximum of only two OVGS courses during his or her graduate program, and only if a similar course is not available at York. If the application is approved, the student can enrol without paying additional tuition fees. When considering this option, the student should begin the process as soon as possible, ideally two months before the beginning of the class. FES students are subject to the regulations of the host university in relation to the course taken. If the student wishes to drop the course s/he must do so as per the host university's regulations, or run the risk of receiving an Unsatisfactory (U) grade and being required to pay for the course in this instance. An OVGS withdrawal form must be completed in order to withdraw from a course at another university.

To enrol in a graduate course offered at another university, a student must list the course on her/his advising form and complete the 'Ontario Visiting Graduate Student' form (<http://www.yorku.ca/grads/policies/kovgs.doc>) and attach a course outline and rationale stating why they need to take the course outside of York. Both forms require the advisor's signature (or email confirmation) before being submitted to OSAS. The Graduate Program Director will review and approve these requests before forwarding the application forms to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for approval. FGS will forward the form to the university at which the course is offered, for approval. If approved, OSAS enrolls you in the course ENVS 6499 for FES records. There is a special form on the FGS website that you must complete if you decide not to take this course after the paperwork has started through the process. The withdrawal form must be submitted to the university where the student is taking the course.

### **Request to take an FES course for additional credits**

Students requesting to take an FES course for additional credits must complete the 'Request to Take Course for Additional Credits' form and indicate the number of additional credits (3, 6, or 9) requested. The student must describe in detail what additional work will be done to justify the extra credit. Students must obtain the course director's approval and signature, as well as their advisor's prior to submitting the form to OSAS. These forms must be submitted before the registration and enrolment deadline, and are subject to approval by the Graduate Program Director.

### **Individual directed study (IDS)**

If a student's plan requires him/her to acquire specific knowledge or skills that cannot be acquired through an existing graduate course at York or at another nearby university, then the student may propose to do an individual directed study (ENVS 5599, 6599, or 7599). To enrol in an IDS course, a student will list the course on their advising form, complete the specific IDS form (both forms require the advisor's signature), and prepare a detailed description of the work to be undertaken in the term (as well as the name and contact information for the instructor, the form and frequency of the proposed contacts with the instructor, a description of the expected final output for the course, and the basis for evaluation of student performance by the instructor, as well as a bibliography). IDS enrolment documentation must be returned to OSAS by the registration and enrolment deadline, and is subject to approval by the Graduate Program Director.

### **Field experience**

A 'field experience' course (ENVS 5699, 6699, or 7699) earns students credit while they work or volunteer in the field. Field experience placements must be related to the plan of study and must be approved by the student's advisor. Students require an on-site field supervisor at the placement as well as an in-faculty instructor to evaluate their field experience report at the end of the term. Most MES students obtain 3 to 12 credits of field experience (MES program maximum is 24 credits). A work placement of 8-10 hours per week for 12 weeks is equivalent to 3 credits. The Student and Alumni Resource Centre (SARC) may assist students in finding suitable field experience placements. A student wishing to enrol in this course must first secure a field experience position. The course is listed on the term's advising form (to be signed by the advisor) and the field experience enrolment form (to be signed by the advisor and field supervisor). Forms must be submitted to OSAS by the registration and enrolment deadline, and are subject to approval by the Graduate Program Director. At the end of the term, students must prepare a field experience report and

submit it to the faculty supervisor by the last day of classes in that term. Guidelines for setting up a field experience and writing the field experience report, can be found at: <http://www.yorku.ca/fes/students/current/mes/forms/>

#### **4000 Level Undergraduate Course**

Under certain circumstances an advisor may suggest that a student take a 4000 level undergraduate course. To enrol in this, students must list the course on their advising form (to be signed by the advisor) and attach the required 'Request' form. Forms are submitted to OSAS to be approved by the Graduate Program Director (and returned to the student's mailbox). The student must take the 'Request' form to the program in which s/he wishes to take the course and obtain their signature as well as their electronic permission to enrol in the course. Upon approval, the student can enrol online

## **10. FUNDING**

MES students are encouraged to apply for entrance, internal and external research awards, scholarships and grants, as well as paid employment in the form of graduate and/or teaching assistantships. For more information about financial assistance and funding, visit <http://www.yorku.ca/fes/financial>.

