

GRADUATE HANDBOOK

2024-2025



**SCHOOL OF THE
ENVIRONMENT**

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New Student Checklist

Before you begin your degree, there are several tasks to complete to ensure you are set up for success. Visit each hyperlink for more information on each task:

GETTING STARTED — March/April		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Respond to your offer of admission	UofT Slate
<input type="checkbox"/>	Attend the MES Welcome Event	grad.office.env@utoronto.ca
<input type="checkbox"/>	Read the “Getting Started” resource page for incoming students	SGS Getting Started
<input type="checkbox"/>	Set up your JOINid (temporary login)	JOINid Activation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Explore Acorn to prepare for course enrolment & registration	Acorn site & Guide
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bookmark the Important Dates Calendar	SGS Important Dates
<input type="checkbox"/>	Begin to satisfy any conditions of your offer	UofT Slate
COURSE ENROLMENT — June		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Read through the SGS Calendar to view your program requirements and determine possible electives	SGS Calendar
<input type="checkbox"/>	Connect with your supervisor to review the courses you plan to select	Faculty Contact Info
<input type="checkbox"/>	Enrol in courses via Acorn	Acorn site & Guide
REGISTRATION — July		
<input type="checkbox"/>	View your invoice via Acorn	Acorn site & Guide
<input type="checkbox"/>	Defer/pay your fees via Acorn. Check back in a couple of weeks to ensure your status says Registered	Student Accounts
<input type="checkbox"/>	Obtain your Tcard and activate your UTORid and email	TCard & UTORid
<input type="checkbox"/>	Apply for TA positions	TA job positing site
THE FIRST WEEK — September		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Attend orientation	ENV Events
<input type="checkbox"/>	Log into Quercus to view your course syllabi, materials, etc.	Quercus site & Guide
<input type="checkbox"/>	Connect with your supervisor	Faculty Contact Info

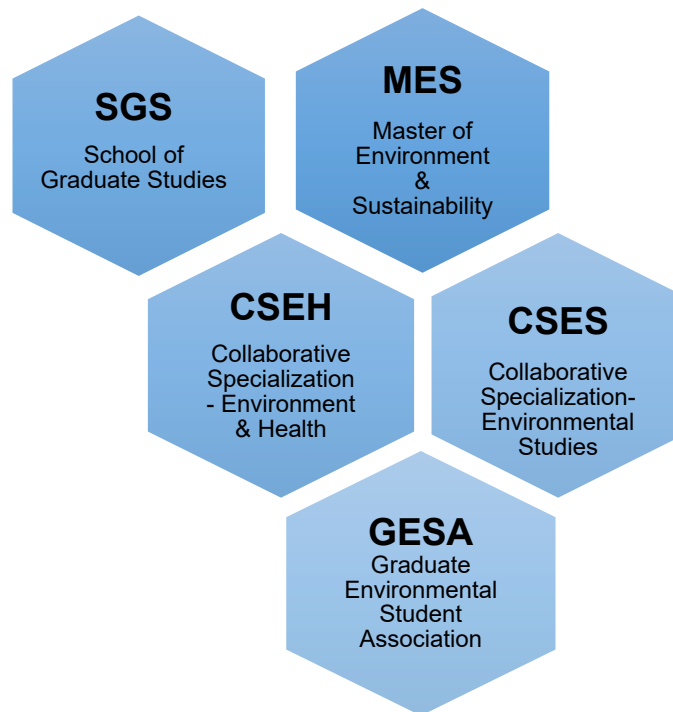
Acorn, TCard, UTORid Features

Below are some of the main features/functions of Acorn, your TCard and your UTORid.

Acorn	TCard	UTORid
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enrol in courses• View fees and pay tuition• Request transcripts and view academic history• Print tax forms• Enter direct deposit info	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student ID• Library card• Access facilities• Provides "cash" value for photocopying, printing, and meal plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Activate your UofT email• Sign into sites such as Quercus and Acorn• Download Microsoft365• Access campus wifi

Acronyms

You'll find that the University of Toronto loves using acronyms for departments, programs, groups, etc. Below are the main ones you'll come across as a School of the Environment student:



Enrolment

Before you begin course enrolment, there are a few sources to consult:

1. The [SGS Calendar](#) for details on your program requirements and a list of electives that count towards your MES concentration or collaborative specialization.

