

Graduate Student Orientation

Department of Physics
McGill University

Sept. 4th, 2013

Agenda

- 14:00 - 14:10: Welcome by Chair (Peter Grütter)
- 14:10 - 14:20: Library resources (April Colosimo)
- 14:20 - 14:30: Career Planning Service (Lorna MacEachern)
- 14:30 - 14:40: Counselling Service (Martha Chamodraka)
- 14:40 - 14:50: Writing Centre (Scott Kushner)
- 14:50 - 15:00: PGSS (Michael Krause)
- 15:00 - 15:10: Break
- 15:10 - 15:20: MGAPS (Robert Keys)
- 15:20 - 15:30: AGSEM (Alex Klotz, Sunci Avlijas, Jamie Burnett)
- 15:30 - 15:40: Outreach Committee (Sebastien Guillot)
- 15:40 - 16:10: General Introduction (Sangyong Jeon)

Welcome!

Know your Department

- Chair – Peter Grütter
- Graduate Program Director (GPD) – Sangyong Jeon
- Building & Safety Director – Dominic Ryan
- Graduate Program Coordinator (GPC) – Lauren Kay (On leave)
- General Manager – Diane Koziol
- Financial Manager – Sonia Vieira
- Chair Secretary – Louise Decelles
- Accounts Coordinator – Alba Furfaro
- Administrative Coordinator – Eddie Del Campo
- Computer System Operators – Paul Mercure (room 347)
& Juan Gallego (room 331)
- Lots more info at www.physics.mcgill.ca

Up-coming graduate event

- Physics BBQ: Sept 14th. Bus will leave at 11:30 from the Univ. street across ERP. Comes back at 17:00.
- RSVP Louise by Sept. 6th.
- A very good chance to meet everyone.

Your McGill “Names”

- Your Student Number
- McGill Username:
first.last@mail.mcgill.ca for students
first.last@mcgill.ca for staff
Minerva, VPN, wireless connections . . .
Login to Windows machines and Windows network at Physics.
- Your Physics Username: (email: username@physics.mcgill.ca)
Ask your supervisor to get one.
Use this for Physics Linux network (***.physics.mcgill.ca).
- Forwarding McGill email to other accounts:
 - For the McGill email, go to www.mcgill.ca/it/ and search for **1077**. Follow instructions.

Your McGill "Names"

- Building entry code \implies See Louise.
- Copier card \implies Ask your supervisor.

Important reminder

- Read your mail.mcgill.ca email! – Announcements sent to it are **official**.
- Announcements from the University and the Department including those from me will almost always go **only** to your mail.mcgill.ca account. – If you use the anti-spam feature, **whitelist** me.
- I (and others) will be very reluctant to answer emails that do not come from either mail.mcgill.ca or physics.mcgill.ca.

- Graduate And Postdoctoral Studies Office (GPS)
www.mcgill.ca/gps – People, policies, rules, Guidebooks, ...
- General information
<http://www.mcgill.ca/study/2013-2014/>
It is **your** responsibility to become familiar with the reg's.
- Dept. Website:
 - www.physics.mcgill.ca/grads
 - www.physics.mcgill.ca/local – Internal Pages. Internal access only.

If you have not done these yet – I

- Go meet your advisor.
- Contact the prof you are TA'ing for.
- Register (at the least REGN RCGR).
- If you have not done so already, let Diane know you're here.
- Get your **McGill ID card**.

If you have not done these yet – II

- Explore your **MINERVA**.
- Hand in your **information release forms**.
- Read your **mail.mcgill.ca** and **physics.mcgill.ca** emails!

If you have not done these yet – III

To get paid you **must**:

- Input your bank account information in the MINERVA
- Input your Social Insurance Number information in the MINERVA
- International students
 - Go to Diane to get a letter to apply for SIN
 - Give Diane a copy of your SIN card
 - Give Diane a copy of valid study permit
- Sign the TA contract and the TA Union form

- If you need an enrolment letter:
MINERVA \implies Student Menu \implies Student Records Menu.
You'll see a button that generates the letter for you.
- If you need an unofficial transcript:
MINERVA \implies Student Menu \implies Student Records Menu.
You'll see a button.
- Unofficial transcript is a good way to check your current academic status

- Will help you to select the right courses.
- Navigate McGill when you are starting.
- Help you find your supervisor (by September 30.).
- Could become your supervisor (usually does).
- Inform Diane when you have found your supervisor and she/he agreed to become your supervisor.

- MSc students start at MSc 1.
- PhD students start at **PhD 2**.
- Set a program of required courses
- Set research topic
- Start thesis research
- If PhD: prelim exam in May, 2014.
- Go to seminars and colloquia
- Apply for fellowships
 - FQRNT: Oct. 2013 – Apply directly
 - NSERC: Oct. 2013 – To the Dept (Ken Ragan)
 - Internal: May-June 2014
 - Many more: Keep an eye on announcements
 - Prof. Ken Ragan is in charge of NSERC fellowships

Degree requirements for MSc in Physics

- Need 45 credits plus thesis. 15 coursework credits. 30 research credits.
- Research credits: PHYS 690 (D1 + D2 = 24), 692 (6) These must be done *BEFORE* you submit your thesis. Just do them in the first 3 semesters.
- Any combination will do provided that D1 and D2 are taken consecutively.
- A typical course plan may be:
 - MSc 1, Fall: 9 course credits
 - MSc 1, Winter: 6 course credits + 692
 - MSc 2, Fall: 690D1
 - MSc 2, Winter: 690D2
- For other options, talk to your supervisor and read the regulation at http://www.mcgill.ca/study/2013-2014/sites/mcgill.ca.study.2013-2014/files/faculty_of_science_graduate_2013_2014.pdf

Degree requirements for PhD in Physics

- Pass the prelim within 1 year (usually the next May)
- Two 600+ level courses. If from McGill MSc with more than two 600+ courses, needs to take only one more 600+ course.
- Thesis

Keep this in mind

- In grad studies, only **A through B–** are passing grades.
- If you fail a course twice or fail two courses, you will be asked to leave.

- Traditional: About 100 pages.
- Thesis plagiarism: **Don't do it.** You'll not get your degree.
- For detailed information, visit <http://www.mcgill.ca/gps/students/thesis> and the pages linked from there.
- Masters students: You need to submit your thesis by **April 15th** of your second year.

Master's

- Show familiarity with previous work
- Demonstrate the ability to carry out research and organize results
- Write in good literate style
- Original scholarship not necessary

PhD

- Show familiarity with previous work
- Demonstrate the ability to carry out research and organize results
- Write in good literate style
- **Must display original scholarship**
- **Make an original contribution to knowledge**

- End of Master's 3 and PhD 7 (Remember, you start at PhD 2!)
- Design timelines throughout the process
- A longer time is NOT a favor to a student
- Student and supervisor should be clear on sabbatical replacement and communication
- MSc 3 and PhD 6 (in the receiving year) cannot apply for fellowships/scholarships

You and your supervisor – I

- Find someone whose interests match yours.
- Your supervisor is *the* most important person in your academic life.
- Regular communication is the **key**.
- Set up meeting schedules.
- Set up milestones.

You and your supervisor – II

- Don't be shy. Ask (anything!). Take charge of your own education. Passive learning doesn't work at all in grad school.
- When something (expectations, duties, etc.) is not clear, clarify it.
- Be explicit. Guess-work creates un-necessary confusion and wastes time.
- Take charge of your own fellowship applications, registration, etc.
- It is possible to change your supervisor but it is not commonly done.

- It is a good idea for students supervised by someone outside of McGill to have a McGill co-supervisor.
- Be careful about IP. A supervisor from another university may have a different policy than McGill's. You need to agree at the outset.

Mandatory Progress/ Graduate Student Tracking

- There are university forms for this
- It is mandatory
- It must involve at least one meeting per year of supervisor, student and a departmental rep.
- Objectives and progress are recorded in writing and signed.
- Two unsatisfactory reports can have a dire consequence.
- Starting from this year, Ph.D. students will have Supervisory Committee.

