



**SFU**  
**URBAN STUDIES**

# GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

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CANADA'S ENGAGED UNIVERSITY

**SFU Urban Studies**

**Graduate Student Handbook**

**2025 - 2026**

**Please note:** This handbook contains both general information about Simon Fraser University and specific information about the Urban Studies Program. [In case of discrepancy, updated information provided on SFU's website shall prevail.](#)

### **How this handbook is organized**

**Part 1** is mainly about SFU resources and services relevant to all students, or all graduate students

**Part 2** is mainly about The Urban Studies Program: its structure, requirements, expectations and opportunities.

*SFU is located on the unceded traditional territories of the Squamish (Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw), Musqueam (xʷməθkʷəy̓əm), Tsleil-Waututh (səlilwətaʔ), Katzie, and Kwikwetlem (kwikwəʔəm) peoples.*

## Table of Contents

<b>Part 1 – Simon Fraser University .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>1.0 Campus Locations .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>2.0 Student Identification .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>3.0 The goSFU System .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>4.0 Library Services and Spaces .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>4.1 Research Commons .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>4.2 Access to Software and Equipment .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>4.3 Library Resources Specific to Urban Studies .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>5.0. SFU Email and Computing Services .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>5.1 SFU Email .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>5.2 Computing Services .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>6.0 Tuition and Fees .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>6.1 Tuition .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>6.2 Fees .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>6.3 Maintaining Your Student Account in Good Standing .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>7.0 Ways to Fund Your Studies: Scholarships, Awards, Bursaries and Student Loans .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>7.1 Eligibility Restrictions .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>7.2 Need-based Funding .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>7.3 Earn While You Learn .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>7.4 Merit-based Funding: Fellowships, Scholarships and Awards .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>8.0 SFU Faculty of Graduate Studies .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>8.1 SFU's Graduate General Regulations .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>8.2 Helpful Graduate Studies Resources .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>9.0 Student Services .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>10.0 The SFU Ombudsperson's Office .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>11.0 The SFU Graduate Student Society .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>12.0 Health and Wellness .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>13.0 Career Services .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>14.0 Business Cards and Letterhead .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>15.0 Information for International Students .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>15.1 Immigration, Study Permits and Customs .....</b>	<b>20</b>

15.2 International Students Advising Office .....	20
16.0 Transportation .....	21
16.1 Public Transportation – the Universal Transit Pass (U-Pass) .....	21
16.2 Cycling: The SFU Vancouver Bike Room .....	21
16.3 Parking .....	22
17.0 Housing .....	22
18.0 Safety, Security and Working Alone .....	22
18.1 Preventing Sexual Violence .....	22
18.2 Lockers and Lost and Found .....	23
Part 2 – The Urban Studies Program .....	23
19.0 Where the Urban Studies Program Fits within SFU .....	23
20.0 Governance of the Urban Studies Program .....	23
20.1 Groups that Work with or Support the Urban Studies Program .....	24
21.0 Learning and Social Opportunities .....	24
21.1 Learning Opportunities .....	24
21.2 Social Opportunities .....	25
21.3 Making the Most of Your Time in the Urban Studies Program .....	25
22.0 Policies and Guidelines that Urban Studies Students Need to Know .....	26
22.1 Enrolment and planning your program .....	26
22.2 Workload .....	27
22.3 Continuity of Enrollment .....	27
22.4 Discontinuation, Reactivation and Readmission .....	28
22.5 Leaves of Absence .....	28
22.6 Withdrawals .....	29
22.7 Grades .....	31
22.8 Making Satisfactory Progress .....	31
22.9 Including Courses from Outside Urban Studies in Your Program .....	32
23.0 Directed Reading Courses (URB 693 & URB 694) .....	33
24.0 Time Limits for Completion .....	33
25.0 Urban Studies Workstations and Lounge .....	34
26.0 Policies and Guidelines that Concern Diploma (GDUS) Students .....	34
26.1 Enrolling in URB 670 (Research Methods) .....	34
26.2 Minimum CGPA Needed to Continue and Graduate from the Diploma Program .....	34

26.3 Transferring from the Diploma (GDUS) to the Master's Program (MURB).....	35
27.0 Policies and Guidelines that Concern Master's (MURB) Students .....	36
27.1 Supervision .....	36
27.2 Graduate Progress Reports.....	37
27.3 Extensions .....	38
27.4 Minimum CGPA Needed to Continue and Graduate from the Master's Program	38
27.5 Course Sequencing .....	38
27.6 Required Courses for the MURB.....	39
27.7 Research Ethics Approval .....	41
27.8 The Road to Completing the MURB Thesis Project .....	42
28.0 Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty .....	47
28.1 Academic Integrity Requirements for Students .....	47
28.1.1 Notification of Standards of Academic Honesty .....	47
28.1.2 Forms of Academic Dishonesty .....	47
28.1.3 Using Generative AI.....	49
28.2 Guide to the Use of Sources in Assigned Papers in the Urban Studies Program..	49

# Part 1 – Simon Fraser University

## 1.0 Campus Locations

Simon Fraser University offers programming across three campuses: Burnaby, Surrey and Vancouver. The Burnaby campus is the university's original campus, and you may need to visit it occasionally to access the [W.A.C. Bennett Library](#) or take advantage of some of the services and facilities available to students.

The Urban Studies Program is based at the Vancouver campus (Harbour Centre) and all faculty offices, and most classes, are here. At this campus, you will also find the [Belzberg Library](#), computing labs, and Health and Wellness Services, as well as the Research Commons, a graduate-student-only research support and study centre located on the seventh floor of Harbour Centre (room 7050 – door code 1-3-5-2.) The Research Commons has bookable study rooms.

The Harbour Centre building also has a graduate student lounge with a sink, fridge, microwave and tables. This lounge is on the third floor in Room 3410, and its access code is 5129#.

## 2.0 Student Identification

SFU ID cards are obtained from [Registrar and Information Services offices](#). Further instructions including locations and hours of operation can be found on [this page](#). Only one card is issued per student, and it is meant to be kept for the entire duration of study.

You should carry your student ID card with you while on campus, as it is needed to access services and facilities.

## 3.0 The goSFU System

[GoSFU](#) is the name of the online student information system you use to enrol in courses, see how much money you owe for tuition and fees, check your grades, review your unofficial transcript, apply for bursaries and for graduation, among other important tasks.

A guide to goSFU is [available here](#).

## 4.0 Library Services and Spaces

The Belzberg Library welcomes Urban Studies students to its research oasis at SFU Vancouver. It is a full-service library with a wide selection of electronic journals, e-books, online newspapers and databases which augment its more traditional print collection. The Belzberg collection emphasizes urban studies. Additional relevant items from the entire SFU library collection can be requested for transfer from our main campus. You are welcome to use the

space for research, studying and reading, or ask for suggestions on beginning or extending your research, managing your citations or requesting books or articles from other libraries.

## **4.1 Research Commons**

### **4.1.1 Workshops and Writing Help**

Through its Research Commons program, the library offers workshops on topics such as how to use citation management and GIS software, blog your research and format your thesis. Many of these are aimed specifically at graduate students. [Find out more and register here.](#)

You can also get one-on-one help with your writing through the library [by booking an appointment](#) with one of their graduate writing facilitators.

### **4.1.2 Research Commons Space at Harbour Centre**

The Research Commons space on the seventh floor of Harbour Centre (HC 7050) is meant for graduate students, post-doctoral fellows and faculty at Harbour Centre. The space includes individual workstations with PC and Mac computers, printers, bookable group spaces and areas for discussion and relaxation. Please see the [Research Commons](#) page for hours of operation and access info (access is by punch code at the door).

## **4.2 Access to Software and Equipment**

The library also offers research tools and software that you can use on your own computer, spatial and GIS data, digital archives and digital training resources such as LinkedIn Learning.

The library also loans some computer equipment on a short-term basis (i.e. for a few hours), including laptops.

## **4.3 Library Resources Specific to Urban Studies**

Nina Smart is the liaison librarian for The Urban Studies Program, and she is happy to answer your library-related questions. She can be contacted at [nsmart@sfu.ca](mailto:nsmart@sfu.ca).

Nina has created a [web page for Urban Studies students](#) where she lists new Urban Studies books and has posted resources that are relevant to our courses.



## 5.0. SFU Email and Computing Services

### 5.1 SFU Email

The primary way that your instructors, the program and SFU (e.g. Graduate Studies, Research Ethics, the library) will communicate with you is via your SFU email account. Please check that email account **regularly** and pay attention to messages you receive. If you don't, you could miss important information, such as course announcements, reminders about academic deadlines and announcements about funding opportunities.

### 5.2 Computing Services

The Harbour Centre campus has computing labs, which are used as teaching and drop-in facilities. To use these labs, you must be part of the SFU community (including students enrolled in credit or non-credit study) and present a valid SFU library card.

The computing labs are available for drop-in use, unless booked for a credit or non-credit course. Bookings are posted regularly outside the labs. Hours are subject to change without notice, and the labs close regularly for maintenance during breaks between terms. More information on labs, locations and hours is available [here](#).

## 6.0 Tuition and Fees

### 6.1 Tuition

For the 2025/2026 academic year, tuition for both the master's program and the graduate diploma program is **\$348.69 per unit**. This means that for a four-unit URB seminar course, tuition is \$1,394.76. Most Urban Studies courses are four units, although this varies. (You can see the number of units a course carries on the course outline and in the SFU academic calendar.) The number of units is found at the end of the course title in brackets.

### 6.2 Fees

In addition to tuition, it is important to budget for the cost of mandatory fees. As a full-time domestic graduate student enrolled in on-campus courses, you will be charged several types of fees over the course of one academic year. The table below lists those fees with 2025 amounts and how often they are charged.

If you are a part-time student, you will be charged less for the graduate student activity fee and for extended health and dental coverage. It is mandatory to maintain extended health and dental coverage while you study at SFU. If you already have your own insurance, you may opt out of SFU's extended health and dental insurance.