- The School of the Environment [Course Schedule](#), which lists courses within the School as well as possible electives. For details on ENV courses, consult the [Graduate Elective](#) webpage.

Course Codes

Graduate courses within the School of the Environment begin with ENV and are 4 digits in length (e.g. ENV1001). You'll find course codes at the 1000, 2000, 3000, 4000 and 5000 level. Within the School, these codes are all graduate-level and do not differ in terms of level, difficulty, etc.

Following a course code, you'll find two letters. The first represents the course weight and the second represents the term it is offered.

Letter	Course Length	Duration	Course Weight
H	1 session	1 session (e.g. Fall or Winter)	Half credit or 0.5 FCE
Y	2 sessions	2 sessions (e.g. Fall and Winter or full summer (May-Aug))	Full credit or 1.0 FCE

Letter	Course Length	Duration in Fall/Winter	Duration in Summer
F	First (i.e. Fall)	September- December	May-June
S	Second (i.e. Winter)	January-April	July-August
Y	Full Year	September-April	May-August

Enrolling in courses within the School of the Environment

Courses can be added on Acorn through the Enrolment menu option. You can search for a course by the name/code and add it to your enrolment cart. Similar to making a purchase online, adding a course to your cart does not mean that you have “checked out,” or in other words, enrolled in the course. You will need to click “Enrol” in order to officially add the course.

Enrolling in courses outside of the School of the Environment

In cases where you need to use an [add/drop form](#) to enrol in elective courses, follow the steps outlined below:

- Fill out the student portion of the [add/drop form](#) and sign off.
- Send the add/drop form to the host department for their signature and the instructor’s approval (note: some departments may ask you to reach out to the instructor directly).
- Once signed by the host, the form is sent to your [home department](#) to approve you into the course.

As there are several signatures needed to add a restricted course, be sure to initiate this process well before the start of the term, if possible.

Independent Reading & Research Courses

Students looking to enroll in ENV2000HY/ENV3000HY: Independent Reading and Research Course first need to obtain approval from the School's Director or Graduate Associate Director. To do so:

1. Complete the [IRR Request Form](#)
2. Write a brief description of the course (structure, content, assessment, etc.)
3. Include rationale indicating how this course will complement your studies
4. Send the above documents to grad.office.env@utoronto.ca for departmental review.

Note: The following are the maximum number of independent study courses that can be taken with the same instructor:

MES – 0.5 FCE

Program Timeline and Completion (MES)

Program Completion

The MES is designed to be completed in one academic year, and the [minimum degree fee](#) (i.e. the minimum tuition amount each student pays) is based on this length. Note that 1) there is no maximum degree fee if you take more than one year to complete your degree, and 2) the School of the Environment only provides funding support (e.g. scholarships, RAs, etc.) for the first year of the program.

Below is the expected timeline for an MES student:

Fall 2022

- ENV1103H The U of T Campus as a Living Lab of Sustainability
- ENV1197H Research in Environment and Sustainability, Part 1
- Elective

Winter 2023

- ENV1198H Research in Environment and Sustainability, Part 2
- 2 Electives

Summer 2023

- Thesis
- Research Showcase

Although all students should approach the degree with the mindset that it can be completed in one academic year, those who do not finish in this timeframe can request to extend their program. Consult both your supervisor and grad.office.env@utoronto.ca for more information.

Note: the maximum program length is 3-years of full-time study.

Attendance Status and Continuous Registration

The MES is a full-time program and students are expected to remain continuously registered (paying fees and engaged in academic activities) throughout their degree, whether they are completing their coursework or writing their thesis. It is important to note that students pay per session, not per

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course. If for example, you were enrol in 2 courses one session instead of 3, you would not receive a tuition refund, as you would still be registered as a full-time student with a full-time course load.

Registration and Financial Information

Viewing and paying tuition

Tuition can be viewed through your [Acorn](#) invoice under 'Financial Account.' Your invoice will list your full tuition amount and the minimum payment needed to register.

