



GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN COMMUNITY-ENGAGED
RESEARCH AND EVALUATION
PROGRAM HANDBOOK
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
UPDATED VERSION: JUNE 2023

APPROVED BY SOCIAL WORK GRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE: SEPTEMBER 11, 2023

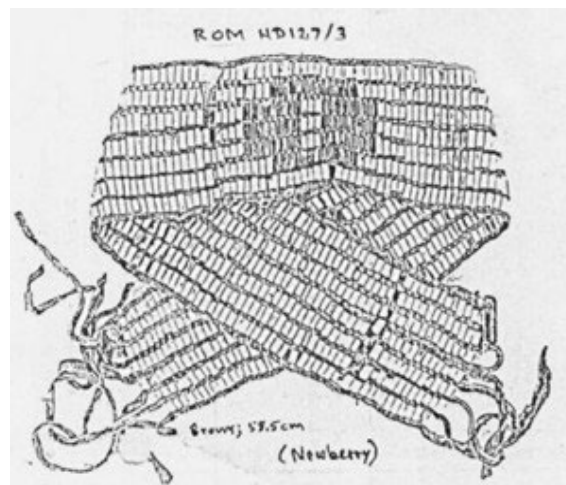
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LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

As many of us are settlers on this land, it is our collective responsibility to recognize, respect and acknowledge that the School of Social Work at McMaster University meets and learns on the traditional territories of the Mississauga and Haudenosaunee nations, and within the lands protected by the “Dish with One Spoon” Wampum.

The Dish with One Spoon wampum belt represents the first peace treaty made in North America between all Native nations before European contact. (Made between the League of Five Nations and its allies, and the confederacy of Anishinabek and allied nations). The dish with one spoon reminds people we only have one dish; one mother earth we can take from. We should take only what we need, leave something for others, and keep the dish clean. It also demonstrates our collective responsibility to share equally. The dish is graphically represented by the wampum pictured.



Why we acknowledge the land

For people who are not Indigenous to North America, or for Indigenous peoples who are on territories that aren't their own, a land acknowledgment recognizes the First Nation(s) on whose land we live and work. It asks those gathered to understand the history that has removed many First Nations from their traditional land. This symbolic acknowledgment recognizes the real impact of colonization, and draws attention to its ongoing effects. This acknowledgement also encourages us to seek and find the beauty associated with all Indigenous cultures in ways that challenge how we think and respond to the violent history of colonialism on these peoples.

Canada's history is a colonial history

Indigenous people have been living on the land that is now called Canada for thousands of years. Since the 17th century however, settlers have been laying their claim to the land and violently forcing Indigenous groups out of the way. It is estimated that North America's Indigenous population was reduced by 80 percent by the mid-19th century.

Starting in the late 19th century, the Canadian government established Indian Residential Schools. These schools forced young Indigenous children away from their parents and communities and attempted to eliminate the Indigenous languages and cultures of its students. This policy remained in place until the 1990s. In the 1960's Canadian child protection policies reinforced these practices through what is referred to as the '60's scoop' which supported the removal of Indigenous babies and children from their homes and communities. Despite this, Indigenous peoples have remained a strong and vital part of Canada. By acknowledging that Canada's history is a colonial history, we recognize the violence of settler-colonialism and the necessity for reconciliation. It reminds us also of our moral and ethical duty to join Indigenous peoples in ally ship to confront this continuing history.

Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada published 94 "calls to action" urging all levels of government — federal, provincial, territorial and Indigenous — to work together to change policies and programs in a concerted effort to repair the harm caused by residential schools and move forward with reconciliation.

The McMaster School of Social Work acknowledges and is committed to responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action.

We urge our entire school community to familiarize themselves with the [Canadian Association for Social Work Education Statement of Complicity and Commitment to Change](#).

The McMaster School of Social Work would like to acknowledge the multiple sources of information we have accessed in order to develop this Land Acknowledgement. This includes faculty in the McMaster School of Social Work, the Ryerson School of Social Work, and the AIDS Committee of Toronto.

