

# *Social Dimensions of Health Program*

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## **Welcome from the Director**

On behalf of all of my colleagues I would like to welcome you to the Social Dimensions of Health program at the University of Victoria. We are delighted that you have chosen our program and are committed to ensuring that your experience will meet your expectations. As you know, Social Dimensions of Health is a multidisciplinary program offered through the cooperation of the faculties of Social Science, Human and Social Development, Education and Humanities. We seek to provide a stimulating learning environment for our students with a focus on research, particularly that which emanates from the University's research centres. We look forward to working with you as you develop your health research career.

## **Welcome from the Program Assistant**

Greetings Graduate Students, welcome to the Social Dimensions of Health Program! This handbook contains essential guidelines, information and resource references. If you can't find what you're looking for within these pages, then check in with me, your Program Assistant or our Program Director/Adviser, Dr. Michael Hayes. If we can't answer your questions, we'll point you in the right direction.

We recommend that you check out the UVic on-line resources, especially the websites for [SDH](#), [Graduate Studies](#), [Graduate Admissions and Records](#) and the [Library](#). Other than that, register on time, study hard, and have fun!

## **Our Contact Information**

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## *What students need to know*

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### **E-mail**

It is essential that every graduate student have a current UVic email address. You will be receiving important messages by email from the Program Director, the Program Assistant, members of your supervisory committee, and the instructors in your graduate courses. You are entitled to a free email account through [NetLink](#). You can also set up mail forwarding from your UVic account to another email account.

### **Registration**

Once you have been fully admitted you can sign up for your UVic Netlink account online. Your NetLink ID will give you access to My page where you will register for classes. Your registration date and time will only be available through My page <https://www.uvic.ca/cas/login?service=https://www.uvic.ca/mypage/Login> so you **must** set up a NetLink ID. See <http://web.uvic.ca/reg101/index.php> for detailed information on registration. Although you can use My page to register for **SDH** graduate courses, you will need special permission to register for graduate courses outside the Social Dimensions of Health Program (elective and methods courses). If you want to register in a graduate course outside of SDH you are well advised to send an email message to the professor concerned, indicating your interest, and asking if there will be room for you in the seminar. Full time status is registration in courses totalling 3.0 units minimum or enrolled in thesis (599) in each term.

The departments/schools offering the elective/method courses will consider requests from SDH students on an individual, student-by-student basis provided they have permission of the instructor and/or the chair or director of the unit offering the course, that there is space in the course and the student has the particular prior background and skills to succeed in the course. Students without an appropriate background may be asked to take additional courses preparatory to taking the courses. Once you receive permission, you will be required to complete a Graduate Course Change form found here <http://www.uvic.ca/graduatestudies/assets/docs/docs/forms/CourseChangeForm.pdf>

Directed Studies courses are courses related to a topic on which the professor has particular expertise. The Directed Studies must be offered by a member of the Faculty of Graduate Studies. (Sessional lecturers are not members of the Faculty.) Moreover, all Directed Studies are "extra-to-load" for the faculty members concerned. That means that if you ask a faculty member to give you a Directed Studies course, you are asking that person to teach an extra course, beyond the person's normal teaching obligations. Thus, a professor may not be able to offer a Directed Studies at all or not in a particular term. If you wish to do Directed Studies with a particular faculty member, you will have to be flexible about the timing, format, and exact nature of the readings. The best idea is to do Directed Studies closely related to your thesis topic. If your supervisor is not teaching a graduate course he/she may be prepared to offer such a course, but be sure to consult with the person concerned well beforehand. Directed Readings courses normally require registration with a proposal for Pro-Forma course form <http://www.uvic.ca/graduatestudies/assets/docs/docs/forms/ProFormaregform.pdf> . This course must be approved by the SDH Program Director.

## Program approval

Your program has to be approved by the Program Director/Advisor and your Supervisors. The Graduate Advisor's main concern is that your program conforms to the Department's and the Faculty's basic requirements.

## Regulations

Once you have become a graduate student, you have to be registered year round. Each semester you must either register or [request a leave of absence](#) or withdrawal with permission. Failure to do so will result in your program being terminated and a statement "withdrawn without permission" added to your official transcript. Full time status is registration in courses totalling 3.0 units minimum or enrolled in thesis (599) in each term.

If you run into difficulties, the Faculty of Graduate Studies allows you to "temporarily withdraw" from the program for up to three terms (4 months each). Once you have exhausted this privilege, you have to maintain your registration (and pay fees continuously). You have to pay **three terms of fees** in order to graduate, no matter how quickly you complete. You only have to pay additional fees if you take additional time to complete.

## Medical and dental coverage

Graduate students are entitled to receive medical and dental coverage. If you already have extended medical and dental coverage and you wish to opt-out of UVic's coverage, you need to take proof of your coverage to the Grad Students Society by **September 30**. For more information, The Health and Dental Plan Coordinator is Ms. Mary Shi. She can be reached by phone: 250-721-8816 or by email: [gsoc@uvic.ca](mailto:gsoc@uvic.ca).

## Library

Library Orientation sessions are held at the McPherson Library in September. Register for a session by visiting the Reference Desk, or by calling 250-721-8274. Further information on using the libraries can be found here <http://library.uvic.ca/using/index.html>.

## Student Computing Facilities

UVic's Student Computing Facilities provide computer classrooms, software, resources and assistance to UVic students, staff and faculty at various sites within Ring Road. Please go to <http://www.sfg.uvic.ca/> for locations and hours.

## Grad Orientation

A Grad student orientation will be held on August 29th. For more information and registration go to <http://transition.uvic.ca/orientation>

## **Important Dates**

In order to meet deadlines for registration, fee reductions for courses dropped etc, please see the Academic Year Important dates for 2014/15 in the UVic calendar.

## **Student and Ancillary Services**

For information on student services such as counselling, child care, athletics, health services etc, please see their website at <http://stas.uvic.ca/>.

## **Tuition Fees**

For information on Tuition fees, due dates etc., please go to <http://web.uvic.ca/gradstudies/fees.php> for detailed information.

**Please see the following pages for more specific program information and policies.**

## Program requirements SDH - MA, MSc

Summary of Course Requirements	Units	Course Registration #	
Fundamentals of Health Research (SDH 500A)	1.5	12837	Winter 2014
Fundamentals of Health Research (SDH 500B)	1.5	22670	Spring 2015
Methodology - Two 1.5 unit courses focus on methods and will typically be chosen from a list of approved courses offered in the program's collaborating faculties.	3.0		Ideally, methodology courses are completed during Year 1 (fall, spring or summer session) depending on course availability.
Colloquium (SDH 501A)	1.5	12838	Winter 2014
Colloquium (SDH 501B)	1.5	22671	Spring 2015
Electives - Two 1.5-unit elective courses, which allow students to tailor their coursework to their specific research interests, will be chosen in consultation with the student's supervisory committee from an approved list of graduate courses.	3.0		Ideally, electives are completed during Year 1 (fall, spring or summer session) depending on course availability.
Thesis (SDH 599)	6.0		See detailed information below.
<b>Total Units</b>	<b>18.0</b>		

### Fundamentals of Health Research (SDH 500A and B)

Master's students are required to complete two 1.5-unit Fundamentals of Health Research courses. These courses will cover topics including basics in epidemiology, ethics, policy, health and wellness, grant and proposal writing, academic presentations, critical review for publication, knowledge transfer and developing community partnerships. Topics covered in the core courses are central to health research scholarship and provide core competencies preparatory to the independent research component of the program.

### SDH Colloquium (SDH 501A and B)

Master's students are required to attend and participate in an SDH colloquium exposing them to a wide range of conceptual and substantive issues that reflect the breadth and depth of health research. Students will receive 3.0 units of pass/fail credit during their first year for attending the colloquium; however, attendance and participation in the colloquium throughout their time in the SDH program is mandatory. In their second year, students will be expected to make a presentation of their own research.

### Methodology

Two additional required courses (1.5 units each) focus on methods and will typically be chosen from a list of approved courses offered in the program's collaborating faculties. The departments/schools offering these courses will consider requests from SDH students on an individual, student-by-student basis provided they have permission of the instructor and/or the chair or director of the unit offering the course, that there is space in the course and the student has the particular prior background and skills to succeed in the course. Students without an appropriate background may be asked to take additional courses preparatory to taking the courses. Other courses, such as directed reading, special topic courses or upper-level undergraduate courses that address health-related topics may be used to fulfill the methodology requirements if approved by the SDH Program Director. Ideally, methodology courses are completed during Year 1 (fall, spring or summer session) depending on course availability.

### Electives

Two 1.5-unit elective courses, which allow students to tailor their coursework to their specific research interests, will be chosen in consultation with the student's supervisory committee from an approved list of graduate courses. Ideally, elective courses are completed during Year 1 (fall, spring or summer session) depending on course availability. The departments/schools offering these courses will consider requests for SDH students on an individual, student-by-student basis provided they have permission of the instructor and/or the chair or director of the unit offering the course, that there is space in the course and the student has the particular prior background and skills to succeed in the course. Students without an appropriate background may be asked to take additional courses preparatory to taking these courses.

Other courses, such as directed reading, special topic courses or upper-level undergraduate courses that address health-related topics may be used to fulfill the elective requirements if approved by the SDH Program Director.

### Thesis (SDH 599)

A thesis based on independent research will form a major part of the program. Thesis proposals will be examined by the supervisory committee in an oral examination. Upon successful defence of the proposal, the student will be approved to begin thesis research and will register in SDH 599 Thesis. Normally master's research proposals should be approved no later than the beginning of the second year of the program. The thesis defence will normally take place by the end of the second year

### Elective Graduate Courses (see list here) <http://web.uvic.ca/sdhealth/documents/SDH%20Electives.pdf>

The list is representative (but not exhaustive) of the types of elective courses from which students may chose. This list will be updated regularly by the SDH Director and Program Committee in consultation with the departments/schools and instructors offering the courses. Space may be limited in some courses and to take them may require that student have particular and appropriate background preparation. Other courses, such as Directed Reading and Special Topic courses that address health related topics and are offered by the Faculties of Social Sciences, Humanities, Education, Human and Social Development and Graduate Studies (for example, GS500) may be used to fulfill methodology course requirements if approved by the SDH Program Director. Similarly, upper level undergraduate courses focused specifically on health issues may be taken for graduate credit with the approval of the SDH Director. Final decisions regarding all methodology courses will be made in consultation with the unit where the course is offered, the course instructor and the student's supervisory committee, and require the approval of the SDHR Director and/or Advisory Committee.

### Methodology Graduate Courses (see list here) <http://web.uvic.ca/sdhealth/documents/Methodology%20courses.pdf>

The list is representative (but not exhaustive) of the types of methodology courses from which students may chose. This list will be updated regularly by the SDHR Director and Program Committee in consultation with the departments/schools and instructors offering the courses. Space may be limited in some courses and to take them may require that student have particular and appropriate background preparation. The departments/schools offering these courses have indicated that they will consider requests from SDHR students on an individual, student-by-student basis provided the students have permission of the instructor and/or chair or director of the unit offering the course, that there is sufficient space in the course to accommodate the student and that the student has appropriate background training and skills to succeed in the course, which may require specific technical as well as health professional background as prerequisite. Students without appropriate backgrounds may be asked to take additional courses preparatory to taking the courses listed here. Other courses, such as Directed Reading and Special Topic courses that address health related topics and are offered by the Faculties of Social Sciences, Humanities, Education, Human and Social Development and Graduate Studies (for example, GS500) may be used to fulfill methodology course requirements if approved by the SDHR Program Director. Similarly upper level undergraduate courses focused specifically on health issues may be taken for graduate credit with the approval of the SDHR Director. Final decisions regarding all methodology courses will be made in consultation with the department/school where the course is offered, the course instructor and the student's supervisory committee, and require the approval of the SDHR Director and/or Advisory Committee.

## MA/MSc Defence of the Thesis Proposal

A thesis based on independent research will form a major part of the program. All MA/MSc students in the SDH program will be required to submit a thesis proposal to their supervisory committee, and to present an overview of the proposal in an open forum talk of 20-25 minutes duration which will be followed by questions from the supervisory committee and others in attendance (the oral defence). The thesis proposal should be 15-20 pages long double spaced (excluding bibliography) and include the following sections: statement of the research question; literature review (why this question is relevant); proposed participants, methods and plans for analysis; time line of the work to be undertaken; budget; and references. MA and MSc students should submit their thesis proposals to the supervisory committee by the end of the second term of the program.