The [SGS Important Dates website](#) will indicate the minimum payment deadline to register for the Fall session (typically late August). The remaining amount for those who did not pay tuition in full) will be due by November 30th to avoid service fees. Students who are registered in both the fall and winter sessions do not pay additional summer tuition fees. Further details on registration can be found on the [SGS website](#).

Your invoice will show tuition fees and incidental fees (campus and student society fees). Students with existing health and/or dental plan coverage may wish to opt out of the health plan, and details on doing so can be found on the [Graduate Student Union website](#).

To reference a previous session tuition amount, visit the [Student Accounts website](#) under Tuition & Fees -> Current schedule. From there, select if you are looking for domestic or international tuition.

Making a payment, deferring fees

- **Payment within Canada:** Students typically make payments through their financial institution or via Acorn with a credit card (Visa/Mastercard). Details can be found on the [Student Accounts website](#).
- **Payment outside of Canada:** For those who are abroad when tuition fees are due, details on paying tuition fees from outside of Canada can be found [here](#).
- **Payment through OSAP/Student Loan:** If you are receiving OSAP or another form of a student loan, you can defer your fees via Acorn. This will register you without payment and provide you with an extension to pay your fees until your loan is received. Details on this process, as well as payment deadlines, can be found on the Student Accounts website [here](#) (for OSAP) and [here](#) (for other government loans).
- **Deferral Based on Major Award/Scholarship:** If you are receiving a major award such as CGS-M or OGS, you are also eligible to defer your fees for when you receive your award. To do so, select "defer fees" on Acorn. If this function is not available, complete the [SGS Register Without Payment](#) form and send it to the [School of the Environment Graduate Office](#) for processing. **Note: All 2024-25 domestic MES students should be able to defer their fees via Acorn due to receiving the MES funding package.**

If you do not pay (or defer) your fees on time, you will become financially cancelled (i.e. FINCA'd), causing you to be removed from your courses and unable to access services. Should you become FINCA'd, contact the [Graduate Office](#) for next steps.

Forms and Policies

Forms

Below you will find a breakdown of the most frequently used forms within the School of Graduate Studies. For further information, visit the [SGS Forms page](#). All of the forms listed below can be sent to grad.office.env@utoronto.ca for processing.

	Form	When to Use	What's Needed When Submitting
Courses	Course Add/Drop	Adding a restricted course or a course outside of your program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approval from host dept and home dept.
	Extension to Complete Coursework	Requesting an extension to submit coursework past the original course end date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rationale for why the course was not completed on time, verification of illness form (if applicable), new submission date, instructor signature
	Reading & Research	Enrolling in an independent study with a faculty member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Course breakdown, description and rationale, approval from instructor
Registration	Leave of Absence	Taking a leave from the program (1-3 sessions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rationale for why you're requesting the leave, verification of illness form (if applicable)
	Register Without Payment Fall , Winter , Summer	Receiving a major award or a scholarship (e.g. CGS-M, OGS, MES entrance scholarship)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Know the amount of funding you're receiving Ensure you're submitting well before the registration deadline
	Confirmation of Enrolment	Verifying your status as a student (for work, bank, study permit, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student number, reason for the request, name of whom to address the letter to
Supervision	Thesis Committee	Putting your committee officially on file	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All 3 of your committee members' signatures, thesis title
	Supervisory Meeting Form	Track your meeting dates with your committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All 3 of your committee members' signatures
Graduation	Degree Recommendation Form	To request to graduate from the MES program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All 3 of your committee members' signatures Graduate Associate Director's signature

Policies

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Below you will find a list of policies from UofT and SGS that each of our graduate students are subject to. Each point hyperlinks to a webpage where you'll find details on that specific policy.

University of Toronto	School of Graduate Studies
Academic Integrity	Comprehensive List of SGS Policies
University Assessment and Grading Practices Policy	SGS Calendar
Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters	
Code of Student Conduct	
Policy on Ethical Conduct in Research	
Official Student Correspondence Policy	
Comprehensive List of UofT Policies	

Research

Supervision Resources

The student-supervisor relationship is a key factor in creating a successful graduate experience. SGS has [developed a guidebook](#) for creating a strong relationship with your supervisor. This guide includes details on your role as a supervisee, your supervisor's responsibilities, what to do if a challenging situation occurs, information on finishing up your thesis, and more.