- Expect to work at least an 8 hour day and at least 5 days in the week.
- It is usual to have work to do on weekends and evenings.
- McGill has a vacation policy: 15 working days and university holidays (not winter break)
- No more than 10 hours work/week (outside of your research)

Informal Problem Solving is Important

- Start with your Supervisor
- Next go to your GPD or Chair
- Then visit the Associate Dean (R & GE)
- The ombudsperson is also there to help you
- Many problems are solved informally every year
- My office: ERP-317, tel. 398-6516, jeon@physics.mcgill.ca

- Departmental Graduate Program Director – Sangyong Jeon
- Associate Dean (Research and Graduate Education) – Vicky Kaspi
- Ombudsperson – Dr. Spencer Boudreau
www.mcgill.ca/ombudsperson/
- Student Services <http://www.mcgill.ca/students/> (Counselling, Mental Health, Physical Health, Office for Students with Disabilities, etc.)

- No one can reveal information on a student to others without permission of the student.
- Quebec law allows access to any kind of information about a student in writing, e.g. e-mails, letters of recommendation, anything in a file.

- Environmental Health & Safety (EHS) offers several Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) training sessions. These sessions are designed specifically for lab personnel. WHMIS training is a legal requirement for all individuals working with controlled products (chemicals and biologicals) and is FREE for McGill faculty, staff and students.
- For training, go to www.mcgill.ca/ehs/training/paying/ for registration info.
- Questions to ehs@mcgill.ca

- You have three Deans: the Dean of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (Martin Kreiswirth), the Dean of your Faculty (Martin Grant) and the Dean of Students (Professor André Costopoulos)
- Daily administration of graduate studies takes place in the department.
- The Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies Office (GPSO) is responsible for the central administration of graduate studies, including admissions, registrations, fellowships, theses, and graduation.
- Location of GPSO: 4th Floor, James Admin Building (just across the street from ERP).

Graduate and Postdoctoral Representation

- Board of Governors
- Senate
- Council of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (CGPS)
- Research Policy Committee (RPC)
- Academic Policy and Planning Committee (APPC)
- Subcommittee on Courses and Teaching Programs (SCTP)
- For the full list, contact PGSS.

Important Policies, Rules and Regulations

- The General Information, Regulations and Research Guidelines at: <http://www.mcgill.ca/study/2013-2014/>
- The Handbook of Student Rights and Responsibilities, aka The Green Book: Available at <http://www.mcgill.ca/secretariat/policies/students/>
- Students should consult these websites for more detailed descriptions of rules and regulations. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and follow these regulations. If you have questions after consulting these sources, ask me.

- Canadians should apply in the fall for provincial and federal funding. Watch for announcements of fellowship meetings. Deadlines: Early to Mid October. CGPA $>$ 3.7
- There are fellowships and scholarships for Canadians, Quebec residents, and International students. For a full list and eligibility requirements, <http://www.mcgill.ca/gps/students/fellowships/>
- Internal fellowship competition: Usually takes place late May, early June.

- If you do research with a non-university partner (a company, a school board, etc.) make sure that you have a signed agreement that specifies your intellectual property rights. Best thing to do: Talk to your supervisor.

- McGill is dedicated to academic integrity
- Help us make this an honest university
- Be sure you know what plagiarism is: find a definition on the web at www.mcgill.ca/integrity/studentguide
- Help McGill have the highest standards for the conduct of research

- Graduate students need to conduct research in a responsible fashion
- If researchers are working with human participants or animals or will be dealing with radioactive or biohazardous materials, proper certification must be obtained before the research may begin.
<http://www.mcgill.ca/research/researchers/compliance/>
- Speak to your supervisor

Some Do-not's

- Don't panic!
- Do not abuse your printer privilege. Print color **only when** it is absolutely necessary. Do not print 100's of pages of personal stuff such as the Tax-return instructions.
- Paper in the printing room is **not free**. Use it only for research purposes.
- If a printer malfunctions, do not try to fix it yourself. Notify **operator@physics.mcgill.ca** or tell Paul or Juan in person.
- Do not let strangers come in after you during after hours. Every year, laptops and personal items are stolen from the Dept.
- Do not leave the door of your office unlocked!
- Be considerate and use the lounge if you want to have a long conversation with someone.

Key Concepts

- Take charge of your own education
- Become involved
- Seek help early if you need it
- Widen your horizons
 - Beatty Lectures
 - Tomlinson Talks
 - Departmental seminars
 - Concerts
- Relax
- Stay fit
- Explore the city
- Meet people
- Apply for fellowships
- Be creative!