WELCOME

Director: Saara Greene

Welcome to the McMaster School of Social Work!

Social Work has always been concerned with the entanglement of private troubles and public issues and committed to the enhancement of social justice. We aim to prepare students for practice, research and leadership in a wide variety of social and community services and for critical reflection on their activities as both professionals and citizens. Through our research, teaching and community engagement, we explore the tensions in contemporary social programs and, in the context of a changing world, strive to understand and challenge various forms and dynamics of social inequality. We hope this handbook will serve as an important resource for you during your time in the program.

I can be contacted in the School of Social Work office:

greenes@mcmaster.ca; 905-525-9140, ext. 22740; KTH 319.

Graduate Chair: Ameil Joseph

Welcome to the Graduate Diploma in Community-Engaged Research And Evaluation, and to our School!

As the Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee, I have responsibility for overseeing the MSW, PhD and GDip programs and supporting graduate students' progress through their program. Students should feel free to contact me if they have any questions or concerns about the program:

ameilj@mcmaster.ca; 905-525-9140, ext. 23792; KTH-309.

Graduate Administrative Assistant: Darlene Savoy & Danielle Schumacher

Welcome to the School of Social Work!

As the Graduate Administrative Assistant, we deal with all aspects of the administration of the Graduate Diploma in Community-Engaged Research And Evaluation program and are knowledgeable about matters concerned with School and University policies, admissions, registration, student records, payroll, etc. If you have concerns or questions about these matters, we can be contacted in the School of Social Work office:

dsavoy@mcmaster.ca; 905-525-9140, ext. 24596; KTH-322.

schumacd@mcmaster.ca; 905-525-9140, ext. 23787; KTH-319.

INTRODUCTION

This handbook is prepared for graduate students as a general orientation to the Graduate Diploma in Community-Engaged Research and Evaluation Program (GDip CERE). It outlines the focus of the program and a range of policies and procedures around which it is organized, as well as some information on the structure of the School of Social Work and opportunities for student participation. Additional information on many of these points and on the wider university can be found in the current [School of Graduate Studies \(SGS\) Calendar](#). **If there is any discrepancy between this handbook and the SGS Calendar, then the School of Graduate Studies Calendar shall prevail.**

We hope that these materials help to situate you in the graduate program and to navigate the various academic and administrative channels that structure it. Please feel free to ask the School's staff and faculty for any information or direction that you need in the course of your studies.

PHILOSOPHY OF THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

As social workers, we operate in a society characterized by power imbalances that affect us all. These power imbalances are based on age, class, ethnicity, gender identity, geographic location, health, ability, race, sexual identity and income. We see personal troubles as inextricably linked to oppressive structures. We believe that social workers must be actively involved in the understanding and transformation of injustices in social institutions and in the struggles of people to maximize control over their own lives.

ORGANIZATION OF THE SCHOOL: OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENT PARTICIPATION

The operation of the School of Social Work is framed by a structure of committees. Student participation is mandated on each of them and welcomed as a means of incorporating students' perspectives and feedback into the running of the School and the development of curriculum. There are three committees in particular in which graduate students are involved; these are outlined below. For more information on the organization of the School, Darlene Savoy, Graduate Administrative Assistant (x24596) dsavoy@mcmaster.ca), and Ameil Joseph, Chair of the Graduate Studies program (x23792 ameilj@mcmaster.ca) or Saara Greene, Director of the School (x22740 greenes@mcmaster.ca) will be pleased to help you.

A [chart](#) which summarizes this structure and specifies reporting and consultative relationships may be found on the [School of Social Work Committees](#) website.

From time to time, ad-Hoc groups or committees may be struck to carry out particular tasks or activities.

There are three committees in particular in which graduate students are involved; these are outlined below.

Graduate Studies Committee

Membership of the Graduate Studies Committee (G.S.C.) includes three faculty members and three students; 2 MSW, 1 PhD.