Type of fee	Cost	When /how often charged	Total cost, 1st year
Graduation	\$ 12.00	per term for 1st 3 terms	\$ 36.00
Recreation/athletics	\$ 88.37	per term	\$ 265.11
U-Pass	\$ 187.60	per term	\$ 562.80
Grad student activity fee	\$ 75.13	per term	\$ 225.39
Student services	\$ 53.05	per term	\$ 159.15
Health	\$ 210.00	Annually in fall or prorated	\$ 210.00
Dental	\$ 290.00	Annually in fall or prorated	\$ 290.00
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$ 1,748.45</b>

If you are an international student, the amounts you pay for medical and dental insurance will be different than those listed above. [More information here.](#)

**IMPORTANT:** The tuition and fee information we provide here is only intended to help you estimate your costs. ***For the most current and accurate information on tuition and fees, you should always consult SFU's calendar.***

**Note:** Urban Studies is classified as a “specialty fee” program within the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS).

### 6.3 Maintaining Your Student Account in Good Standing

It's important to maintain your student account in good standing, because if you owe tuition or fees, this will prevent you from enrolling in courses for the next term (as well as from ordering an official transcript or obtaining your parchment when graduating).

[Information on how to pay your tuition and fees is here.](#)

You can check to see if you [owe SFU any money through goSFU](#).

If you don't understand what you are being charged for or disagree with the amounts being charged, here are two things to try:

1. If you haven't already done so, look at the “Activity” and/or “Charges Due” sections of your account, which you can find in the Finances section of your [student centre in goSFU](#). Below is an example of the types of charges you will see listed.

Summary **Activity** Charges Due

Account Activity

Term Balance: **0.00 (All Terms)** [View a Student's previously requested Report](#)

View by

From 2019/02/13 To 2020/10/01 **All Terms** go

Transactions		Find	View All	First	1-10 of 38
Transaction Date	Item	Term	Charge	Payment	Refund
2020/09/23	Payment	2020 Fall		2,021.46	
2020/07/16	GRAD Tuition T2202A - Select Topics in Urban Studies	2020 Fall	1,263.28		
2020/07/10	U-Pass BC Fee Assessment	2020 Fall	170.00		
2020/07/08	GRAD Student Activity Fee	2020 Fall	75.13		
2020/07/08	GRAD Student Services Fee	2020 Fall	48.05		
2020/07/08	Grad Health Plan Dental	2020 Fall	269.10		
2020/07/08	Grad Health Plan Medical	2020 Fall	195.90		
2020/06/16	Payment	2020 Summer		1,327.02	
2020/05/21	U-Pass BC Fee Adjustment	2020 Summer		41.00	
2020/04/21	U-Pass BC Fee Adjustment	2020 Summer		170.00	

Currency used is Canadian Dollar

- If the charges you see don't make sense to you, or you think they're incorrect, contact student accounts at [student\\_accounts@sfu.ca](mailto:student_accounts@sfu.ca) or 778.782.6930. You can also check with [urban@sfu.ca](mailto:urban@sfu.ca).

## 7.0 Ways to Fund Your Studies: Scholarships, Awards, Bursaries and Student Loans

It may be possible to offset some of the costs of your studies by applying for a combination of bursaries, scholarships and fellowships, student loans and/or research and teaching assistant positions. Some of this funding is needs-based (e.g. bursaries) while other sources are merit-based (i.e. based on grades and academic performance) such as graduate fellowships, private awards and outside awards).

### 7.1 Eligibility Restrictions

Whether needs-based, merit-based or both, funding is usually restricted on various grounds, most commonly including the type of program you're enrolled in, your enrolment status and your citizenship or residency. There may also be requirements to possess a minimum CGPA before applying, and to maintain a minimum CGPA while holding the award. These various restrictions are set by the funders and are outside the control of the Urban Studies Program.

Most funding opportunities are restricted to students pursuing a master's degree (MURB). Many scholarships, awards and bursaries require students to be enrolled in their program of study on

a full-time basis, at least in the term in which the award is to be held. Thus, timing your award application is important to optimizing your outcome.

A graduate student in the SFU Urban Studies Program is considered full-time when they are enrolled in six or more units in a given term.

Most URB courses are worth four units, so typically students have to enrol in more than one course to be considered full-time. Important exceptions are URB 692, URB 696, URB 697 and the Urban Studies Field School, all of which carry a workload equivalent to six units.

This is especially important for part-time MURB students to keep in mind because it means they are eligible to hold a graduate fellowship while enrolled in URB 696 or 697. Note that other criteria for being awarded a GF still apply.

### **7.1.1 Considerations for International Students**

If you're hoping to obtain financial support through loans or grants from your country of origin, we recommend that you secure these arrangements before arriving in Canada. Organizations that provide grants and loans outside of Canada can take considerable time to assess whether the Urban Studies Program meets their funding criteria.

## **7.2 Need-based Funding**

[General information on financial aid administered by SFU can be found here.](#)

### **7.2.1 Bursaries**

To apply for a bursary, you must:

- be enrolled full-time (minimum six units) in an approved program
- have a demonstrated financial need (as assessed by SFU)

[Apply through goSFU.ca during the application periods.](#)

[More information on bursaries s available here.](#)

### **Eligibility**

Part-time students: no

Master's students: yes

Diploma students: yes

International students: yes

### 7.2.2 The Work-Study Program

The work-study program provides part-time on-campus jobs for full-time undergraduate and graduate students. The purpose is to provide financial assistance and career-related employment experience to students in high financial need. The value of work-study awards varies according to the applicant's need and funding availability. Graduate students must meet the following criteria to qualify for the work-study program:

- have been assessed as in high financial need
- be a registered full-time graduate student
- maintain satisfactory academic standing

Work-study applications are accepted for each term and can be completed [online via goSFU](#) during the application periods. Follow the links under "My finances." Only one application is required for both bursaries and the work-study program.

Application periods and deadlines [are available here](#).

[More information on the work-study program is available here.](#)

#### Eligibility

Part-time students: no

Master's students: yes

Diploma students: yes

International students: yes

### 7.2.3 Student loans (Provincial and Federal)

Eligibility for student loans is based on financial need. Canadian students applying for a loan must do so through the province in which they reside. International students are not eligible for provincial or federal student loans but may be eligible for student loans in their country of origin or citizenship. Student loan applications for Canadian students are available at Information/Registration Services at the Harbour Centre campus.

**Note:** For BC student loans, students are considered full-time if they carry a course load of six or more units in a given term. Loan programs in other provinces may assess a full-time course load as enrolling in ten or more units in a given term.

[See here for more info](#) and/or seek advice from [SFU's Financial Aid office](#).

#### Eligibility

Part-time students: yes, with conditions

Master's students: yes

Diploma students: yes

International students: no

## 7.3 Earn While You Learn

### 7.3.1 Teaching and Research Assistantships

The Urban Studies program does not typically offer teaching assistantships because we are primarily a graduate program. Sometimes our students are hired as teaching assistants by other SFU departments. [These opportunities and information on how to apply for them can be found here.](#) These opportunities may involve working at either the Burnaby or Surrey campuses.

Research assistantships within Urban Studies are available occasionally. The program or individual faculty members will announce these opportunities via the Urban Studies student e-mail list. Feel free to ask faculty members about current or upcoming opportunities. Note as well that some faculty give preference to students they have taught, and thus have had the opportunity to assess directly.

#### Eligibility

Part-time students: yes

Master's students: yes

Diploma students: yes

International students: yes

### 7.3.2 The Master's Co-op Program

The Urban Studies program also offers a co-operative education option for students pursuing the MURB degree. Co-op placements are paid placements arranged through the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Co-operative Education office. While co-op placements will be noted on your transcript, they do not carry credit value toward completion of your degree requirements. Most Urban Studies students who participate in co-op do so in the summer term. If you're interested in a summer co-op placement, you should attend an information session and join the co-op program the preceding September. We will send information about these information sessions to the student email list. [Lina Guo is the coordinator](#) for the FASS master's co-op program. More information about the [program can be found here.](#)

#### Eligibility

Part-time students: yes

Diploma students: no

International students: yes, with a valid study permit

### 7.3.3 MITACS Accelerate Internship Program

MITACS Accelerate is a federally-funded matching grant program that provides research and practice internships to students. You can obtain a four-month full-time internship or a six-month part-time internship in which you dedicate approximately half your time to work in a private

sector or not-for-profit organization and the other half to research that is relevant to the organization. The internship therefore requires: a private sector or not-for-profit organization partner willing to contribute financially to the internship and participate in supervising the proposed internship project; a faculty supervisor willing to partner and supervise the research component of the project; and a successful application. The MITACS program also offers occasional professional development opportunities for participants. Occasionally, a partner organization approaches Urban Studies with an internship opportunity that we then pass on to students. More information about the [program can be found here](#).

### Eligibility

Part-time students: yes

Master's students: yes

Diploma students: yes

International students: yes, with a valid study permit

## 7.4 Merit-based Funding: Fellowships, Scholarships and Awards

We strongly encourage students to apply for all awards they are eligible for. SFU Graduate Studies [maintains an awards web page](#). Students are encouraged to consult this resource regularly. Application deadlines for some awards are announced, but students should pay attention to external announcements.

The time spent searching on SFU's graduate awards website (and beyond) can pay off. Urban Studies students have succeeded in winning many competitive grants and awards.

### 7.4.1 Graduate Fellowships (GF)

These awards support students during the research phase of their MURB. You must be enrolled full-time in the term in which you hold this award, but you can apply in a term in which you are enrolled part-time. We usually call for GF applications in the fall (for awards to be held in spring) and, if there are sufficient funds remaining, in the spring (for awards to be held in the summer). Priority is often given to students with high CGPAs (> 3.8) and students entering their thesis-writing term in URB 697. As of fall 2025, a full GF is worth \$7,000. The awards committee can award partial GFs. You must hold this award within the first nine terms of your enrolment, which is something we recommend keeping in mind when planning or requesting leaves.

[For more information and terms of reference, see the awards section of the Graduate Studies website.](#)

### Eligibility

Part-time students: no (not in term you hold the award)

Master's students: yes

Diploma students: no

International students: yes

### 7.4.2 Graduate Travel and Research Awards

These awards fund required expenses and travel relating to the research component of a student's graduate degree. The maximum amount per student for this award is \$7,000, but individual award values will vary depending on the number and quality of applications, and the availability of funds. You must be enrolled in the term in which you hold this award, but you can apply in a term in which you are enrolled part-time. We usually call for applications in the fall (for expenses to be incurred in the spring) and in the spring (for expenses to be incurred in the summer). You must hold this award within the first nine terms of your enrolment, which is something we recommend keeping in mind when planning or requesting leaves.

#### Eligibility

Part-time students: no (not in the term you hold the award)

Master's students: yes

Diploma students: no

International students: yes

[For more information and terms of reference, see the travel awards section of the Graduate Studies website.](#)

### 7.4.3 Awards Administered by Urban Studies (by application):

The Urban Studies Program administers three awards that students may apply for via the online application system (GA3).

Applications are usually due early in the summer, with the awards held in the fall. Students must be enrolled in the term in which they hold the award. These awards are:

- The Doug Drummond Research Fellowship
- Joy de Cosson Graduate Scholarship in Sustainable Transportation
- David Gillanders Award in Urban Studies
- Urban Studies Alumni Award for Community Engagement
- Making Cities Better Together Graduate Award for Indigenous Students in Urban Studies
- Jonathan X. Côté Graduate Leadership Award in Urban Studies

Eligibility for these awards varies. In some cases, part-time and diploma students are eligible for this group of awards. International students are eligible.

The Joy de Cosson award is restricted to female graduate students conducting research related to sustainable transportation.

[More information on the terms of reference for each of these awards is available in the awards section of the Graduate Studies website.](#)



#### 7.4.4 Other SFU Private Awards (by application)

The Dean of Graduate Studies administers [many awards for which Urban Studies students may be eligible](#), including the following:

- BCAA Environmental Studies in Transportation Award
- Laurine Harrison Graduate Thesis Award
- Michael Geller Graduate Scholarship in Urban Development
- Waterhouse Graduate Fellowship in Organizational Change and Innovation
- Arthur and Ancie Fouks Graduate Entrance Award in Public Service
- Knud George Pedersen International Graduate Students Fund Endowment

##### Eligibility

Part-time students: varies by award, but usually must be full-time in the term you hold the award

Master's students: yes

Diploma students: no

International students: yes

#### 7.4.5 The Tri-Council Canada Graduate Scholarship Master's (CGS-M) Program

This prestigious scholarship seeks to develop research skills and assist in the training of highly qualified personnel by supporting students who demonstrate a high standard of achievement in undergraduate and early graduate studies. It is valued at \$27,000 over 12 months. Citizens or permanent residents of Canada holding an undergraduate degree with a first-class grade point average who are full-time students (or who are applying to be) are eligible. Applications are due in the fall term, and students should work closely with their supervisor, program director or graduate chair to prepare strong applications.

More information is [available on the CGS-M website](#).

##### Eligibility

⚠ Before working on your application, please contact [gradawards@sfu.ca](mailto:gradawards@sfu.ca) with your student number **to determine your eligibility**. ⚠

In general, to be eligible to apply, you must have completed, as of December 31 of the year of application between 0 and 12 months of full-time studies (or full-time equivalent) in the MURB program.

Part-time students: Two terms of part-time study count as one term of full-time study.

Transfer students: only count the months of full-time studies in the MURB program; two terms of part-time study count as one term of full-time study.

Master's students: yes

Diploma students: no

Transfer students (GDUS to MURB): yes

International students: no

#### **7.4.6 Urban Studies-administered Awards (by nomination)**

Finally, there are two awards that the Urban Studies Program administers for which students do not have to apply. Instead, Urban Studies faculty nominate students once per year (typically in the early summer for awards that will be held in the fall). Urban Studies faculty nominate students for the following awards:

**The Lambda Alpha International Vancouver Award** recognizes a MURB student who demonstrates academic excellence and leadership (including professional, academic, volunteer or community leadership experience).

**The Downtown Vancouver Association Award in Urban Studies** recognizes an outstanding MURB student who has submitted the best paper in an Urban Studies course over the past academic year.

#### **Eligibility**

Part-time students: yes

Master's students: yes

Diploma students: no

International students: yes

## **8.0 SFU Faculty of Graduate Studies**

SFU Faculty of Graduate Studies provides a variety of resources, special programming and support for all graduate students at the university, including career and [professional development services](#).

As graduate students, Urban Studies students are bound by the student declaration, as well as SFU's graduate general regulations.

[Student declaration here.](#)

### **8.1 SFU's Graduate General Regulations**

GPS oversees SFU's [graduate general regulations](#), which set out requirements and limits for completion times and leaves, among other things. We recommend that each student familiarize themselves with SFU's graduate general regulations because it is each student's responsibility to comply with them.

### 8.1.1 Understanding How the Graduate Regulations Apply to You

This handbook is meant to help you understand how SFU's graduate regulations and other regulations, as well as the policies of the Urban Studies Program, apply to you. If, after reviewing the handbook you have a question about how you are affected by a graduate regulation or whether a particular thing you want to do is possible, you can ask the [graduate program assistant](#), [program manager](#), or graduate chair. Email is the best way to contact them. Please note that if your question is not already answered in this handbook or on SFU's website or relates to a complex or unique situation you have, you may need to make an appointment to discuss your question with the graduate program assistant, program manager or graduate chair, although most student questions can be answered by email.

In some cases (e.g. leaves, etc.), you may also get a direct answer from the Faculty of Graduate Studies by using its [help ticket system](#).

## 8.2 Helpful Graduate Studies Resources

The Faculty of [Graduate Studies Support Portal ticket system](#) allows you to ask Graduate Studies a question online and be assigned a tracking number. You will need to provide your student number. You can assign your question high, medium or low priority. Depending on the nature of your question, Graduate Studies may direct you back to us rather than respond directly and we are happy to help.

Most forms you'll need as a graduate student -- forms to request leaves, extensions, to take a course through the Western Dean's Agreement and to request a program transfer -- are on the Faculty of [Graduate Studies student forms page](#).

Consult the Faculty of Graduate Studies [Dates and Deadlines](#) page for information like:

- When is the last day of classes?
- When can I enrol in courses for the next term?
- When is the last date that I can submit my finalized and approved research project to the library this term?
- When is the deadline for opting out of SFU's health insurance plan?

The Faculty of Graduate Studies also [has its own handbook](#), which it sends to all new graduate students when they are officially admitted. By enrolling in classes at SFU, you agree to follow university policies, such as academic honesty, student conduct, freedom of information and privacy protection, and SFU's Graduate General Regulations (GGRs).

## 9.0 Student Services

Various support and advising services are available at each of SFU's campuses. These include health and financial advising, services for students with disabilities, international students,

Indigenous students and other support services. Some of these services are discussed in more detail later in this manual. See the full list [at the student services website](#).

## 10.0 The SFU Ombudsperson's Office

The SFU Ombudsperson can assist with fairness issues, appeals, interpersonal conflict, academic concerns and policy questions. Students are welcome to consult the Ombudsperson as a first step, last resort or at any point along the way.

The Office of the Ombudsperson provides detailed guidance on how to appeal a grade.

Additional information and support related to student advocacy are available from the [Office of the Ombudsperson](#).

## 11.0 The SFU Graduate Student Society

As an SFU graduate student, you are a member of the Graduate Student Society (GSS) which advocates on your behalf and provides valuable services to you. More information about the [GSS and the benefits available to you here](#).

## 12.0 Health and Wellness

Student health and wellness are key priorities at SFU. Before you feel signs of stress, depression or anxiety, please make yourself aware of the services available to you. These include:

- Health and Counselling: [currently open for bookings](#).
- My SSP (Student Support Program) app: [You can find out how to book an appointment to speak with a counsellor here](#).
- Interfaith services: [Information here](#).
- Wellness programming at SFU Vancouver. More information and the schedule are available [here](#). Other health and wellness events are scheduled in the Harbour Centre concourse on an occasional basis. To find out about them, read the display boards around campus.

If you feel signs of stress, depression or other anxiety building during your studies, **tell** someone you trust.

Please note that for the 2025-26 academic year, SFU will not be requiring medical notes from students to support minor absences or extensions -- defined as up to five days. You must, however, communicate with your course instructor as early as possible about any absences or requests for academic concessions using the [Academic Concession Self Declaration Form](#).

## 13.0 Career Services

SFU provides career advising services on topics such as career exploration, work search strategies, resume and cover letter writing, interview tips, mock (practice) interviews and networking. Services are available at [Harbour Centre](#), [Burnaby campus](#), and [online](#)

## 14.0 Business Cards and Letterhead

Graduate student business cards may be ordered through Document Solutions. [See here for more information.](#)

Should your research require the use of SFU letterhead, [please contact us](#) to request this.

## 15.0 Information for International Students

### 15.1 Immigration, Study Permits and Customs

International students considering graduate studies at Simon Fraser University should obtain current immigration requirements from a Canadian embassy or its equivalent. Students must have a valid study permit prior to entering Canada. Full-time international students holding valid study permits do **not** require a work permit to work on the SFU campus, including as teaching assistants or as co-op students. International students might also be able to work off campus without a work permit if they meet [all the requirements determined by the Government of Canada](#). Students should obtain current customs regulations for any goods and possessions they intend to bring to Canada.

Once admitted, students will receive a formal letter of admission from SFU Faculty of Graduate Studies. Students should present this letter to immigration authorities when applying for a study permit. The processing of an application for a study permit may take many months. Students should therefore submit their application well in advance of their anticipated arrival at Simon Fraser University.

### 15.2 International Students Advising Office

SFU offers many resources to international students planning to study at Simon Fraser University. Check out [SFU's International Services for Students website](#) for more information.

#### Advising Services for All International Students

ISS can provide help with the following:

- Academic and cultural transition issues
- Study permits and entry visas

- Co-op and post-graduate employment work permits
- Medical insurance (temporary and MSP)
- Social Insurance Numbers
- Immigration regulations for on-campus employment & volunteer opportunities
- U.S. entry visas

## 16.0 Transportation

### 16.1 Public Transportation – the Universal Transit Pass (U-Pass)

Each term, students who are registered in at least one on-campus course (of three units or more) and reside within Metro Vancouver are automatically and mandatorily enrolled in the U-Pass program. The U-Pass provides students with unlimited, all-zone access to public transit (buses, SkyTrain, SeaBus) within Metro Vancouver at a significant discount as compared with the cost of a regular transit pass.