If you have questions or concerns about supervision, you are welcome to reach out to the [Centre for Graduate Mentorship & Supervision](#) for support.

Research Ethics

Students who are conducting research concerning human or animal subjects will first need to obtain ethics approval from the University of Toronto. Before you begin the ethics application process, you'll need to a) devise a proposal with your supervisor to submit, and b) review the "Before Engaging in Research" information on the [UofT Research + Innovation website](#).

Once you're ready to submit your ethics proposal, your supervisor will create a profile for you on the My Research Human Protocol website. Note that it takes around 4-6 weeks to be approved and the Research Ethics Board (REB) will contact your supervisor, once approved.

Some additional resources that may be helpful before initiating this process include:

- [UofT Research + Innovation training and resources](#)
- [UofT Research + Innovation policies and procedures](#)

Questions? Contact raise@utoronto.ca.

Conferences

Below are potential funding sources you are welcome to apply for if you are attending a conference:

- [SGS Conference Grant](#)
- [UTGSU Conference Bursary](#)

Accessibility Services

UofT [Accessibility Services](#) is here to assist you with navigating disability-related barriers to your academic success, both for ongoing and temporary disabilities. Services include developing accommodations, providing one-on-one advising, testing, note taking and technology services, and access to a resource library.

Accessibility Services also offers many programs such as peer advising, group learning sessions, transitional programs, graduate chats, accountability check-ins, and learning strategy appointments.

Further information on registering and the services this office offers can be found in the [Graduate and Professional Program Student Handbook](#).

Health and Wellness

Below are on- and off-campus health and wellness resources available to UofT students. Find out more about each service by clicking on a box.



University of Toronto Resources

<i>Academic Support</i>	
Academic Success	https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/department/academic-success/
Accessibility Services	https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/department/accessibility-services/
Centre for Graduate Mentorship & Supervision	https://www.cgms.utoronto.ca/
Graduate Centre for Academic Communication	https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/resources-supports/gcac/
UofT Libraries	https://onesearch.library.utoronto.ca/
UofT Writing Guide	https://writing.utoronto.ca/
<i>Student Life and Support</i>	
Anti-Racism and Cultural Diversity Office	https://antiracism.utoronto.ca/
Athletics	https://kpe.utoronto.ca/welcome-sport-rec-u-t
Centre for Community Partnerships	https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/department/centre-for-community-partnerships/
Centre for International Experience	https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/department/centre-for-international-experience/
Family Care Office	https://familycare.utoronto.ca/
First Nations House	https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/department/first-nations-house/
Health and Wellness	https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/department/health-wellness/
Sexual and Gender Diversity Office	https://sgdo.utoronto.ca/
Sexual Violence Prevention and Support Centre	https://www.svpscentre.utoronto.ca/
SGS Grad Hub	https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/gradhub/
Student Housing	https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/department/housing/
UofT Graduate Student Union	https://utgsu.ca/
UofT Office of Ombudsperson	https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/ombudsperson
<i>Professional Development</i>	
Career Exploration and Education	https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/department/career-exploration-education/
Leadership Development	https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/department/club-s-leadership-development/
TA Training	https://tatp.utoronto.ca/
SGS Centre for Graduate Professional Development	https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/resources-supports/cqpd/
<i>Financial Information</i>	
Award Explorer	https://awardexplorer.utoronto.ca/

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Enrolment Services (OSAP, loans, etc.)	https://future.utoronto.ca/finances/financial-aid/
School of Graduate Studies Awards	https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/awards/
School of Graduate Studies Financial Aid & Advising	https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/awards-funding/financial-aid-advising/
School of the Environment Awards	https://www.environment.utoronto.ca/graduate/graduate-student-resources/scholarships-awards
<i>On Campus Employment</i>	
Career Learning Network	https://clnx.utoronto.ca/home.htm
TA positions	https://unit1.hrandequity.utoronto.ca/ https://taships.iit.artsci.utoronto.ca/

Resources for International Students

<i>Pre-Arrival</i>	
Study permit information	https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/study-canada.html
Immigration information	https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/immigration-information-for-international-students/
Pre-arrival services	https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/service/pre-arrival-and-welcome-services-for-international-students/
SGS 'Before you Arrive' Tips	https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/international-portal/before-you-arrive/
Assistance with finding housing	https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/department/housing/
<i>Arrival</i>	
Arrival and getting oriented	https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/international-portal/arriving-getting-oriented/
Obtaining a Social Insurance Number	https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/portfolio/service-canada.html
Getting your UHIP card	https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/task/get-your-uhip-card-for-international-students/
Learning about your UHIP plan	https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/service/university-health-insurance-program/
Attending Grad Step Up, an orientation for international students	https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/program/grad-step-up/
<i>Current Student Services</i>	
Centre for International Experience	https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/department/centre-for-international-experience/
International Student Advising	https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/service/advising-transition/
My Student Support Counselling	https://www.utoronto.ca/news/u-t-rolls-out-demand-my-ssp-counselling-service-all-students

Tips for Students

Living in Toronto

Rental Costs

- <https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/task/rental-costs-in-toronto-gta/>

City of Toronto Moving Guide

- <https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/moving-to-toronto/>

Budget Your Year

- <https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/task/living-costs-in-toronto/>
- <https://planningcalc.utoronto.ca/financialPlanner/#/>

URent Workshop

- <https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/program/urent-finding-a-place-workshops/>

News & Events

- <https://www.destinationtoronto.com/>
- <https://festivalstoronto.com/>
- <https://torontolife.com/>
- <https://www.blogto.com/>
- <https://www.toronto.com/>

Student Resources and Discounts

Discounts for Students

- <https://www.utsu.ca/utsu-student-perks-discounts/>
- <https://www.narcity.com/toronto/ontario-student-discounts-you-can-get-with-your-id>

Free Microsoft Office

- <https://uthrprod.service-now.com/infocomm>

Toronto Star and Globe and Mail Access

- <https://onesearch.library.utoronto.ca/faq/do-we-have-online-access-globe-and-mail-and-toronto-star-now-there-paywall>

Student Price Card (SPC) For Additional Discounts

- <https://spccard.ca>

Safety

Below you will find details on campus safety numbers and resources. Each bullet point under “Resources” provides further information when clicked.

Emergency Numbers and Contacts

- Canada Emergency: 911
- Campus Police Urgent: 416-978-2222
- Campus Police Non-urgent: 416-978-2323
- Campus Emergency Phones are stationary phones that are located around campus. They can be identified by the word "emergency" written on them/some have a flashing blue light
- Ensure you have updated your emergency contact in Acorn

Resources

- Download the UofT Campus Safety App and select "Work Alone Session" for when you are working in an isolated place on campus
- Request a Building Patroller or Special Constable to escort you to a location on campus/the TTC (through the Safety App or by calling Campus Police)
- The UofT Community Safety Office responds to personal safety responses, assess the safety risks and provides intervention options for students/staff/faculty
- The Sexual Violence Prevention and Support Centre aids and supports members of the UofT Community who have been affected by sexual violence or sexual harassment through navigating supports (medical, legal, counselling, etc.)
- Campus Police also offers resources such as Buy-and-Sell safe zones, fraud and theft protection, and more. Details can be found on their website

Connections for Students

Graduate Environmental
Students' Association

University of Toronto
Student Union

University of Toronto
Graduate Student Union

CUPE 3902 (for TAs)

Campus Groups
Database

University of Toronto
Environment Action

Getting Involved

There are many ways to stay informed and involved during your degree. Below are a few ways the School of the Environment helps you do so (click each box for further information):



We also post events, news, research and engagement opportunities to our social media pages:



The University of Toronto also houses several environmental-based resources on campus that may be of interest to you:

- [University of Toronto Environmental Resource Network \(UTERN\)](#)
 - Central group for those at UofT who are concerned about the health of our environment
- UofT's [Sustainability Office](#)
 - Bridging together sustainability research and institutional operations
- [Jane Goodall Institute](#)
 - Collaboration on Jane Goodall's teaching and research
- [Gerstein Library](#) and [Noranda Earth Science Library](#)
 - