

Social Dimensions of Health Program

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

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).

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.

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

The UVIC Grad student orientation will be held (Friday September 4th). For more information and registration go to <http://www.uvic.ca/orientation/graduate/index.php>

An SDH student orientation, lunch and meet and greet will be held on Thursday September 10th at 1:00 during the first class of SDH 500/600A, location TBA.

Important Dates

In order to meet deadlines for registration, fee reductions for courses dropped etc, please see the Academic Year Important dates for 2015/16 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 program specific information and policies.

Program requirements SDH - PhD

Summary of Course Requirements	Units	Course Registration #	
Total:	18.0	CRN #	TERM
Fundamentals of Health Research (SDH 600A)	1.5	12902	Winter 2015
Fundamentals of Health Research (SDH 600B)	1.5	22773	Spring 2016
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 601a)	1.5	12903	Winter 2015
Colloquium (SDH 601b)	1.5	22774	Spring 2016
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.
Candidacy (SDH 693)	3.0		In Year 2 of the program
Dissertation (SDH 699)	15.0		See detailed information below.
Total Units	30.0		

Fundamentals of Health Research I, II (SDH 600A and B)

Doctoral 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 (SDH601A and B)

Doctoral 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.

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.

Candidacy (SDH 693)

Within two years of registration as a doctoral student and at least six months before the final oral examination, a student must pass a comprehensive examination. The purpose of the comprehensive examination is to test the student's understanding of material considered essential to completion of a PhD and the student's competence to do research that will culminate in a doctoral dissertation. Doctoral students must register in SDH 693 Comprehensive Exam (3.0 units). This course helps students prepare for a comprehensive written examination on material considered essential to the completion of a PhD, as well as for an oral defense of their dissertation proposal. See complete process below.

Dissertation (SDH 699)

Students will advance to candidacy and are approved to begin dissertation research after successfully completing the comprehensive written examination and oral dissertation proposal defense. Independent research and a dissertation form major parts of the SDH doctoral program. The dissertation is assigned a value of 15.0 units. The dissertation defense will normally take place by the end of the fourth 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 choose. 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 SDH 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 choose. 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. The departments/schools offering these courses have indicated that they will consider requests from SDH 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 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 department/school where the course is offered, the course instructor and the student's supervisory committee, and require the approval of the SDH Director and/or Advisory Committee.

Social Dimensions of Health Candidacy procedures

Candidacy Essays and Oral Defence of the Research Proposal (SDH 693)

Within two years of registration as a doctoral student, and at least six months before the final oral examination of a dissertation, a student must pass their candidacy essays and defend their research proposal. The purpose of the candidacy essays is to test a student's understanding of material considered essential to completion of a PhD and a student's competence to do research that will culminate in a doctoral dissertation. Doctoral students must register in SDH 693 (3.0 units). This course helps students prepare for the candidacy essays on material considered essential to the completion of a PhD, as well as for an oral defense of their dissertation proposal.

SDH PhD Candidacy Essays:

The formats of candidacy processes (also called comprehensive examinations in some departments or schools) vary among programs in the four faculties sponsoring the SDH program. However, to ensure fairness to all SDH PhD students, the format for the SDH candidacy process is as follows. All PhD students are required to write candidacy essays, normally toward the end of the 5th term of residency (i.e., March-April of the second year in the SDH program). The purpose of the essays is to allow each student to read intensively in the area of focus of their PhD research. The candidacy essays can take one of two formats: either three essay questions of approximately 30 pages, OR two essay questions of approximately 45 pages.

In both cases, the essays will be based on a reading list of materials negotiated between each PhD student and their supervisory committee. Reading lists should be compiled and agreed to by the end of the third term, or very early in the fourth term, to allow students enough time to prepare for writing their essays (about 7 months). Given the interdisciplinary nature of the SHD program, it is difficult to prescribe how many readings the lists should include. However, they must be manageable for students and should include readings that are of central importance to a student's proposed dissertation topic, and may reflect topics related to methods/research design, theory, and/or content specific to each student's disciplines or fields of study. Reading lists for each essay will be longer for the two-paper option than for the three-paper option (for example, 40-50 readings per essay for the two-essay option, 30-35 for the three-essay option. These are guides only, and will need to take account of differences between books, journal articles and other materials – ultimately the process rests upon the exercise of professional discretion).

About four months after the reading lists have been agreed to, each student will be given the two or three questions based on their reading lists, for which they will prepare essays of 45 double-spaced pages (for two essays) or 30 double-spaced pages (for three essays), (excluding bibliographies). Essays will be due seven months from the beginning of the candidacy essay process (i.e., from the time the reading lists have been established). A date for the oral defence of the essays will be set one month before the final essay is due. Normally, the oral defence of the essays will occur within three weeks of final essay submission. During the oral portion of the exam, students will be asked questions by members of their supervisory committee relating to the essays written and the materials read.

The candidacy essays and oral defence will be evaluated on a pass/fail basis by each student's supervisory committee. If one of the papers, or its oral defence, is deemed unsatisfactory, the student will have the opportunity to revise the paper based on a schedule negotiated between the student and their supervisory committee, and approved by the SDH Director. If more than one paper is deemed unsatisfactory, the student will be withdrawn from the program. When a student has successfully completed their candidacy examination, the SDH Graduate Adviser will send a memorandum of confirmation to the Graduate Admissions and Records Office. The memorandum should be signed by the student's supervisor and the SDH Program Director.

PhD Defence of Dissertation Proposal

Once their candidacy essays are completed, each PhD student in the SDH program will be required to submit a dissertation 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 their supervisory committee and others in attendance (the oral defence). The dissertation proposal should be 20-25 pages long (excluding bibliography) and include the following sections: statement of the research question; literature review (why this question is relevant); methods and plans for analysis; issues anticipated (e.g., ethical concerns, access to data, logistical concerns), time line of the work to be undertaken; budget; and references. Normally, students will prepare and orally defend the proposal within three months of defending their candidacy essays.

Students will be approved to advance to Candidacy and to begin dissertation research after they have successfully completed their candidacy essays and successfully defended their dissertation proposal – that is, after successfully completing the candidacy process. During this time, students will be registered in SDH 693 Candidacy which carries 3.0 units of credit. All research with human or animal subjects will require ethics approval from the [Office of Research Services](#) prior to the start of research, and only after a dissertation proposal has been approved.

When Candidacy requirements are met, students will be registered in SDH 699 Dissertation, which carries 15.0 units of credit. Independent research and a dissertation form major parts of the SDH doctoral program. The dissertation defence will normally take place by the end of the fourth year. Deviations from “normal” practice will be documented in writing and agreed to by the SDH Director, Supervisory committee members, and the student.

Dissertation (SDH 699)

Students will advance to candidacy and are approved to begin dissertation research after successfully completing the candidacy essays and oral dissertation proposal defense. Independent research and a dissertation form major parts of the SDH doctoral program. The dissertation is assigned a value of 15.0 units. The dissertation defense will normally take place by the end of the fourth year.

Application for Graduation, Oral Examination and submission of Dissertation

PREPARING TO DEFEND YOUR DISSERTATION

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 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 – Dates and deadlines vary depending on whether you are planning to attend fall (November) or spring (June) convocation. Complete the appropriate form and submit before the deadlines.

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 dissertation represents an examinable document for the degree requirements.** The supervisory committee confirms this by 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/calendar2015-05/>. PhD Students must be registered in their Dissertation, (SDH 699) at the time of oral defence. Procedural guidelines for Oral Examinations are available on the **Faculty of Graduate Studies website**.

Step by Step to Graduation

1. First, your supervisor must confirm with you that your dissertation 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 Dissertation (be sure to also allow for sufficient time to make further revisions).
3. In addition to a student's supervisory committee, an [External Examiner](#) and Chair will attend the oral exam. The External Examiner must be chosen by the supervisor and in the case of PhD oral exams must be approved by the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies. [Guidelines for the Appointment of External Examiners of Doctoral Candidates](#). 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 dissertation is “**examinable**”, the student and the committee will decide on a date for the oral that is convenient for everyone. This date must be far enough in advance to allow time to submit the [Request for Oral Examination \(ROE\) form](#) and submit to the Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS) at least **30 working** days (for PhD students) before the examination. The request for oral must be signed by each member of the supervisory committee. Committee members who are away may fax a signature or send an email stating they agree the dissertation is examinable and that they are available on the specified date and time. The form must include the name, address, telephone number and email address for the proposed external examiner.

5. Login to UVic [CourseSpaces](#) using your netlink ID and upload a pdf file of your dissertation (128Mb or less) to GS 599/699. If your dissertation is larger than 128Mb or you have appendices or ancillary information for the examiners (such as a performance video) you will have to bring your dissertation and ancillary materials to the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies appropriately formatted on a DVD
6. Submit the completed request for oral examination form together with an updated CV from the External Examiner for approval by the Dean as well as a copy of the [Confirmation of Arm's Length Status Form](#). Two Arm's Length Status Forms (one form per supervisor) must be submitted if you have two co-supervisors. Graduate Studies will email the External Examiner and examination chair one copy of your dissertation. At this time you will be required to sign a PhD declaration form. Out of town candidates are required to arrive in person to sign the form sometime before the date of the oral examination.

- Please note: Supervisor(s) may obtain pre-approval of the External Examiner from the Dean of Graduate Studies by submitting the [Confirmation of Arm's Length Status Form](#) well in advance of the request for oral examination form. Pre-approval is strongly recommended in every case where the supervisor(s) are unsure of the External Examiner's arm's length status

You must bring a completed copy of the [thesis/dissertation approval form](#) to your supervisor at the time of your examination. In the case of **PhD oral examinations**, the Faculty of Graduate Studies will cover a small portion of the travel expenses incurred in relation to the examination

- Once you have successfully defended your dissertation, 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**).
- The next two deadlines for meeting all degree requirements are **4:00pm, April 30th, 2016 (for spring 2016 graduation) and 4:00pm August 31st, 2016 (for fall 2016 graduation)**. **Please note: Graduate Studies allows no exceptions.**

This means that you must complete your dissertation, have your final oral defence, complete revisions and submit a copy of your final version of your dissertation (electronically) to the SDH Program office via [UVicSpace](#) by these deadlines.

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 30th 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 February 15th in order to be eligible for the spring convocation in June.

Fall Graduation:

Meeting the **August 31st 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. You have to [apply for graduation](#) by July 15th in order to be eligible for the fall convocation in November.

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 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 dissertation in PDF format and a signed copy of the Thesis/Dissertation approval form and Letter of Recommendation.

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

Final submission of Dissertation

In order to be accepted, a dissertation must be in its final form, including all corrections required after the oral examination.

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

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

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