On successful defence of the thesis proposal, the student will be approved to begin thesis research and will register in SDH 599 Thesis. The Thesis is assigned a value of 6.0 units. All research with human or animal subjects will require ethics approval from the Office of Research Services prior to the start of research <http://www.uvic.ca/research/conduct/home/regapproval/index.php> and after the thesis proposal has been approved. The Thesis defence will normally take place by the end of the second year.

### Application for Graduation, Oral Examination and final submission of Thesis

#### PREPARING TO DEFEND YOUR THESIS

**This document is to be used as a guide only. There may be additional tasks/forms required. It is the student's responsibility to ensure all forms and procedures are followed. In order to meet the deadlines, please be aware of the following steps and timelines.**

Please consult the information provided by the Graduate Studies website for advice on preparation of your thesis or dissertation: <http://www.uvic.ca/graduatestudies/resourcesfor/students/thesis/index.php>. The most important thing you must remember is that from start to finish, **the defence process takes approximately 2 months.**

**Application for Graduation** – Complete form and submit before the deadlines below. The [application for graduation](#) form must be submitted by December 1<sup>st</sup> for Spring Convocation and July 1<sup>st</sup> for Fall Convocation, (otherwise you will be charged a late fee). Note: The deadline for completing all degree requirements is the final business day in April for Spring Convocation, and the final business day in August for Fall Convocation.

There are a number of important deadlines to be met before you can graduate. **Students may proceed to an oral examination when the supervisory committee is satisfied that the Thesis represents an examinable document for the degree requirements.** The supervisory committee confirms this by signing and having the Graduate Advisor



sign the [Request for Oral Examination form](#). Read the next few sections carefully, check the [Faculty of Graduate Studies website](#) for deadlines and consult the UVic Calendar <http://web.uvic.ca/calendar2014/>. MA/MSc Students must be registered in their Thesis, (SDH 599) at the time of oral defence. Procedural guidelines for Oral Examinations are available on the [Faculty of Graduate Studies website](#).

### Step by Step

1. First, your supervisor must confirm with you that your thesis is ready to be submitted to your committee for review (it will have already gone through a series of revisions before you submit it to your committee).
2. Your **committee requires *at least two weeks* to read your final thesis** (be sure to also allow for sufficient time to make further revisions).
3. An **External Examiner** is selected (MA, MSc: within UVic but outside of your supervisor's home department. Your supervisor will identify potential external examiners for your oral and contact them directly. You cannot communicate directly with the examiner before the defense and they must confirm "arms length status". The External Examiner is given the lead role in examining the candidate and has the authority to fail the thesis.
4. The student and the committee will decide on a **date for the oral that is convenient for everyone (including the External Examiner)** that is **at least 4 to 6 weeks in the future** (see next point for exact deadlines).

Once your committee has agreed that your thesis is "**ready to defend**", you will attain the signatures of the committee and the Grad Advisor on the [Request for Oral Examination \(ROE\) form](#) and submit to the Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS) at least **20 working** days (for master's students) before the examination. The request for oral examination form must be accompanied by one PDF copy of the thesis burned to CD. Graduate Studies will send this copy to the chair of the examination when one is located. It is the responsibility of the student/department to deliver a copy of the thesis to the external examiner as soon as possible once the date of the examination has been confirmed. You must also submit a copy of the [thesis approval form](#) to your supervisor at the time of your examination. In the case of **master's oral examinations**, the Faculty of Graduate Studies does not cover any expenses incurred in relation to the examination. Normally the committee members and external examiner are located on campus and no travel or postage expenses are necessary.

5. **The SDH Program Assistant also requires a copy of the completed and signed ROE form.**

\*Please note the Dean of Graduate Studies Office requires **at least 20 working days for Master's students** between the submission of the ROE with the thesis to Grad Studies and the date of the defence (*do not count the day of the defence and be sure to skip holidays and weekends when you count*). These are strict deadlines set by the Faculty of Graduate Studies for the timing of this defense; if these are not met, the student's graduation will be delayed.

The oral examination is chaired by a UVic faculty member from another department. The chair is appointed by the Dean of Graduate Studies; this individual is responsible for ensuring that the oral examination is held according to established procedures.

Once you have successfully defended your thesis, you should **allow for at least two weeks for revisions and final approval** from your supervisor and/or committee (therefore, **plan to defend by mid April if you want to complete your degree in the spring term and by mid August if you want to complete your degree in the summer term**).

6. The next two deadlines for meeting all degree requirements are **4:00pm, April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2015 (for spring 2015 graduation) and 4:00pm August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2015 (for fall 2015 graduation)**. **Please note: Graduate Studies allows no exceptions.**

This means that you must complete your thesis, have your final oral defence, complete revisions and submit a copy of your final version of your thesis (on CD) to the SDH Program office and one PDF copy on CD/DVD along with the necessary accompanying documents to **Graduate Studies** by this deadline.

Oral examinations are open to the public. Notice of examination (including room, which is arranged by the department) will be communicated to all faculty members involved and to each academic department at least 7 days prior to the date of the examination. It is the expectation that the student and all the members of the supervisory committee will be present at the oral examination.

#### **Spring Graduation:**

Meeting the **April 30<sup>th</sup> deadline** means that your program will be considered complete as of the end of the Spring Term and that you will not have to register or pay fees for the summer term. You have to **apply for graduation** by December 1<sup>st</sup> in order to be eligible for the spring convocation in June.

In order to meet the **April deadline**, here is an example of actual (latest possible) dates for 2014:

1. **Final draft of your thesis to your committee:**
  - end of February/start of March (Feb. 27<sup>th</sup> – Mar. 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2014)
2. **Request for Oral Examination (ROE) form due to Grad Studies:** *(NB: count the exact number of days)*
  - beginning to mid-March (March 5<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup>, 2014)
3. **Date for oral defence:**
  - First two weeks of April (April 2<sup>nd</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup>, 2014) to allow sufficient time for revisions.
  - defence must occur **no later than April 16<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Fall Graduation:**

Meeting the **August 31<sup>st</sup> deadline** means that your program will be considered complete as of the end of the Summer Term and that you will not have to register or pay fees for the Fall term (unless you plan to enter the PhD program in September). You have to **apply for graduation** by July 1<sup>st</sup> in order to be eligible for the fall convocation in November.

In order to meet the **August deadline**, here is an example of actual (**latest possible**) dates:

1. **Final draft of your thesis/dissertation to your committee:**
  - end of June/start of July (June 25<sup>th</sup> – July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2014)
2. **ROE form due to Grad Studies:** *(NB: count the exact number of days)* • **MSc:** mid-July (July 9<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup>, 2014)
3. **Date for oral defence:**
  - First two weeks of August (August 7<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup>, 2014) to allow sufficient time for revisions
  - Defense must occur **no later than August 17<sup>th</sup>**

After completion of the final examination, the student must complete all corrections required by the Examining Committee. Then, and only then, the student will obtain the Social Dimensions of Health Director's signature as the final signature on a (LOR) letter recommending the student for the degree sought. This letter will state that the student has successfully completed all the requirements of the program, including the oral examination. At this time, the student must present the SDH office with a final corrected copy of the thesis on CD in PDF format in addition to copies of the signed Thesis/dissertation approval form and the Letter of Recommendation.

In addition to the content of the thesis there are a number of elements required in the submission of a thesis. You are advised to read through the final submission document requirements and submission requirements ahead of time.

### **Submission of Thesis to Graduate Admissions and Records Office (GARO)**

The Final copy of thesis must be received by GARO along with the [Thesis/Dissertation Approval Form](#) in accordance with deadlines set by the Registrar for fall and spring convocation. Check deadlines on the Registrar's website.

<http://www.uvic.ca/graduatestudies/resourcesfor/students/gradreq/spring/index.php#section0-15>

<http://www.uvic.ca/graduatestudies/resourcesfor/students/gradreq/fall/index.php#section0-15>

### **Final submission**

In order to be accepted, a thesis or dissertation must be in its final form, including all corrections required after the oral examination. The [student workflow diagram](#) illustrates steps students must complete post-examination.

Make sure you consult the [final submission document requirements and submission steps](#). The correct electronic submission of the thesis or dissertation to [UVicSpace](#) is a requirement for graduation.

For more information on submitting your thesis or dissertation to UVicSpace, consult the [library guidelines](#).

You may bind a personal paper copy of your thesis or dissertation, but this is not required for the submission of your thesis or dissertation.