The mandate of the Graduate Studies Committee includes the following:

- To monitor and support the graduate program in accordance with the School's [philosophy](#), [CASWE standards](#), [IQAP requirements](#) and [University regulations](#).
- To engage in planning and curriculum development.
- To undertake admissions and recruitment, and from time to time review admissions procedures and practices.
- To enable and support graduate student participation in the life of the School.
- To make recommendations to and advise the Faculty Committee and Director.

Circle of Indigenous Social Work Action

Membership: Aboriginal students, alumnae and community members, Undergraduate and Graduate Program Chairs and one other faculty member.

The mandate of this group is to support and monitor the recruitment and retention of Aboriginal students, with the goal to reducing barriers to admission, enhancing students' experience in the School and University, and linking with local Aboriginal communities. To support and learn from Aboriginal students experiences of social work education. To make recommendations to and advise the Faculty Committee and Director.

Meets at least twice a year and is co-chaired by a faculty member designated by the Director and a community member/ alumnae.

THE GRADUATE DIPLOMA PROGRAM IN COMMUNITY-ENGAGED RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

The Graduate Diploma in Community-Engaged Research and Evaluation offers students the opportunity to develop knowledge and skills in community-engaged research and evaluation, and to contribute to community and agency learning, effectiveness, and change. In this program students who have undergraduate degrees and experience working in social and community services will work with partnering organizations to craft locally relevant research questions and/or frame evaluation processes useful for agency, community, and funder purposes, and build their capacities for conducting participatory, justice-focused research and evaluation.

McMaster School of Social Work graduate programs are designed in part to respond to contemporary trends in social services and community work. Research and evaluation are taking on increased importance in these sectors. Emphasis is placed on 'evidence-based' practice, clear definition of intended outcomes, and formal evaluation of program and policy initiatives (usually tied to funding). Yet in many cases evidence is too narrowly defined to capture and document individual, group and community needs, contextual constraints, aspirations and changes. Many agencies and groups also have their own questions about their communities, about the services they provide, and about ways of achieving their visions for a better world. They sometimes have mountains of unanalyzed data, and certainly have lots of untapped insight. Many appreciate, as well, the transformative potential of participatory research for communities, staff and service users.

The Graduate Diploma in Community-Engaged Research and Evaluation aims to foster critical and ethical practice in community-engaged research and evaluation. Students who complete the program will understand the historical, theoretical and ethical bases of community-based research (CBR) and be able to apply and communicate CBR principles; understand and be able to apply critical conceptual frameworks to evaluation practices in social services and communities, and identify justice-oriented alternatives or improvements; and demonstrate a capacity to undertake a community-engaged research or evaluation project that reflects concepts and ethical frameworks highlighted in the program.

Like all graduate programs at McMaster, it is shaped by the standards and procedures of the School of Graduate Studies. Thus, matters concerned with registration, procedures and evaluation are channeled through the School of Graduate Studies which is located in Gilmour Hall, Room 212.

CONTENT OF THE GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN COMMUNITY-ENGAGED RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

Graduate Course Work

The **Graduate Diploma in Community-Engaged Research and Evaluation** curriculum is comprised of three (3) required courses. Students take two foundation courses (3-units each) that focus on community-engaged research (SOC SCI 708), and evaluation practices (SOC WORK 743). One 6-unit course (SOC WORK 744) builds on the two foundation courses and is the application and reflection component of the program.

Candidates are enrolled on a part-time basis, and will normally complete the program in sixteen months of study, beginning in January.

Specific [course requirements](#) for the GDip Community-Engaged Research and Evaluation program are outlined in the School of Graduate Studies Calendar (also listed below). The passing grades for all graduate courses are A+, A, A-, B+, B and B-. (For information on procedures regarding failing or incomplete grades, see p. 11.)