[Information about the U-Pass BC here.](#)

There are limited grounds on which you can apply for an [exemption from the U-pass program](#) and fee.

If you wish to apply for an exemption, you need to do so by the deadline each term, which falls approximately two weeks after classes start. Check for the term-specific date on the [dates and deadlines page of the Faculty of Graduate Studies website](#).

Getting to and between campuses by transit

Travel by transit between the Vancouver (Harbour Centre) and Burnaby campuses is relatively easy. The Hastings R5 (Rapid Bus) provides a direct link along Hastings Street, while #145 bus links the Burnaby campus with the Production Way SkyTrain station.

[Bus schedules, route maps, and other transit information.](#)

### 16.2 Cycling: The SFU Vancouver Bike Room

For those who cycle to school, Harbour Centre has a secure bike room in the Richards Street parkade (at W. Cordova), which you can access on Richards St. with a fob. To obtain a fob, visit the Harbour Centre offices at 2000-555 West Hastings St. These offices can also be reached at 604-689-7304 or [admin@harbourcentre.com](mailto:admin@harbourcentre.com). However, you will need to visit in person to obtain the fob and pay a \$25 refundable deposit by cash or cheque.

## 16.3 Parking

SFU students can obtain a discounted rate at the Impark parking structure at 450 W. Cordova, across the street from SFU Harbour Centre. Student card required.

## 17.0 Housing

Most students find housing through channels independent of SFU. However, SFU's Burnaby and Vancouver campuses offer a variety of on-campus housing options available to graduate students. Please visit the following website for more information:

[SFU Residence and Housing](#)

The [SFU Residence at the Charles Chang Innovation Centre](#) is the closest SFU graduate student option to Harbour Centre.

## 18.0 Safety, Security and Working Alone

We want you to be safe when working at Urban Studies. Harbour Centre security regularly patrols the building, but if you are working alone and would like them to check on you more often, you can submit a request by email [securhcc@sfu.ca](mailto:securhcc@sfu.ca) or by speaking to staff at the security desk.

Harbour Centre security will also walk you to your car, bike or transit within a couple of blocks of the campus if you feel unsafe. You may contact them by phone at their non-emergency line: 778-782-5029 (or by dialing 12 from a classroom or campus phone).

In case of emergency, call: 778-782-4500 or 911. The non-emergency line is 778-782-7991.

You can request a [Safe Walk](#) from Security to any destination within a two-block radius of an SFU Vancouver building. Safe Walk is also available from 611 Alexander to the Harbour Centre building.

The Safe Walk station is on the main concourse of the Harbour Centre building. Please contact Security at **778-782-7991**.

## 18.1 Preventing Sexual Violence

SFU is committed to creating a respectful campus community, free from all types of violence, including sexual harassment and assault. [Learn more about sexual violence prevention](#). Support is available, including virtually, through the Sexual Violence Support & Prevention Office for all SFU community members impacted by sexual violence.

## 18.2 Lockers and Lost and Found

Lockers are available for student use on the second and seventh floors of the Harbour Centre campus. Please visit the Information and Registration Services counter to have a locker assigned. A nominal rental fee will apply, and students are required to supply their own lock.

If you want to check whether an item you're missing has been turned in, you can call 778-782-5209 or check with the security staff in the main concourse at Harbour Centre. You can also email [fsvhelp@sfu.ca](mailto:fsvhelp@sfu.ca).

**Reminder: Do not to leave valuables such as laptops, smartphones and bags unattended**

## Part 2 – The Urban Studies Program

### 19.0 Where the Urban Studies Program Fits within SFU

Urban Studies is a program within the [Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences \(FASS\)](#), which is SFU's largest faculty. Every year FASS makes resources and special programming available to graduate students (such as the FASS Graduate Student Support Fund). [Information for and about FASS graduate students](#).

With up to 80 students, the Urban Studies Program is one of the larger graduate programs within FASS.

### 20.0 Governance of the Urban Studies Program

The Urban Studies Program is governed by the Urban Studies Steering Committee (USSC), which is made up of core Urban Studies faculty and associated faculty with urban-related interests. One seat on the steering committee is reserved for a student representative selected by the Urban Studies Graduate Students Association (discussed below) or their designated alternate.

We also have a Graduate Program Committee (GPC), which is made up of the director and graduate chair. This committee handles matters related to curriculum, student discipline and appeals.

The program's Admissions and Awards Committee manages applications for admission and for awards administered by the program.



## 20.1 Groups that Work with or Support the Urban Studies Program

### 20.1.1 The Urban Studies Graduate Student Association (USGSA)

As a graduate student enrolled in the Urban Studies Program, you are automatically a member of the Urban Studies Graduate Student Association (USGSA), which was formed in 2007 to promote and represent student interests within the program. The aims and objectives of the USGSA are consistent with those of the Simon Fraser Graduate Student Society (GSS), which is the umbrella organization to which the USGSA belongs.

The USGSA's mission is to support and advance the academic capacity and social well-being of students in the SFU Urban Studies Program. In other words, they are here to represent **you** and your concerns and hopefully build some social capital (and fun) along the way.

There are many ways to get involved in the USGSA, such as volunteering for a position on the executive and/or helping to organize an event (social, educational or otherwise). Watch for USGSA announcements and initiatives throughout the term.

## 21.0 Learning and Social Opportunities

### 21.1 Learning Opportunities

We typically offer a range of courses in the fall (September), spring (January) and summer (May) terms. This gives students the flexibility to tailor their diploma or master's program to their particular interests.

However, please be aware that we offer most elective and required (master's stream) URB courses only once per year. Self-directed courses such as URB 697 and directed readings are the exceptions to this pattern.

This once-per-year pattern of course offerings has implications for master's students, which are further discussed later in this handbook. And for all students, it means that passing on the chance to take a seminar of interest could mean that you do not get a second chance to take that course later in your studies.

We encourage you to plan for your program completion in your first term of enrolment.

#### 21.1.1 International Learning Opportunities

URB 691/497 is an international field school course in the Urban Studies curriculum that is open to both graduate and upper-division undergraduate students. During years in which it is being offered, information about URB 691/497 will be circulated to all students as it becomes available.

SFU International also offers learning opportunities in a growing range of locations, some of which are appropriate as a component of your graduate diploma or MURB degree. You can [find out more here](#).

### 21.1.2 URB 695: Special Topics Courses

URB 695 is the course number we use for special topics elective courses taught either by core faculty or guests and associates. Don't worry if you want to take multiple different offerings of URB 695. If the course title and topic are different each time, these credits will count!

## 21.2 Social Opportunities

The Urban Studies Program organizes or supports a variety of social opportunities for students over the course of the academic year. We will send you information about these and other opportunities through the student email list.

Also, when possible, the USGSA organizes formal and informal social opportunities for students throughout the year, including partnering with other student and professional groups. In the past, these have included field trips around the Lower Mainland, including with alumni mentors, and pub, trivia and movie nights.

## 21.3 Making the Most of Your Time in the Urban Studies Program

Students and alumni who have done well in the Urban Studies Program often share similar advice and tips for making the most of your time with us:

- **Talk to your professors**
  - While professors are very busy and have many demands on their time, advising students can be one of the most enjoyable aspects of their jobs. Make sure you take advantage of their knowledge and expertise and seek them out. You don't have to have taken a class with a faculty member to approach them with a request to discuss your research, or your ideas for a MURB research project.
- **Use your course assignments to explore and build toward your research project**
  - If you're a master's student, you can focus your elective course work toward testing out parts of your research project. The reading and research you do in your elective courses, especially for your longer written assignments, can help you hone your focus and be better prepared for your independent research. It can also provide lessons in which topics are ripe for further investigation, and which ones are less likely to yield fruitful results.
- **Get to know your fellow students**
  - You never know when a fellow student might know of a book, contact, research tool or conference that could send you off in a whole new promising direction. Whenever you can, be sure to make time for informal and formal socializing opportunities.

- **Take care of your health**
  - The demands of academic life sometimes conflict with what it takes to maintain a healthy mind and body. Do your best to keep your health on the priority list. [SFU Health and Counselling Services](#) will help support you in times of need.

## 22.0 Policies and Guidelines that Urban Studies Students Need to Know

This section discusses the regulations, policies and general advice and guidelines that apply to all Urban Studies students. Over the years, we have found that awareness of these policies and guidelines could have prevented students from experiencing hardship and stress during their journey through the program, if they had known of these policies in advance. References to specific graduate general regulations are included where applicable. In other cases, these policies and guidelines are specific to the Urban Studies Program. Please also see the section on plagiarism and academic dishonesty at the end of the handbook.

### Terminology Note

The research project that MURB students are required to complete to earn their degree is technically defined as a “project” by SFU, though it is functionally the same as a thesis and we therefore often refer to it that way because the latter term is more commonly used and understood. The two terms are used interchangeably in this handbook. See GGR 1.7.2b for reference.

## 22.1 Enrolment and planning your program

### 22.1.1 For new students

Once you have received your formal letter of admission from SFU Faculty of Graduate Studies, you will be asked to pay a \$250 tuition deposit. Paying this deposit will allow you to be activated ahead of your first term of enrolment. GoSFU has useful information for new students, including instructions on how to activate your SFU computing account. You will need this ID and the password you attach to it to access the course registration system.

### 22.1.2 For All Students

You can see [our current course offerings and outlines \(as they become available\) here](#). We post this information once we have confirmed it and then notify students. We post one term in advance to assist in your planning. Keep in mind that future course offerings may always be subject to change.

Because most of our courses are offered a maximum of once per year (and some only occasionally), it is wise to make a course plan early in the program. The [graduate program assistant](#) or graduate chair may be able to assist you with course planning. We recommend that students keep an eye open for new course opportunities that may arise. You can register

yourself for most courses, except for the directed readings and MURB research project course (URB 697). You must do so via the goSFU system. Access is automatic if your student account is in good standing.

### 22.1.3 When to Enrol

The enrolment (also referred to as registration) process begins two months ahead of the next term. You can find the specific date that [enrolment opens for the next term here](#).

**We strongly recommend that you check the status of your student account *at least a week ahead of the date enrolment opens* in case there are any obstacles to your enrolment that you need to resolve.**

Common obstacles (sometimes referred to as service indicators) include overdue tuition or other fees (even small amounts) and exceeding the time limit for your program. In the latter case, you will need to submit an extension request and have that request approved by your supervisor and the graduate program chair, and then reviewed, approved and processed by the Faculty of Graduate Studies before you can enrol. This can take a week or more, by which time your preferred course could be full.

#### GGR 1.4.2 Enrollment

### 22.1.4 Priority Registration Period for Urban Studies Students

Urban Studies students have registration priority in Urban Studies courses **only during the first two weeks of the registration period**. We encourage students to enrol as soon as enrolment opens to avoid disappointment, as most of our courses fill up very quickly. After the priority registration period, any graduate students may register for URB courses.

## 22.2 Workload

Because the program is reading-, writing-, and presentation-intensive, students should expect to spend an **average of 20 hours per week for each course in which they are enrolled**.

We therefore recommend that full-time students register for **no more than two courses per term**. This will facilitate your academic success and aid your competitiveness for internal and external awards.

## 22.3 Continuity of Enrollment

According to Graduate General Regulation 1.4.1, students are required to maintain continuous enrolment. When students find it necessary to interrupt their studies, they must apply for a leave of absence as per Graduate General Regulation 1.4.5.

## GGR 1.4.1 Continuity of enrolment

## 22.4 Discontinuation, Reactivation and Readmission

### 22.4.1 Reactivation

If you are **not** either enrolled or on leave by the end of the sixth week of classes each term, you will be discontinued from your program. If you have not yet reached the time limit for your program when you are discontinued, you can apply for reactivation in the same term in which you were discontinued and then be retroactively enrolled.

To apply for reactivation, you must complete the reactivation form on the Faculty of Graduate Studies forms page. Signatures from your supervisor and the graduate chair are also required. After these approvals are obtained, send the form to the manager of the Urban Studies Program, who will review it for correctness and submit it to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for final approval.

[The reactivation form is here.](#)

## GGR 1.4.8 Reactivation

### 22.4.2 Readmission

If your enrolment has lapsed when you are still within the time limit for your program plus three terms of possible extension time and you want to recommence your studies, you must apply for readmission. Note that the time away continues to count towards your time limit and possible extension time for program completion. Students who are readmitted to their program maintain the same start date and time limit from when they were first admitted.

Readmission applications must meet the same requirements as admissions applications and are considered by the Admissions Committee at the same time as admission applications. There is no guarantee of reinstatement.

## GGR 1.4.9 Readmission

## 22.5 Leaves of Absence

If you take a leave of absence, you will not be enrolled and should not expect to use SFU's facilities or resources, or to undertake supervised academic or research work related to your program. Typically, a leave of absence begins on the first day of an academic term. You should request approval for the leave from your supervisor (for master's students) or the graduate chair (for diploma students) before the term that you want to take leave from begins. For all students, leave requests must also be approved by the graduate chair and then further reviewed and approved by SFU Faculty of Graduate Studies. A retroactive request for a leave of absence will not be allowed unless there are documented extenuating circumstances. The form needed to

request the various types of leave is available on the Faculty of [Graduate Studies student forms page](#). Some types of leave may affect the ability of an international student to work on or off campus and therefore international students may wish to consult the resources available on SFU's [Office of International Student Advising](#) before making leave decisions.

GGR 1.4.5 Leaves of Absence.

### There are four types of leave

**Personal Leave:** This type of leave can be taken for any reason, other than those defined below, but the time taken will be counted towards the maximum time allowed for program completion. You are allowed a maximum of three terms of personal leave.

**Academic Break:** An academic break (or scheduled break) can be taken when no courses are offered for a student's program within a particular term. The time taken for an academic break is **not** counted towards the maximum time allowed for degree completion. The maximum number of academic break terms allowed is one term per year, with no consecutive academic breaks. Urban Studies students will normally only be permitted to take an academic break during the summer term. An academic break is only allowed in the following situations:

1. You have already taken all the elective course(s) offered in that term and are not eligible for the required courses.

OR

2. You are a master's student who has completed all your required elective units and are waiting to begin the URB 696-URB 697 completion sequence.

Academic breaks are not permitted for master's students who have begun the URB 696-697 completion sequence.

**Parental Leave:** The time taken for parental leave is **not** counted towards the maximum time allowed for program completion. The maximum number of terms permitted for parental leave is three for each childbirth or adoption (including twins, triplets, etc.). You must provide supporting documentation to be approved for this type of leave.

**Medical or Compassionate Leave (including family caregiving):** The time taken for medical/compassionate leave is **not** counted towards the maximum time allowed for program completion. The maximum number of terms permitted for medical/compassionate leave is normally three terms per reason. Normally, approval of this type of leave requires that you submit supporting documentation.

## 22.6 Withdrawals

You should inform yourself about the course drop dates and the procedures for withdrawing from courses. The Faculty of Graduate Studies keeps an updated list of these dates by term:

### Graduate Studies Dates and Deadlines

If you have [extenuating circumstances](#) that prevent you from completing your coursework, you **must contact your instructor at the earliest opportunity** and supply appropriate supporting documentation.

[GGR 1.4.4 Withdrawal from Courses.](#)

[GGR 1.8.3 Withdrawal from Courses and from the University.](#)

## 22.7 Grades

Most URB courses use SFU's graduate level grading scale, as detailed in Graduate General Regulation 1.5.1.

A+ = 4.33 point  
A = 4.00 points  
A- = 3.67 points  
B+ = 3.33 points  
B = 3.00 points  
B- = 2.67 points  
C+ = 2.33 points  
C = 2.00 points  
F = 0 points  
FD= 0 points See Part 6.3 below.

N = 0 points

URB 697 is not included in the calculation of your CGPA. This course is graded as either IP (in progress) or S (satisfied).

GGR 1.5.1 Standard Grading Basis.

GGR 1.5.2 Competency Grading Basis.

### 22.7.1 Marking and Grade Appeals

Course instructors set the marking practices for their courses and make these known to students. If you have questions about the marking scheme used in your course/s or how those marks translate to SFU's grading scale, ask your instructor.

If you wish to appeal a grade, your first appeal should be to the instructor who assigned the grade. If you are not satisfied with the result of this appeal, you can send a written explanation of your concerns to the chair of the Graduate Program Committee, who is the program director.

GGR 1.16.1 Grades

## 22.8 Making Satisfactory Progress

We strongly recommend that you make it a regular habit to check your own unofficial transcript (available for free through goSFU) to ensure that it is accurate, that you are on track to complete your requirements in a timely way, and that your CGPA is above the required minimums.

While you will receive reminders of various important dates and deadlines (e.g. for course enrolment, course drops and withdrawals, applying for graduation) from us, the Faculty of



Graduate Studies and SFU, it is ultimately your responsibility to be aware of and comply with requirements and deadlines. Information about these requirements is provided in this handbook and in the Graduate General Regulations. If you have questions about the requirements, you are welcome to contact the Urban Studies Program manager.

You can also direct any questions you have about graduate requirements that are not specific to the Urban Studies Program to the Faculty of Graduate Studies directly through [their help ticket system](#).

If your progress appears to be unsatisfactory, the Graduate Program Committee, in consultation with your supervisor and/or supervisory committee (in the case of master's students) may:

- a) require you to withdraw, or
- b) inform you that your progress is unsatisfactory and require you to improve in specific ways in a specific period of time.

Such direction will normally be decided following a meeting of the Graduate Program Committee that will include you. Decisions of the GPC will be communicated to you in writing.

Satisfactory student progress is defined by a number of factors. These factors include, but are not confined to, meeting all the general and specific grading and course completion benchmarks laid out in this handbook, and in the Graduate General Regulations section of the academic calendar. You should also give careful consideration and closely follow the recommendations and criteria provided to you by your supervisor, and if applicable, those of the Graduate Program Committee.

GGR 1.8.2 Review of Unsatisfactory Progress.

## 22.9 Including Courses from Outside Urban Studies in Your Program

While we expect that most students will complete their course requirements within the Urban Studies curriculum (by enrolling in courses that begin with URB), you can request permission from the graduate chair to take up to two graduate-level courses from other SFU departments and count these course units toward the requirements of your graduate diploma or MURB degree.

These courses can also come from other graduate programs offered at universities in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia (via a [Western Dean's Agreement](#)), as well as from international learning opportunities, or via special arrangements. These options also require approval from the department and university that offers them. These processes can take some time so if you are considering taking courses outside the URB curriculum, you should approach the graduate chair **at least** two months before your desired course starts to increase your chance of success. You should also be clear about the number of units (credit hours) that

the outside courses carry, and how this could affect your completion timeline. For example, most UBC graduate courses count for only three units, while URB courses count for four units.

## 23.0 Directed Reading Courses (URB 693 & URB 694)

Under exceptional circumstances and depending on the Program's enrolment profile, directed reading courses may be taken at any point in the program, if you can find a willing faculty supervisor. Directed reading courses may allow you to conduct in-depth reading and personalized learning on a topic of your choice, working mostly independently. The syllabus for each directed reading course should be prepared by you, in close consultation with the faculty member who has agreed to supervise the reading course.

URB 693 is worth two units and URB 694 is worth four units. You should consider the workload and outcomes of the course in relation to the unit-load when creating the syllabus. You may count up to eight units of directed readings courses toward your degree or diploma.

If you are seeking to undertake a directed reading course, first find a willing faculty supervisor. When doing so, please be aware that faculty members may not be available to supervise a directed reading course and are not required to do so. The most common situation in which master's students take a directed reading course is when they want or are required to supplement their knowledge of a subject area related to their proposed research project through additional reading, under the guidance of their supervisor.

If you're able to find a faculty member who will supervise your directed reading, the next step is to prepare the syllabus or course outline, which needs to be approved by the faculty member supervising the course. Next, send this approved document to the Urban Studies manager who will register you manually in the course. Students are not able to enrol themselves in directed reading courses.

## 24.0 Time Limits for Completion

Students have up to nine terms from their initial term of enrolment in which to complete their graduate diploma or MURB degree (see Graduate General Regulation 1.12.1). This time excludes any terms taken as parental leave, medical/compassionate leave, or academic break.

For master's students, extensions to this time limit may be possible. If you have not yet completed your MURB research project by the time you complete nine terms, you will need to submit an application for an extension of your time limits, which will need to be approved by your supervisor, the graduate chair and the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

GGR 1.12 Time Limit for Program Completion

## 25.0 Urban Studies Workstations and Lounge

There are limited workstations and desktop PC computers in the Urban Studies skybridge area (in the 2100 suite of offices) available for student use. These workstations are available to use on a first come, first served basis.

The skybridge space is available for use when Harbour Centre is open. As of September 2025, those hours are 7:30 a.m. to 10:30 p.m., Mondays to Thursdays, 7:30 a.m. to 9 p.m., Fridays and 7:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., Saturdays and Sundays. [Current hours of operation are posted on the Harbour Centre page of the Vancouver campus website](#). Students who require access to Urban Studies office space outside these hours will need to make special arrangements with Campus Security at Harbour Centre so that they will be anticipated by security patrols.

## 26.0 Policies and Guidelines that Concern Diploma (GDUS) Students

This section discusses the regulations, policies and general advice and guidelines that apply to students in the graduate diploma program. References to specific graduate general regulations are included where applicable. In other cases, these policies and guidelines are specific to the Urban Studies Program.

Earning the graduate diploma requires completion of 24 units of URB courses. Students normally complete the graduate diploma in one to two years, depending on their pace of study.

GGR 1.7.1 Minimum Program Requirements for the Graduate Certificate and Diploma.

### 26.1 Enrolling in URB 670 (Research Methods)

MURB students are prioritized for enrolment in URB 670, because it is a required course for the master's program. If space is available, GDUS students who intend to transfer to the master's program and who have secured the written agreement of a faculty member to supervise them if their transfer application is successful may enrol in URB 670. If there is still space available in URB 670 after these two groups of students have enrolled, then other GDUS students may enrol, with the permission of the instructor.

**Note:** Enrolment in URB 696 and 697 is restricted to master's students.

### 26.2 Minimum CGPA Needed to Continue and Graduate from the Diploma Program

As per GGR 1.5.4, a student in a graduate diploma program is required to maintain a CGPA of at least 2.5. If you fail to meet the minimum CGPA, this will be considered evidence of

unsatisfactory progress and will be brought to the attention of the Graduate Program Committee. If your CGPA is below the minimum, you will not be awarded a graduate diploma.

GGR 1.5.4 CGPA Required for Continuation and Graduation.

## 26.3 Transferring from the Diploma (GDUS) to the Master's Program (MURB)

Diploma students may apply to transfer to the master's program. Transfer applications are normally considered only after a minimum of two terms in the GDUS. This time allows diploma students who wish to transfer to demonstrate their academic readiness for such a move. Students also get the chance to know faculty members who may be willing to supervise research projects if their transfer applications are successful.

The transfer process is **both** competitive and merit-based. We expect transfer applicants to demonstrate greater potential for successful urban research compared to external MURB applicants because transfer candidates have already had the opportunity to climb the learning curve through taking graduate courses in our program. The Admissions Committee will seek evidence of such potential in the transfer applicant's proposed thesis topic and research question, and in their SFU transcript *which should include "A" grades* (not just A-) in already completed URB seminars, and especially four-credit elective seminars (except for URB 610) that must demonstrate students' ability in research, analysis and writing. Transfer applicants must identify a continuing faculty member at SFU who is prepared to supervise their MURB research project, and that prospective supervisor must confirm their agreement to supervise the applicant by providing a reference letter for the transfer application package that explicitly states their willingness to take on this role. Sessional and limited-term lecturers cannot fill this role. Transfer applicants must also articulate a specific proposed MURB thesis topic and research question in their transfer application package. Please note that meeting these minimal requirements **does not guarantee** transfer admission to the master's program.

### Timing and course-planning considerations

URB 670 is the first required course for the master's program, and it is commonly offered only once per year, in the spring term. Because space is limited, MURB students have first priority for enrolment when access to this course opens in early November. The second level of enrolment priority is diploma students who intend to transfer in the next application cycle (i.e. for the spring deadline), and who also have secured the agreement of a continuing faculty member to supervise them, should their transfer application be successful. The faculty member will need to notify the program manager or director of their agreement in writing for the student to be included in the second priority group. If there is any remaining space after these two student groups have enrolled in URB 670, the next level of priority is for diploma students who intend to transfer in a later application cycle. Students in this group may enrol in December.

**Note:** Because enrolment for spring courses, including URB 670, opens in early November, diploma students who plan to submit a transfer application for the spring deadline will need to confirm their potential faculty supervisor earlier than that -- i.e. by early November -- to be in the second-level priority group for access to that course. While we will strive to meet student demand for this course, we can't guarantee that space will be available for transfer applicants. In some cases, an alternate research methods course may be taken instead of URB 670, but this would need to be proposed well in advance and approved by the graduate chair.

Diploma students should also be aware that if they have completed all their diploma requirements (24 units) by the fall term, that, assuming there is available space, they will need to enrol in (and pay for) URB 670 in the spring term even though they will not know the outcome of their transfer application until the spring semester is well underway. This means that diploma students in this situation may end up taking URB 670 as a course that is surplus to their diploma requirements if their transfer application is not successful. Your transfer application must include the following:

- the *Request for Program Transfer* form, available on the [forms page](#) of the Faculty of Graduate Studies website
- your **current** curriculum vitae
- a **new** statement of interest
- an unofficial copy of your SFU transcript.
- reference letters (i.e. including one from your prospective supervisor + two others).
  - **Note:** You should arrange for your referees (including your prospective supervisor) to send their reference letters directly to [urban@sfu.ca](mailto:urban@sfu.ca) rather than including them in your application package. This is so that referees can provide their reference letters confidentially, as is done for external MURB applicants.

Email the above document package (except the reference letters) to the [Graduate Program Assistant](#) by the application deadline. You do **not** need to pay an application fee or submit your transfer application through SFU's online application system.

## 27.0 Policies and Guidelines that Concern Master's (MURB) Students

This section discusses the regulations, policies and general advice and guidelines that apply to students in the master's program. References to specific graduate general regulations are included where applicable. In other cases, these policies and guidelines are specific to the Urban Studies Program.

### 27.1 Supervision

Incoming students are supervised by the program director until the director assigns them a supervisory committee composed of a supervisor and a committee member. Supervisory

committee assignments are done via a balloting process, usually in February, whereby students can identify their preferences for their supervisor and the second member of their supervisory committee. Students who don't return a supervisory committee ballot by the deadline will be assigned a committee without the benefit of having had input into this decision.

The supervisor is responsible for providing guidance, oversight and feedback throughout the student's execution of an independent research project, from initial proposal to post-defence revisions.

Committee members normally don't engage with students until they have already completed a draft of their MURB thesis that their supervisor has already deemed to be ready for defence. At that time, the committee member reads the thesis and is asked to confirm whether they agree that the draft is ready to be defended. Committee members also provide quality control by identifying improvements to the draft thesis that would otherwise escape the notice of the supervisor and could delay thesis completion if required by the examination committee as major post-defence thesis revisions.

In assigning supervisors and committee members, student preference is weighed along with the existing workload of faculty, and as a result, there is no guarantee that students will get their first preferences for supervision. If students want someone as a supervisor who is not a core member of the Urban Studies Program, they must obtain that professor's written agreement in advance of the balloting deadline and submit that with their ballot. Committee members are normally drawn only from core Urban Studies faculty members.

#### GGR 1.6.3 Supervisor

## 27.2 Graduate Progress Reports

Graduate regulations require that the progress of students in a master's program be reviewed at least once per year. The program manager will contact you, normally in late spring, to ask you to submit your portion of a graduate progress report (GPR). Your supervisor will then submit both yours and their portion of the report to the Graduate Program Committee chair (or program director) for review. When this review is finished, a copy of the completed progress report is circulated to both the student and their supervisor.

GPRs are mandatory. They also present an opportunity to reflect and gain perspective on progress made, your project goals and plans for the coming year, and to connect with your supervisor about where you are at in the program. Students are expected to fulfil the commitments to reaching academic milestones that they make in their annual progress reports.

#### GGR 1.8.1 Progress Evaluation

## 27.3 Extensions

MURB students may be granted extensions for one to three terms at a time. More than one extension is possible, but only up to a maximum of six extension terms. To obtain an extension, you will need the approval of your supervisor and graduate chair. Before agreeing to an extension, your supervisor may require you to submit a research completion plan that they deem acceptable. An extension that includes a sixth (and final) term of extension will only be granted if the supervisor advises the Graduate Program Committee chair that you have a defensible draft, and the extension is for the purposes of scheduling your defence. Students granted extensions remain subject to the graduate general regulations on leave and continuity of enrolment. The extension application form is found on the [forms page](#) of the Faculty of Graduate Studies website and should be submitted well before the end of the term in which you reach your time limit.

GGR 1.12.2 Extensions

## 27.4 Minimum CGPA Needed to Continue and Graduate from the Master's Program

As per GGR 1.5.4, a student in a master's program is required to maintain a cumulative grade point average (CGPA) of at least 3.0 (B). If you fail to meet the minimum CGPA, this will be considered evidence of unsatisfactory progress and will be brought to the attention of the Graduate Program Committee. If your CGPA is below 3.0 you will not be awarded a MURB.

GGR 1.5.4 CGPA Required for Continuation and Graduation

## 27.5 Course Sequencing

To satisfy MURB requirements, you must successfully complete 32 units. These 32 units are typically made up of elective courses plus three required courses, for which students earn four units each.

The three required courses must be taken in the following order: URB 670, URB 696 and URB 697. URB 670 provides a foundation in urban research methods. URB 696 is designed to prepare students to successfully complete their independent research project. URB 697, which has two phases, is when students collect data for their original research project (Phase 1), write their research project and defend it (Phase 2).

As previously noted, we offer most URB courses only once per year. **This means that deciding to defer a required course such as URB 670 or 696 could add an additional year to your degree completion timeline.**

Students who enter the program in September and are taking a full course load (two courses per term) should take URB 670 in their second term (January) after they enter the program.



**Students who are on this schedule but taking a part-time course load (one course per term) should take URB 670 in the second year of their program.**

GGR 1.7.2 Minimum Program Requirements for the Master's Degree.

## 27.6 Required Courses for the MURB

### URB 670 Urban Research Methods

- This course will expose you to a variety of urban research methods and you should assess each one to determine which method or methods would enable you to analyze data in your research project.
- You must successfully complete URB 670 before taking URB 696.
- A grade below A- in URB 670 signals a need for additional preparatory work on research methods before proceeding to develop your research project. If you receive a B+ or lower, you will need to consult your supervisor regarding additional preparatory work before you will be allowed to enrol in 696.
- A second enrollment in URB 670 will be charged at 50% of the unit fee.

### URB 696 Seminar in Urban Studies

When students are ready to develop and begin executing their research project, and after they have completed the pre-requisites (16 or more units of coursework completed, including URB 670 with a grade of A- or higher), they may proceed to enrol in URB 696. This course is normally only offered in the fall term. Students need to have a provisional research question in mind before entering this course. In this course, students will:

- Develop their initial research question into a fully-fledged and testable research question that is grounded in relevant literature and supported by analysis of empirical evidence.
- Justify the scope of analysis that can address the question within a 100-page thesis.
- Identify prospective research outcomes that yield intellectual value commensurate with the research effort, and which could justify interest and support of this work by third parties.
- Prepare an approved plan for ethical conduct of research.
- Meet with supervisor about the prospectus and develop a work plan for URB 697.
- Complete a project proposal/prospectus, including schedule for completion, and submit a graded copy to your supervisor at the end of the class.
- A grade of B+ or lower in URB 696 signals that a student has deficiencies in their proposed research that either must be addressed in the first term of URB 697, or if the proposed research is not viable, through an alternate approach that is approved by the Graduate Program Committee. This could include re-taking URB 696 to attain an acceptable prospectus (see below for more details).



Upon successful completion of URB 696, students should proceed with their research by enrolling in URB 697 in the following term. However, students can't enrol themselves in this course and will require assistance from the Urban Studies manager. Enrolment can only take place after URB 696 grades are available, because a minimum grade of A- is required to move ahead directly to URB 697. Students who fail URB 696 may not proceed to URB 697.

It is recommended that students enrolled in URB 696 only take this six-credit (i.e. full-time) course, since development of the thesis prospectus usually requires more work than is needed to succeed in our other seminars.

Students need to take URB 696 with the intention and ability to devote dedicated time to completing their MURB project in the following terms of URB 697.

### **Two possible options for students who receive a B+ or lower in URB 696**

A grade of B+ or lower in URB 696 signals that a student has deficiencies in their proposed research that must be addressed in one of two ways.

**Option A:** If the supervisor, in consultation with the instructor of URB 696, judges that the deficiencies identified in 696 can be addressed quickly, the student will be allowed to enrol in URB 697 Phase 1. However, our expectation is that all deficiencies identified in URB 696 and all URB 697 Phase 1 requirements must be met before the student proceeds to Phase 2 of URB 697.

**Option B:** If the supervisor, in consultation with the instructor of URB 696, judges that the student is not ready to correct the identified deficiencies and proceed with a viable research project in the term following URB 696, then a GPC meeting will be convened to determine an alternative path forward. This may include enrolling in additional courses, retaking 696 (charged at 50% of the unit fee), or being required to transfer to the GDUS.

### **URB 697 Research Project**

URB 697 is a six-unit course with two phases (Phase 1, with up to two consecutive enrolments allowed; and Phase 2, with up to three consecutive enrolments allowed). Students remain in IP (in progress) status until they successfully defend their research project. Students will only receive the six units for URB 697 once their thesis is successfully defended, any post-defence revisions have been accepted, and the final version has been accepted by the SFU library.

### **Tuition for URB 697**

Tuition for the first enrollment of URB 697 is based on a six-unit course. Subsequent enrollment in URB 697 will be charged at 50% of the unit fee. All terms in URB 697 are regarded as full-time enrolment for visa and scholarship eligibility purposes.

### 27.6.1 URB 697 Progress Requirements

To move from Phase 1 to Phase 2, students must at minimum:

- Address any deficiencies identified in URB 696
- Secure the required approval for ethical conduct of research, complete data collection and preliminary data analysis, as well as create a draft table of contents for their project in the SFU Library's Thesis Template

#### **And**

- Present their updated research plan, including how they have addressed any deficiencies identified in URB 696, and report on their data collection and preliminary analysis. The student must demonstrate that they have made sufficient progress since completing URB 696 to proceed to Phase 2 of URB 697.

If any URB 696 deficiencies are not addressed and/or progress requirements for URB 697 Phase 1 are not met in the initial term of enrolment in that course, then a second enrolment in URB 697 Phase 1 is permitted. Here again, students can't enrol themselves in this course and will require assistance from the Urban Studies manager. Enrolment can only take place once supervisors have informed the Urban Studies manager whether their supervisee has met progress requirements for moving on to Phase 2 or should enrol in a second term of URB 697 Phase 1.

If, after a second enrolment in URB 697, Phase 1 the outstanding work is not completed, a GPC meeting will be convened to consider whether the student will be allowed to proceed with their MURB or required to transfer to the GDUS.

Students who meet the requirements of URB 697 Phase 1 may enrol in URB 697 Phase 2.

A second enrolment in URB 697 Phase 2 requires students to submit a plan to defend in that term for approval by their supervisor. If students fail to defend their MURB project by the conclusion of their 2nd term of URB 697 Phase 2, then to enrol in a third and final term of URB 697 Phase 2, the supervisor must advise the chair of the Graduate Program Committee that the student has a defensible draft.

27.6.2 Taking elective courses while enrolled in URB 697 is not recommended. Students who have completed a full draft of their MURB project, may with the permission of their supervisor, enrol in an elective course concurrently while enrolling in URB 697 Phase 2.

## **27.7 Research Ethics Approval**

All MURB projects must meet the ethical standards for research as outlined by the university. (See the [Office of Research Ethics](#) and [University Research Policy](#)).

In all cases where students' research entails interaction with human subjects, the student is responsible for ensuring ethical conduct of their project. As part of the course requirements of URB 696, all students intending to conduct human-subject research must apply for ethics approval from the Office of Research Ethics by submitting their MURB project's research protocol and other materials. Formal ethics approval from the ORE is contingent on the approval of the student's application materials by the supervisor, who is also the supervisor of the ethical research protocol and any amendments that may be required.

Research involving human participants may not commence until approval has been obtained. In brief, ethical approval for research means that projects must meet all the following basic guidelines:

- Informed consent of research participants
- Information that clearly outlines that the research participant is being invited to participate in a research project
- An understandable description of the research, the identity and institutional affiliation of the researcher, contact information, the duration, the nature of participation, and a description of research procedures
- An assurance that research participants are free to avoid participation or to withdraw from participation at any time
- An understandable description of the type(s) of data to be collected, the method(s) of data collection (e.g. interview, video recording), the purpose(s) for which the data will be used, and limits on the use and disclosure and retention of data
- Anticipated secondary uses of identifiable data collected during the research, and anticipated linkages of data with other data about research subjects
- Methods for data archiving, and provisions for ensuring security and confidentiality of data

GGR 1.6.7 Human Subjects Ethics Review.

## 27.8 The Road to Completing the MURB Thesis Project

The MURB research project, its defence and satisfactory revisions (which are typically required) comprise the final requirements for obtaining the master's degree in Urban Studies from SFU. The guidelines here trace the route to your project defence, as well as the options and expectations for the document you produce as your project. They are broad and are intended to allow each student and their supervisor to develop a specific orientation within program parameters. The guidelines may be used as a vehicle for discussion and guidance to help the student develop a focused and sound project.

### 27.8.1 Topic Selection

The first step in developing your MURB project is selecting a topic. We encourage you to begin thinking about general topics of interest to you even before you enter the program. Upon arrival

in the program, you should not hesitate to discuss the feasibility of your research project ideas with SFU faculty you encounter in seminars, and beyond. Once you have been assigned a supervisor, you should meet soon after to discuss your topic idea(s) with them. While your interests may evolve and change, you should aim to have a defined and doable research question that has been approved by your senior supervisor by the time you enter URB 696. In URB 696, you will develop a prospectus (i.e. proposal) for your MURB project in consultation with the course instructor and your supervisor. Your prospectus will include a written schedule for the completion of your project and its defence.

A great place to turn for both inspiration and a reality check on your ideas for the research project is the growing number of defended MURB projects that are accessible electronically through SFU's library (see: Summit – Institutional Repository > Theses, Dissertations, and other [Required Graduate Degree Essays, currently here](#)). Consult library staff if you are having difficulty accessing past Urban Studies projects through the SFU library catalogue.

### 27.8.2 What Constitutes a MURB Project?

Two types of documents will satisfy the requirements for the MURB project:

- A document based on a social science model  
OR
- A document based on an internship or work experience

#### Option 1: MURB Project Based on a Social Science Model

This option is analogous to a master's thesis in many social science disciplines. Topic options for this type of project are abundant. A project could inquire into an urban policy issue or question of urban theory; conduct an analysis of an urban policy, initiative, or plan formation or implementation, or; develop a "case study" of a particular program or issue in the Lower Mainland or other urban area. We encourage you to take a normative stance in your analysis. In other words, you can ask a research question that will allow you to explain a current urban phenomenon in order to support and advance a position of what cities should become.

No matter the topic or approach, the project should meet the following expectations in terms of evidence, methodology, and analysis:

1. The project should be based upon a research question or hypothesis that will be tested empirically and analytically to develop a research argument.
2. The project should be grounded in some identifiable output from original research, either through primary data collection and analysis or novel re-analysis and critical interpretation of secondary data.
3. The project should employ a feasible and appropriate qualitative or quantitative methodology (or methodologies) and research design, as explored in URB 670.

4. The project should engage a theoretical and/or conceptual framework.
5. The project should include a critical literature review that includes scholarly research, legislation, policy and community sources, etc., relevant to the subject area and question.
6. The project should be **no more than 100 pages** of double-spaced, 12-point text, excluding abstract, table of contents, illustrations, appendices and Works Cited.

**Note:** The MURB project is subject to the same standard of academic honesty as all Urban Studies class assignments. Any project-related work submitted to your supervisor, whether in draft or final form is subject to [SFU's Academic Honesty and Student Conduct Policies \(Policy S10\) available here](#).

#### Option 2: MURB Project Based on a Practicum, Internship, or Employment

This option is available to those students who have undertaken or are undertaking a practicum or internship or have the opportunity to complete a project through their regular employment that could be suitably analyzed for a MURB project.

There is no difference in terms of expectations, required courses or examination types between Option 1 and Option 2.

Students participating in an internship program or Urban Studies-related employment are not required to “use” their experience as the basis for a MURB project. They may, and often do, focus their projects thesis on a different topic.

### 27.8.3 Procedures and Timeline Leading to Project Defence

When both the supervisor and the committee member concur that the draft thesis is defensible, students proceed to defend their thesis. The thesis defence is a public examination of the student's research in which the MURB candidate presents the methodology and findings of their research and responds to questions posed by members of their examination committee, as well as potentially from those in the audience. [Further information about defence procedures can be found here](#).

You should begin discussions and planning for your defence with your supervisor well in advance of your target defence date because SFU has strict deadlines and procedures regarding defences that must be followed. Below is a timeline for the term of defence, but you should also consult the Faculty of [Graduate Studies website](#) for exact dates for particular terms:

## Recommended Timeline for Term of Project Defence (URB 697)

### *Early in your target defence term*

You may suggest candidates for external examiner to your supervisor, but selection of any of these candidates is not guaranteed. Students should never contact potential external examiners about their thesis.

### *First Monday in second month of term (i.e. October, February, June)*

This should be your target date for submission of a complete draft of your thesis to your supervisor, based on revision of draft material that you have previously submitted to your supervisor while enrolled in URB 697. They will assess what final revisions are needed to yield a defensible draft and the likelihood of defence in that term.

Please note that thesis writing is an iterative process. Most MURB candidates need to submit multiple drafts of the various sections of their thesis and make revisions and improvements on them based on feedback from the supervisor throughout the writing process to obtain a defensible draft.

The committee member's agreement that your project is ready for defence is also required before the defence can be scheduled.

### *At least four weeks before the defence*

At this point, the form listing your examining committee members must be submitted to the Dean of Graduate Studies. Also, either your supervisor or the program manager will circulate your defensible draft to your examining committee, which allows all members adequate time to review it and prepare for your defence. At this time, a digital copy of your thesis can also be circulated to any member of the University community or the public upon request. Such requests are rare.

At this time, we will also announce the date of your thesis via email to students, instructors, alumni and interested urbanists at SFU, as well as post the information on our website.

Once your defensible draft has been circulated, the Urban Studies program manager will discuss the required paperwork with you for your final project submission.

### *Between the middle and end of the third month of term (i.e. November, March, July)*

We encourage students and supervisors to schedule defences between the middle and end of the third month during a term (e.g., November, March, and July). The earlier, the better; earlier defence dates are encouraged to allow for plenty of time to complete post-defence revisions.

*End of term submission deadlines (i.e. December, April, August)*

The last day to submit final copies of projects to the Thesis Office at the Bennett Library (Burnaby campus) with required paperwork into graduate in the term of the defence can be found at the link below. Not meeting this deadline will require another registration in URB 697.

[Library submission procedures are explained here.](#)

[Library submission deadlines are noted here.](#)

GGR 1.9.2 Preparation for Examination of a Master's Thesis.

#### **27.8.4 Online defence procedures**

Defences can be held online or in person.

Defences are public events. The candidate and the examining committee are welcome to share the online or in-person meeting information with those they would like to invite to observe the public part of the defence. When the manager sends out the usual notification to the urban studies community that a defence has been scheduled, they will note that anyone interested in attending the defence can contact the manager to obtain the meeting information.

*Recording online defences*

Defences can be recorded if all members of the examining committee and the candidate agree to this in advance and on the condition that the recording is only for personal use. Candidates interested in recording their defence should discuss this with their supervisors well before the defence is scheduled because that needs to be acceptable to the external examiner should thus be confirmed before they are appointed. If the candidate wants to record the defence, the supervisor will seek the consent of the rest of the examining committee. Notification of recording must be given at the beginning of the online defence.

#### **27.8.4 Library Guidelines and Resources for Writing and Submitting your MURB Thesis**

The SFU Library, via the Thesis Librarian's Office at the Bennett Library (Burnaby campus) offers a wide range of online resources relating to the preparation and submission of theses. Students who are ready to embark upon this final phase of their MURB program are encouraged to spend time [perusing their website](#).

Students can also contact the Assistant for Theses at [theses@sfu.ca](mailto:theses@sfu.ca) (or by phone at 778-782-4747) for assistance with questions relating to project format and submission.

## 28.0 Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty

SFU and the Urban Studies Program take academic integrity and honesty very seriously. Students engaging in any form of academic dishonesty in any assignments, including paper and project drafts, will be dealt with strictly in accordance with [University's Academic Honesty and Student Conduct Policies \(Policy S10\)](#) available [here](#).

The section below provides:

- SFU's student conduct policies as they pertain to academic integrity requirements for students (Policy S10.01)
- a guide to the use of sources in Urban Studies

### 28.1 Academic Integrity Requirements for Students

*(Excerpted from SFU policy S10.01)*

#### 28.1.1 Notification of Standards of Academic Honesty

- a) Students have a responsibility to ensure they are familiar with the generally accepted standards and requirements of academic honesty. Summaries of these must be published in the University Calendar. Ignorance of these standards will not preclude the imposition of penalties for academic dishonesty.
- b) Faculty members have a responsibility to inform their students at the beginning of each term of the criteria for academic honesty that pertain to a class or course, including the format for acknowledging the thoughts and writings of authors that is acceptable to the underlying discipline. Faculty should also impart other relevant information, such as the acceptable level of group work in the class or course.
- c) A draft paper, proposal, thesis or other assignment may be subject to a penalty for academic dishonesty, providing the instructor or supervisor informed the student(s) before the work was submitted, that drafts are subject to academic honesty requirements.

**Note:** In the Urban Studies Program, all drafts and proposals, including those submitted for MURB research projects, are subject to SFU's academic honesty requirements and penalties.

#### 28.1.2 Forms of Academic Dishonesty

The following acts or omissions constitute academic dishonesty and are prohibited.

- a) Plagiarism, including:
  - i) submitting or presenting the work of another person, including artistic imagery, as that of the student without full and appropriate accreditation;



- ii) copying all or part of an essay or other assignment from an author or other person, including a tutor or student mentor, and presenting the material as the student's original work;
  - iii) failing to acknowledge the phrases, sentences or ideas of the author of published and unpublished material that is incorporated into an essay or other assignment.
- b) Submitting the same, or substantially the same, essay, project, presentation or other assignment more than once, whether or not the earlier submission was at Simon Fraser University or another institution, unless prior approval has been obtained from the instructor to whom the work is being submitted.
- c) Cheating in an examination, including
  - i) the unauthorized sharing of material such as textbooks during an "open book" examination;
  - ii) concealing information pertaining to the examination in the examination room, or in washrooms or other places in the vicinity of the examination room;
  - iii) using course notes or any other aids not approved by an instructor during an examination; or,
  - iv) the unauthorized possession or use of an examination question sheet, an examination answer book, or a completed examination or assignment.
- d) Submitting as one's original work an essay, project, thesis, presentation or other assignment, or part thereof, that was purchased or otherwise acquired from another source, unless the work is commercially available data, images or other intellectual property the source and acquisition of which is properly and fully described and cited by the student and approved by the course Instructor or supervisor.
- e) Cheating in assignments, projects, examinations or other forms of evaluation by:
  - i) using, or attempting to use, another student's answers;
  - ii) providing answers to other students;
  - iii) failing to take reasonable measures to protect answers from use by other students; or
  - iv) in the case of students who study together, submitting identical or virtually identical assignments for evaluation unless permitted by the course Instructor or supervisor.
- f) Impersonating a candidate or being impersonated in an examination.
- g) Falsifying material that is subject to academic evaluation.

- h) Submitting false records or information, in writing or orally, including the falsification of laboratory results or research findings.
- i) Engaging in misrepresentation, including falsifying documents, to gain a benefit or advantage in a course including the submission of a forged or altered medical certificate or death certificate.
- j) Engaging in any action intended to disadvantage students in a course including destroying, stealing, or concealing library resources.
- k) Stealing, destroying or altering the work of another student.
- l) Unauthorized or inappropriate use of computers, calculators and other forms of technology in course work, assignments or examinations.
- m) Misconduct in research as defined in Policy R 60.01.

### **28.1.3 Using Generative AI**

The SFU Artificial Intelligence Learning and Teaching Task Force is preparing guidelines, to be released in Fall 2025, that will cover academic integrity and graduate studies.

In the meantime, please review the SFU resources on Generative AI and academic integrity.

Please do not assume that using generative AI is allowed for course assignments. Except for grammatical and language-related purposes, the use of AI is generally not permitted in Urban Studies graduate courses.

## **28.2 Guide to the Use of Sources in Assigned Papers in the Urban Studies Program**

In any kind of writing, but especially in scholarly work, it is important that the reader be able to distinguish between the writer's original ideas and the ideas of others. But it is equally important that the writer makes intelligent use of ideas gathered from books and articles. Often the ideas in papers assigned result from your own attempts to understand urban studies literature. You must distinguish between your own ideas and those of others.

It is not possible to provide instruction in the writing of essays within the scope of such a guide as this, but there are certain basic principles regarding the use of texts that can be summarized.

- a) Whenever you quote passages from any published text, document or other source, you must indicate the exact source.
- b) Whenever you summarize or paraphrase ideas from other material, you must likewise give the exact source. Paraphrase consists of a restatement in substantially different language of the

ideas in a fairly limited passage or series of passages; summary is much like paraphrase, only it deals more generally with the ideas. The mere alteration of a few words in a passage does not constitute paraphrase. If you have any doubt as to whether you are substantially re-stating the ideas, it is better to quote so that there will be no ambiguity.