#### **Graduate assistantships (GAs)**

Graduate assistantships and other forms of funding are normally allocated with a student's offer of admission. The specific jobs/tasks are allocated through a process conducted by OSAS each year.

#### **Teaching assistantships (TAs)**

MES students may apply for teaching assistantships. A few teaching assistantships are available to MES students within FES, and additional opportunities exist throughout the University. In order to be considered for these positions, students should complete a CUPE Unit 1 'blanket application' form and submit it to each department they are interested in working for. Information and a blanket application form are available at [http://http://www.yorku.ca/hr/documents/CUPE\\_3903\\_Unit\\_1\\_Blanket\\_Application.pdf](http://http://www.yorku.ca/hr/documents/CUPE_3903_Unit_1_Blanket_Application.pdf)

#### **Internal funding**

FES offers internal funding opportunities to MES students through the Student Awards office located in the Student and Alumni Resource Centre (SARC), HNES 129. Queries may be directed to [fesaward@yorku.ca](mailto:fesaward@yorku.ca).

#### **External funding**

External awards include Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) scholarships and Ontario Graduate Scholarships (OGS). SARC provides information to current students regarding the availability of funds that may assist them in completing their programs. To receive notices of external funding opportunities, students must register for the MES-Info Listserv at <http://www.yorku.ca/fes/comp/listservs.asp>

#### **Research activities and conference travel funding**

MES students are encouraged to seek funding to support travel to conferences and other research activities through the Graduate Environmental Studies Student Association (GESSA) located in HNES 136B and the Graduate Student Association (GSA) located in 325 Student Centre.

The Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS) also maintains a database of fellowships, assistantships, scholarships, awards, and prizes (see <http://www.yorku.ca/grads/financial/index.htm>). Other funding opportunities are offered through York University's Office of Student Financial Services (<http://www.yorku.ca/osfs>) and York International for international students (<http://international.yorku.ca>).

## **11. RESEARCH AT FES AND AT YORK**

FES is an established leader in innovative interdisciplinary teaching and research on natural, built, and social environments. In its dual commitment to research diversity and interdisciplinary research collaboration, FES has claimed a leading position in environmental studies scholarship. FES' interdisciplinarity is characterized by a vibrant intellectual and academic life where research and teaching activities are

complementary. The involvement of graduate students in faculty members' research projects is vital and benefits both students and faculty.

For more information on faculty research interests, projects, and publications, see full-time faculty profiles at <http://www.yorku.ca/fes/about/people/faculty/FullTime.htm>. More information on student research and publications is available at <http://www.yorku.ca/fes/research>.

### **The Canada Research Chair in Sustainability and Culture**

FES proudly hosts the Canada Research Chair in Sustainability and Culture held by Professor Catriona Mortimer-Sandilands. The Canada Research Chair in Sustainability and Culture was established in 2004 and renewed in 2008. The purpose of the Chair is to bring together research and researchers in the growing field of environmental cultural studies to address and expand pressing questions of sustainability. Building on the premise that the movement toward sustainability involves questions of meaning as much as questions of resources, the Chair places interdisciplinary ideas and practices of cultural studies at the centre of questions of sustainability. For more information visit: <http://www.yorku.ca/ecocult>.

### **Las Nubes Project**

Las Nubes is a Costa Rican cloud-forest preserve donated to York in 1998 by Dr. Woody Fisher. The Fisher Fund for Neo-Tropical Conservation supports FES faculty and student research at Las Nubes and in the surrounding region on a wide range of issues such as deforestation, sustainable agriculture, and biodiversity conservation. For more information visit: <http://www.yorku.ca/lasnubes>

### **York research centres**

York University is home to 24 research centres and institutes. Some are pan-university and others under the auspices of specific Faculties. For more information visit: [http://www.research.yorku.ca/securehome/about\\_yorkresearch/centres\\_institutes/index.html](http://www.research.yorku.ca/securehome/about_yorkresearch/centres_institutes/index.html).

FES faculty members are particularly active in the following interdisciplinary research units:

**The City Institute at York University (CITY)**, directed by FES Professor Roger Keil, is a university-wide research unit that conducts critical urban research that, in addition to contributing to the knowledge base of academics, policymakers and civil society, seeks to challenge received wisdom as the city of the 21st century takes shape. For more information, see <http://www.yorku.ca/city>.

**The Institute for Research and Innovation in Sustainability (IRIS)** is a university-wide interdisciplinary centre dedicated to pursuing multifaceted approaches to the contemporary challenges of sustainability. For more information, visit <http://www.yorku.ca/iris>.

**The Centre for Research on Latin America and the Caribbean (CERLAC)** is an interdisciplinary research unit concerned with the economic development, political and social organization, and cultural contributions of Latin America and the Caribbean. For more information, visit <http://www.yorku.ca/cerlac>

**The Centre for Refugee Studies** is involved in research projects around the world, and is dedicated to research on diverse refugee issues; it informs public discussion as well as policy development and practice innovation by international, governmental, advocacy and service organizations; and it supports teaching in refugee and migration studies. For more information, visit <http://www.yorku.ca/crs/about.htm>

## **12. SERVICES, FACILITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN FES**

During the MES program, students have access to a network of academic and other resources that are housed both within the Faculty and within the broader York University community.

In addition to the computer labs in the HNES building, MES students have two student lounges available for their use: one is located on the main floor of HNES outside of OSAS, and the other -- for MES students' exclusive use -- is in HNES 204. MES student mailboxes are located behind the Zig-Zag Gallery in the lounge outside OSAS. Faculty mailboxes are located in the reception area (HNES 109).

Photocopying for students is not available in the HNES Building. The closest photocopiers are in the Scott Library and the Copy Centre located in Central Square.

### **MES Listservs**

FES offers two MES listservs: an official listserv (*fes\_mesinfo*) and a dialogue listserv (*fes\_mes\_alt*). Postings on the official listserv are made only by the listserv administrator and by sending information to *fespost@yorku.ca*. MES students must subscribe to this listserv in order to ensure that they receive all official announcements regarding the MES program. Postings to the dialogue listserv are made directly.

Subscription information on both listservs is available at <http://www.yorku.ca/fes/listservs>

### **OSAS- Office of Student and Academic Services (HNES 137)**

OSAS, the administrative office for MES program requirements, provides information and resources, and manages issues related to registration, enrolment, student dossiers, FGS communication and convocation. OSAS is open for student inquiries Monday to Friday from 8:30am to 3:30pm.

### **SARC- Student and Alumni Resource Centre (HNES 129)**

SARC provides information for current students regarding the availability of funds (internal and external) for academic support. To research FES funding opportunities, please visit <http://www.yorku.ca/fes/financial>. You can also book an appointment with an Awards Advisor by contacting SARC at *fesworks@yorku.ca*.

SARC also provides access to employment and networking opportunities; career advising and individualized support; and links to other alumni professionals, industry associations and labour market information. MES students should consider signing up for our Career Services listserv and may view job opportunities exclusive to FES students and graduates at <http://www.yorku.ca/fes/asp/main.asp>. They can also book an appointment with an environmental career specialist by contacting *fesworks@yorku.ca* or by visiting HNES 129. Students interested in participating in career programs, workshops and networking events should visit [http://www.yorku.ca/fes/fesworks/student\\_services.asp](http://www.yorku.ca/fes/fesworks/student_services.asp)

### **FES Computing Services (FEScomp)**

FEScomp operates three computer labs on the second floor of the HNES building that are available for use by MES students. In addition to these labs, MES students can benefit from the York wireless network. For more computing information, see <http://www.yorku.ca/fes/comp/yorknet.asp>

### **FES Graduate Writing Centre (HNES 286)**

The writing centre's mandate is to help graduate students develop their own writing skills and processes. The centre offers support, advice, strategies, and troubleshooting on specific writing projects. The centre can also provide students with a variety of text, internet, and in-person resources that can improve their writing. Open workshops are offered during the fall term; thirty-minute individual and small group sessions are available throughout most of the year and must be booked in advance by emailing Ray Bennett at *rbennett@yorku.ca*.

### **The Wild Garden Media Centre (HNES 266)**

The media centre is a valuable resource for all members of the FES community who wish to use media arts for research, course projects, teaching or learning practices. Named in memory of the late dian marino, a FES faculty member, the media centre has video and still cameras (and accessories) and a digital editing system. Workshops are offered throughout the year. For more information, please contact John Vainstein, Coordinator, at *vainjk@yorku.ca*.

### **Eco-Art and Media Festival**

The Eco-Art and Media Festival is a remarkable showcase of multidisciplinary creative work done in FES and beyond. The festival is a time to celebrate and share diverse forms of creative expression intended to inspire reflection, engagement, dialogue and building of community among students, staff, faculty and alumni. The festival is developed and coordinated by the Wild Garden Media Centre team of GAs, staff, faculty and volunteers. All students are invited to participate. Watch for announcements in October/November. For more information, please contact John Vainstein, Coordinator, at *vainjk@yorku.ca*.

### **Maloca Garden (located in the southwest corner of the York University campus)**

Maloca Garden has official club status and is registered with the Office of Student Affairs. Along with its community building goals, Maloca strives to foster sustainable living practices (e.g. organic gardening,

composting) and to create an environment for multicultural and intergenerational learning and sharing. Maloca provides significant environmental, educational, and social benefits, while creating a rare meditative space for the cooperative growing of nutritious foods. For more information, visit <http://www.yorku.ca/maloca>.

### **York Academic and Support Services**

In addition to the FES services and resources listed above, York offers a range of academic and support services. For more information on academic support services available to York graduate students, see <http://www.yorku.ca/yorkweb/currentstudents/academicsupport/index.html>. For more information on various campus services, visit <http://www.yorku.ca/yorkweb/currentstudents/campusservices/index.html>.

## **13. COMMUNITY SERVICE AND INVOLVEMENT**

MES students are members of the Graduate Environmental Studies Students' Association (GESSA) and the Graduate Students' Association (GSA).

**GESSA** is the student-run organization for graduate students in FES, and is an associate member organization of the Graduate Students' Association (GSA) at York. All graduate Environmental Studies students are automatically members of GESSA and are entitled to the use of its resources and services. The executive coordinates the general activities of the association and provides information on Faculty policy, issues and events to the student body. Members also act as liaisons between the Faculty and students as needed. Elected delegates represent MES students on various FES committees and at other levels of governance on campus. GESSA holds general meetings at which students are encouraged to participate and share ideas.

GESSA sponsors various student-run programs such as the Maloca Community Garden. Each semester, GESSA also sponsors social events and other community building activities. Funding for conferences and research is available through both the GESSA Research and Travel Fund and the GSA. For more information on how to become actively involved in GESSA, visit <http://www.yorku.ca/gessa> or write to [gessa@yorku.ca](mailto:gessa@yorku.ca).

**The Graduate Students' Association (GSA)** represents the majority of graduate students at York University and provides support with issues such as health-care coverage, conference and research travel funds, as well as advocacy on issues such as tuition and university governance. Representatives from GESSA sit on the GSA council and participate in university-wide initiatives. For more information about the Graduate Students' Association, visit <http://www.yorku.ca/gsa>.

### **MES representation on FES and other governing committees**

MES students serve as representatives on FES governing committees. Representation on FES committees helps ensure that the interests of MES students are considered in decision-making processes. GESSA nominates representatives on Faculty and University committees each September. The following committees require MES representation:

Faculty Council (12 MES representatives) establishes policy in all academic matters relating to the Faculty through its standing committees. Faculty Council meetings are open to the FES community, and all MES students are encouraged to attend (designated MES representatives may vote).

Executive Committee (Chair of GESSA is a member) – prepares agendas for Faculty Council meetings and carries out any business as delegated by Faculty Council

Committee of Instruction (1 MES representative) advises the dean on all matters related to the implementation of academic programs in FES, and frequently makes major policy recommendations to Faculty Council.

MES Program and Curriculum Committee (2 MES representatives)

MES/JD Program Committee (1 MES/JD student representative)

Planning Programs Committee (1 MES Planning student representative)

Research Committee (1 MES representative)

Faculty Appointments Advisory Committee (1 MES representative)

Tenure and Promotions Committee (1 MES representative)

Appeals Committee (1 MES representative)

Outside of FES, the following two committees require MES representation:

Faculty of Graduate Studies Council (Chair of GESSA is a member)

York University Senate (2 GESSA representatives; normally one is an MES student and one is a PhD student). The Senate is the senior academic policy-making body of York University.

## **14. DIVERSITY AND EQUITY**

FES is committed to social justice. There are many opportunities for students to get involved in promoting equity in the daily life of the Faculty: becoming a student representative on governing committees; participating in workshops organized by Teaching Development Graduate Assistants and the Centre for the Support of Teaching; joining pan-university efforts toward more equitable practices through campus organizations, unions, and the Senate Committees on Equity, Teaching and Learning, Recruitment and Admissions, and Research; organizing seminars and workshops within the Faculty to address equity issues.

At a personal level, MES students have the responsibility and opportunity to design their own plans of study, and to incorporate diversity and equity concerns into the substantive content as well as the methodological approaches to their studies. Consider the following questions: How does the framing of an area of concentration reflect the histories, experiences, and issues of groups marginalized by disabilities, sexual and gender diversity, Aboriginal identity, class and poverty, race and ethnicity, and gender? Are there ways that students can challenge dominant modes of analysis or privileged practices by bringing in alternative perspectives on environmental and social issues? How can students integrate other ways of knowing, learning, and communicating into their learning strategies? What forms of communication (verbal, visual, performative, etc) would be most appropriate for the area of interest, audience, and intent of the student's studies?

### **Accommodation**

If a student needs special support in assignment and assessment procedures to accommodate any particular disabilities or needs based on socio-economic status, sexual and gender diversity, Aboriginal identity, race, ethnicity, religion, s/he should talk to his/her academic advisor and course directors. Faculty are required to accommodate any student who is a registered client of The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD). The Office for Persons with Disabilities provides information, support, and advocacy on behalf of students, staff, and faculty with mobility, hearing, visual, and invisible disabilities. For more information, see <http://www.yorku.ca/opd/>

## 15. FULL-TIME FACULTY MEMBERS

**Harris Ali** Associate Professor ([hali@yorku.ca](mailto:hali@yorku.ca))

Environmental disaster research; Health impacts; Emergency response and risk management; Contested diseases; Contaminated communities; Global cities and health regulations; Sociology of environmental health risks

**Deborah Barndt** Professor ([dbarndt@yorku.ca](mailto:dbarndt@yorku.ca))

Community arts and popular education in Canada and Latin American; Diversity and equity, ways of knowing; Women workers, food and globalization; Transnational activism.

**Martin Bunch** Associate Professor & Associate Dean of Research ([bunchmj@yorku.ca](mailto:bunchmj@yorku.ca))

Public participation and GIS; Web-distributed GIS; Adaptive ecosystem approach; Complexity science; Urban environmental management; Natural-human systems modeling; Ecosystem Management in the Golden Horseshoe region of Southern Ontario, Chennai, Tamil Nadu India

**Mora Campbell** Associate Professor ([moracamp@yorku.ca](mailto:moracamp@yorku.ca))

Environmental thought, spirituality and embodied knowledges; Narrative approaches to environmental and agricultural ethics; Time and technology; Yogic philosophy/practice; Indigenous modes of knowing in university settings

**Robin Cavanagh** Lecturer ([cavanagh@yorku.ca](mailto:cavanagh@yorku.ca))

Indigenous Research Methodologies; Spiritual Pedagogies; Indigenous Education; Environmental Justice; Cross-cultural Spaces; Research Ethics and Protocols

**Sebastien Darchen** Sessional Assistant Professor ([sdrachen@yorku.ca](mailto:sdrachen@yorku.ca))

Urban development processes; Urban stakeholders, Participation in planning; Urban Economics; Suburban development; Planning Marketing strategies

**Ravi de Costa** Associate Professor ([rdc@yorku.ca](mailto:rdc@yorku.ca))

Colonialism; Globalization, transnationalism and Indigenous people; Political development

**José Etcheverry** Assistant Professor ([rejose@yorku.ca](mailto:rejose@yorku.ca))

Climate Change Policy; Energy Conservation and Renewable Energy strategies; Energy Policy for Sustainable Development; Environmental Policy

**Leesa Fawcett** Associate Professor & Associate Dean of Students ([lfawcett@yorku.ca](mailto:lfawcett@yorku.ca))

Human/animal relationships; Animal consciousness; Environmental education (critical and feminist pedagogy); Biological conservation and natural history; Ecofeminism; Women, science, and biotechnology; Organic gardening

**Sarah Flicker** Associate Professor ([flicker@yorku.ca](mailto:flicker@yorku.ca))

Urban Health; Community Based Participatory Research; Adolescent health; HIV; Community Development; Gender; Social Determinants of Health

**Honor Ford-Smith** Associate Professor ([hoperoad@yorku.ca](mailto:hoperoad@yorku.ca))

Community arts; Cultural studies; Social environment; politics and identity; social change; gender and sexuality

**Jennifer Foster** Associate Professor ([jfoster@yorku.ca](mailto:jfoster@yorku.ca))

Urban and regional environmental planning; Ecological restoration; Landscape ecology; Spatial practices; Political ecology, Environmental aesthetics; Discourse analysis; Urban Nature

**Gail Fraser** Associate Professor ([gsfraser@yorku.ca](mailto:gsfraser@yorku.ca)) *on sabbatical leave 2010-11*

Ecology (avian, aquatic, behavioral, marine, terrestrial); Applied ecology; Interface between ecological knowledge and policy; Indicators of ecosystem health; Wildlife management; Conservation biology

**Liette Gilbert** Associate Professor ([gilbertl@yorku.ca](mailto:gilbertl@yorku.ca))

Citizenship; diversity and immigration; Politics of multiculturalism; Production of built environments; Urban and environmental justice; Border studies and North American identities; Politics of landscapes, sprawl and conservation

**Ilan Kapoor** Professor & Undergraduate Program Director ([ikapoor@yorku.ca](mailto:ikapoor@yorku.ca))  
Development studies and Third World politics; Global environmental politics; Participatory development, Democratic theory and democratization; Postcolonial theory and cultural studies; Socio-environmental movements in the North and South; New critiques of development (ecological, post development post Marxist, feminist, anti-racist, non-western, postcolonial)

**Roger Keil** Professor & Director, City Institute ([rkeil@yorku.ca](mailto:rkeil@yorku.ca))  
Global Cities; Urban politics and governance; Urban political ecology; Cities and infectious disease (SARS in Toronto); European and North American cities

**Stefan Kipfer** Associate Professor & PhD Program Coordinator ([kipfer@yorku.ca](mailto:kipfer@yorku.ca))  
Comparative urban, social and regional planning and politics; Urban social and political theory; Canadian political economy and urbanization; Globalization; Transnational urbanization and restructuring; Multiculturalism and racialization; Ecology; Sustainability and urbanization

**Ute A. Lehrer** Associate Professor ([lehrer@yorku.ca](mailto:lehrer@yorku.ca))  
Urban geography; Cities and globalization; Image production in cities; Economic restructuring and urban form; Political economy of the built environment; Built environment, ethnicity and immigration to urban areas; Theory and history of planning, urban design and architecture

**Rod MacRae** Associate Professor & MES Program Coordinator ([rmacrae@yorku.ca](mailto:rmacrae@yorku.ca))  
Federal food policy making Regulatory frameworks for pesticide and GE crops, Demand - supply management in the food system, Strategies to localize the food and agriculture system, Farm environmental goods and services payments

**Lewis Molot** Professor ([lmolot@yorku.ca](mailto:lmolot@yorku.ca)) *on sabbatical leave 2011*  
Iron regulation of cyanobacterial blooms in eutrophic waters; Nutrient and carbon fluxes through forested catchments and lakes; UV and FE control of organic carbon dynamics in surface waters

**Peter R. Mulvihill** Associate Professor ([prm@yorku.ca](mailto:prm@yorku.ca))  
Environmental planning; Environmental assessment; Environmental history; Northern Canada; Rural and ex-urban sustainability

**Patricia E. Perkins** Associate Professor ([esperk@yorku.ca](mailto:esperk@yorku.ca))  
International trade; Trade and environment; Ecological economics; Community economic development; Metal markets and trade; Debt, poverty, and environmental degradation; Women, ecology and economics

**Rebecca L. Peterson** Associate Professor ([rebecca@yorku.ca](mailto:rebecca@yorku.ca))  
Women and environments; Environment and behaviour; Work environments; Gender and environmental health

**Justin Podur** Associate Professor ([jpodur@yorku.ca](mailto:jpodur@yorku.ca))  
Forest Fires; Mathematical Modeling; Statistics; Operations research; Landscape ecology

**Barbara Rahder** Professor and Dean ([rahder@yorku.ca](mailto:rahder@yorku.ca))  
Community-based planning; Diversity, equity and access to community services; Planning theory and history; Women and planning; Sustainable community and campus planning

**Raymond A. Rogers** Associate Professor ([rrogers@yorku.ca](mailto:rrogers@yorku.ca)) *on sabbatical leave 2010-11*  
Relationship between economics and the natural world focusing on critiques of conservation and development; Application of social theory to the environmental crisis; Cultural studies

**R. L. Liora Salter** Professor, Joint Appointed with Osgoode Hall School ([lsalter@skywaywest.net](mailto:lsalter@skywaywest.net))  
Communications; Law, science and technology policy standards; Regulation and public policy; Language and political controversies

**L. Anders Sandberg** Professor (sandberg@yorku.ca)  
Forest and environmental history; Political Ecology; Critical studies of the environment sciences; Maritime, and Scandinavian studies

**Catriona A. H. Sandilands** Professor & Canada Research Chair in Sustainability and Culture (essandi@yorku.ca)  
Nature and environment in social and political theory; Gender, sexualities and (eco)feminism; Radical democracy and environmental citizenship; Cultural studies; Nationalisms and natures

**Dayna Nadine Scott** Associate Professor & Director of National Network on Environments and Women's Health, Joint Appointed with Osgoode Hall School (dscott@osgoode.yorku.ca) Environmental Justice; Globalization/Localization; Critical Sociology of Risk; Trends in Regulation and Governance

**Grant Sheng** Assistant Professor (sheng@yorku.ca) *on leave*  
Computer modeling and simulation; Ecological modeling; Nuclear and toxic waste disposal; Risk analysis; Influence of computer technology on culture and society; Facility siting processes

**Joseph W. Sheridan** Associate Professor, Joint appointed with Faculty of Education (Joe\_Sheridan@edu.yorku.ca)  
Environmental education; Environmental thought and First Nations tradition; Folk culture; Media technology and oral cultures; Educational reform on environmental models; Homelessness

**Laura Taylor** Assistant Professor (taylorl9@yorku.ca)  
Politics of nature in urban expansion; Culture/nature studies; Conservation planning; Processes and discourses of landscape settlement and landscape conservation; Urban-rural fringe; Urban dispersion and sprawl; Political negotiation of landscape meaning and values; Textual landscapes; Visual culture studies.

**Gregory W. Thiemann** Assistant Professor (thiemann@yorku.ca)  
Northern ecology and conservation of arctic carnivores (particularly polar bears); Animal foraging behaviour; Biological conservation; Ecosystems and Wildlife management; Relationships between northern aboriginal communities and the wildlife populations; climate change impact on northern populations

**Peter C. Timmerman** Associate Professor & Business and Environment Program Coordinator (ptimmer@yorku.ca)  
Environmental ethics; Environmental conflict; Coastal city management

**Peter A. Victor** Professor (pvictor@yorku.ca)  
Ecological economics; Renewable energy; Sustainable development; Peak Oil

**Gerda R. Wekerle** Professor & Graduate Planning Programs Coordinator (gwekerle@yorku.ca)  
Sprawl and growth management; Urban politics and the local state; Urban agriculture; Community food security; Cultural landscapes; Urban natures; Planning and civil society; Urban theory; Gender and cities; Social movements

**Paul F. Wilkinson** Professor (eswilkin@yorku.ca)  
International development; Resource and environmental management; Caribbean; recreation and tourism geography; Recreation and tourism planning and management; open space planning; Protected-area management

**Mark Winfield** Associate Professor & MES/JD Program Coordinator (marksw@yorku.ca)  
Environmental Policy; Environmental Law; Sustainable Energy; Urban Sustainability; Climate Change Policy

**Anna Zalik** Associate Professor (azalik@yorku.ca)  
Political economy of development; social movements; comparative historical sociology of post-colonialism; sociology of the aid industry in Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa

## Appendix 2: MES PROGRAM SUMMARY

term	1 fall	2 winter	3 spring	4 fall	5 winter	6 spring
<i>enrolment</i>	Fall, Winter and Summer terms Enrolment paperwork (i.e. advising forms listing courses and individualized course form/description) must be completed each term and submitted to OSAS					
<i>MES stage (duration)</i>	<b>MES I</b> (1 term)	<b>MES II</b> (2-3 terms)		<b>MES III</b> (2-4 terms)		
<i>Plan of study</i>	<b>Develop initial plan</b> (with advisor) Title/abstract Personal statement Currents of thoughts Area of concentration Components Objectives Course list (6 terms) Bibliography	<b>Revise plan</b> (with advisor)	<b>Revise/finalize plan</b> (with advisor) <b>Submit</b> Preliminary Research Proposal and Request for Supervision <b>Prepare/finalize proposal</b> (with supervisor) Title/abstract Relations with plan Problem statement Research context Research design Methodology Tentative outline Timeline Bibliography	<b>Research</b> (with supervisor)	<b>Research/write major research</b> (with supervisor)	<b>Finalize and submit major research</b> (with supervisor)
<i>Examination</i>	<b>MES I to II exam</b> with advisor + reader  If not approved, requires exam If not approved after exam, withdrawal	<b>General exam</b> with advisor	<b>General exam</b> with advisor  <b>or</b> <b>MES II to III exam</b> with advisor + supervisor	<b>MES II to III exam</b> with advisor + supervisor  <b>or</b> <b>No exam</b> required if already at MES III	<b>No exam</b> required if already at MES III	<b>Final exam</b> with supervisor, advisor + chair  scheduled by OSAS
<i>Submission</i>	MES I to II exam: 1 copy of initial plan of study to circulate from advisor to reader to OSAS dossier	General exam: 2 copies of revised plan of study 1 to advisor and 1 to OSAS dossier	General exam: 2 copies of revised plan of study for advisor and OSAS dossier  MES II to III Exam: 3 copies of final plan of study and proposal: advisor, supervisor, OSAS dossier. HPR and/or risk forms.	MES II to III exam: 3 copies of final plan of study and proposal for advisor, supervisor, OSAS dossier. HPR and/or risk forms.		3 copies of final plan (including proposal) and examinable copies of major research to OSAS  2 final/revised copies of the major research to OSAS
<i>Period of submission</i>	November 9, 2011 (week 9)	Before the end of term	Before the end of term	Early in the term		July 31, 2012