Required Courses

Course work is completed on a part-time basis as follows:

Year I*

- SOC SCI 708 / Critical Approaches to Community-Based Research (Winter Term)
- SOC WORK 743 / Critical Approaches to Evidence and Evaluation in Social Services and Communities (Spring/Summer Term)

Year II**

- SOC WORK 744 / Evaluation and Advocacy Experience & Seminar (Fall and Winter Terms)

*Pro-rated pt supp. fees because of the Jan. start

**Full year supplemental fees.

Additional Comments

Students entering the Community-Engaged Research and Evaluation diploma program who have already successfully completed SOCWORK 743 or SOCSCI 708 may receive one of these courses as advanced credit if approved by the School's Chair of Graduate Studies.

Prior to admission, students will submit a Statement of Interest that outlines:

1. Their work experience in social services or communities; their description should reflect the length, range and diversity of experience.
2. A challenge or question facing a community or organization with which they are familiar. Outline the significance of this challenge/ question in the context of the community or organization. Describe in a preliminary way how they might undertake a community-engaged research or evaluation project relevant to the challenge / question.
3. Why they are interested in this particular diploma program and how they expect it to help you in pursuing your career and personal development.

During SOCSCI 708, students will continue to explore options for their project to be completed as part of SOCWORK 744. Details of the research experience will be confirmed following admission into the program and in consultation with the instructor for SOCWORK 744 and the program Facilitator including partnering organization(s) and stakeholders, number of hours, project outputs, etc. with support from the program Facilitator.

Two Mandatory Online Courses for Graduate Students

All graduate students are mandated by McMaster University and provincial legislation to complete:

Two SGS Courses:

- SGS 101 / Academic Research Integrity and Ethics (Passing Grade: 14/20);
- SGS 201 / Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act – AODA Training (Passing Grade: 10/10)

*** Note: You must wait until you are officially registered (after September 1st) to start completing these courses.**

Students are required to register for SGS 101 and SGS 102 courses on [Mosaic](#); please search for the courses using the “class search” button and then enter “SGS”. After one (1) business day, students will be able to log in to [Avenue to](#)

[Learn](#) to complete the courses. Please see the Self-Service Training Enrollment guide for instructions on [how to enroll](#) in online courses.

In addition to the School of Graduate Studies courses, students are also required to complete seven (7) [Health and Safety training modules](#) (click on “employees” tile):

- Asbestos Awareness;
- Ergonomics;
- Fire Safety;
- Slips, Trips and Falls;
- WHMIS 2015;
- Health and Safety Orientation;
- Violence and Harassment Prevention.

Step 1: Register on Mosaic via the Regulatory Training tile on your homepage OR the following pathway:

- NavBar > Navigator > Human Resources > Self Service > Learning and Development > Request Training Enrollment

Step 2: “Search by course name” > Leave search field blank > “Search” > “View available sessions” and proceed with your registration until reaching “Submit” Please disregard the start/end date of online training. These are used for administration purposes and will not affect your registration or course completion.

Step 3: For online sessions only. After one business day the courses will appear in Avenue to Learn for completion. Log in with your MacID and complete the training found under term “Continuing”.

Step 4: After successful completion of online training, your training record will be updated in Mosaic the following business day. This can be viewed under “My Academics” and click on “View2 Unofficial Transcript”, or via the Regulatory Training tile on your Mosaic homepage OR the following pathway:

- Nav Bar > Navigator > Human Resources > Self Service > Learning and Development > Request Training Summary

Step 5: Save or print a copy of your summary as proof of completion for your supervisor and/or department administrator. All records for health and safety training completed before 2015 are stored in our historical database.

- Students who are interested in viewing their training record can do so by following the steps outlined in the [Instructions to obtain your training record](#).

It is the student's responsibility, in consultation with their program, to ensure that all course requirements have been satisfied; once satisfied, the student's program office will inform the School of Graduate Studies that the student is ready to proceed to graduation.

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. It is the student's responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](#), specifically Appendix 3.

POLICIES, PROCEDURES & RESOURCES

Registration Procedure

Registration information, forms, dates, etc. are emailed directly to the student from the School of Graduate Studies. In addition, the School of Social Work emails information in June with information on orientation timetables, parking and key information).

Policies

Graduate students register in July. Until they graduate or withdraw, students must register annually in July and pay fees. If they fail to re-register they do not retain the status of graduate student and must apply for re-admission if they wish at a later date to continue their studies.

Addition or Deletion of Courses

Any change in registration in the course program must be made before the specified dates in the Academic Calendar (see [see Section 2.5.9: Appeals and Petitions](#)). After the deadline, such changes will only be possible through special action of the appropriate Committee on Admissions and Study. Please see [SGS Graduate Resources](#) and click on “Petition for Special Consideration” form.

For each term there is a deadline date by which full-time and part-time registrations must be received (see School of Graduate Studies Calendar, [Sessional Dates](#)). A student dropping courses after that date in the term, will not receive academic credit for any work completed in that term, but will be expected to incur the course fee. Students are not permitted to register in courses after the deadline.

Failure to achieve a passing grade in a course

Students who have failed to make the required standing in any course will not be granted supplemental privilege and their standing will be reported either as failed or incomplete. A student whose record indicates a failure (grade below B) will be required to withdraw unless the School of Graduate Studies Committee on Graduate Admissions and Study has approved a recommendation from the School to allow the student to continue in the program.

Incomplete Course Grades

Under exceptional circumstances a course instructor may approve an extension for the student for the completion of work in a course and assign an [Incomplete grade](#) (INC). Typically this extension is in the range of a few weeks. The appropriate form requesting consideration of an Incomplete may be obtained from the Graduate Administrative Assistant in the School of Social Work office. *See the School of Graduate Studies Calendar for the full specification of regulations concerning incompletes.*

Leave of Absence

Typically, students in the GDip program are only eligible for a leave of absence (for up to one year) due to illness. Students who have successfully completed at least one full year in a graduate program may apply for a [Leave of Absence](#) once (for up to one year) for other personal circumstances. *Please see SGS Calendar, [Section 2.5.7](#) for more details.*

Accommodation Procedures

Students with disabilities, needing academic accommodation for degree completion, or any student who suspects they may have a disability for which some type of academic accommodation may be necessary, should contact

[Student Accessibility Services](#) (SAS) to arrange a time to meet with a SAS Program Coordinator. A range of accommodations, supports and funding can be reviewed to assist with degree completion requirements. SAS is located in the basement of MUSC, Room B107 or can be reached by telephone at extension 28652.

Many graduate students are also employed by the University as TAs or RAs. Students requiring workplace accommodations, or who are experiencing accommodation-related issues related to their employment as TAs or RAs, should contact [Employee Health Services](#).

The School of Social Work recognizes that people learn and express their knowledge in different ways. We are committed to reducing barriers to accessibility in the classroom, and working towards classrooms that welcome diverse learners. Students who have accessibility concerns or who want to talk about their learning needs are also invited to talk to their instructor or the graduate chair.

Appeal Procedures

Students have a right to fair and equitable procedures for lodging and hearing of complaints arising out of University regulations, policies and actions that might affect them directly. A mark in a graduate course that is not in accordance with the student's needs or hopes is not in itself grounds for a [formal appeal](#). Therefore, in appeals with respect to academic standing or status, the graduate student should, in every case, consult with the course instructor first of all, then, the Graduate Chair and then the Director of the School prior to the Dean of Graduate Studies before seeking a formal review of any allegation of injustice with respect to academic standing or status.

If, after these consultations, the student remains of the opinion that they have suffered an injustice, they may petition the Committee of Graduate Admissions and Study for a formal ruling on the allegation. If the allegation involves a written examination, essay or research paper, the student may request, or the Faculty's Committee may institute, a re-read procedure as part of the consideration of the allegation. The subsequent ruling by the Committee on Graduate Admissions and Study on a matter of substantive academic judgement will be final.

If, in a matter that does not only involve a judgement of academic substance, the student is of the opinion that the Faculty's Committee on Graduate Admissions and Study has not satisfied the allegation of injustice, they are

required to meet with the Dean of Graduate Studies to discuss the matter. At such a meeting they may be accompanied by a friend or counsellor. If, after that meeting, they are still unsatisfied, they may appeal in writing to the Senate Board for Student Appeals for a final adjudication of the grievance. [The Office of the Secretary of the Senate](#), Gilmour Hall, room 210, will provide all members of the University Community with definitive information on where and how to seek redress for particular grievances or where and how to make representation for changes in policy on any given matter.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Funding may be available to students working on projects that will advance the study of social policy. For information on eligibility, value/duration, and the application process, please contact Darlene Savoy, Graduate Administrative Assistant in the School of Social Work at dsavoy@mcmaster.ca or (905) 525-9140 ext. 24596.

GRADUATE STUDENT FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Student Account

- Once you have fully registered (which requires the activation of your MacID), you will be able to log on to [Mosaic](#) and view payments due and other financial activity on your student account.

If you have trouble with your MacID or logging on to Mosaic, you will need to contact [University Technology Services \(UTS\)](#).

Students should direct questions regarding their account and lifting a financial hold to student.billing@mcmaster.ca

Important Dates to Note:

Tuition due:

- January 1 (Winter 2024)
- May 1 (Spring/Summer 2024)

Monthly interest charges begin:

- January 30 (Winter 2024)
- May 30 (Spring/Summer 2024)

Tuition payment: Due by the 25th of the first month of each term (September, January, May). See Registrar's Office for [payment methods](#) and [payment plan](#)

enrolment dates (you can now choose to pay your fees in four monthly payments per term).

GSA Health & Dental Plan Coverage

- Students are automatically enrolled in insurances, and have the option of adding their spouse and/or dependent children. Students have the option to “opt-out” at the beginning of the academic year by contacting macgsa@mcmaster.ca and providing proof of similar insurance. See change of coverage period, and “[opt-out](#)” for full details.
- University Health Insurance Plan (UHIP) is only available to international students.
- TAs are automatically enrolled in the [CUPE Unit 1 Dental Plan](#). If you have proof of similar coverage, please complete “opt-out” form found on their website at above link.

GRADUATION INFORMATION CENTRE

Please note it is the student’s responsibility to ensure that they have completed all of their degree requirements by the end of April of Yr. 2.

The Graduate Administrator will process a Service Request via Mosaic, which will include the “Completion of Course Requirements” form.

The Graduate Administrator will then mark the student for “graduation processing” in mosaic. Note: Please do not initiate this process as it will “override” (undo) graduation status.

Potential graduates will find a [Graduation Tile](#) in their Mosaic Home at the beginning of the graduation period with forms to complete.

APPENDIX I: CENTRAL RESOURCES AND SERVICES

- Progressing to Degree Completion
 - [Completing your degree](#)
 - [Guide to Accessing Academic Advisement reports](#)
- Requesting Enrollment/Financial Letters in Mosaic Student Centre
 - Letters certifying enrollment by term; clear to graduate, and degree completion (after convocation date) may be found in [Mosaic](#) at Student Centre/Academics; then click on drop down menu, “Other Academic” choose “Enrolment/Financial Letters” and input last term that you attended.
- Policies and Regulations
 - [Academic Integrity Policy](#)
 - [Collective Agreement for TA/RA in lieu of TA](#)
 - [Leaves of Absence](#)
 - [Incomplete/Failing Grade](#)
 - [Petition for Special Consideration](#)
 - [Research Integrity Policy](#)
 - [Sexual Violence Policy](#)
 - [Student Appeals Process](#)
 - [Student Code of Conduct](#)
- [Information for International Students](#)
- Where to go for help
 - [Other Services and General Resources](#)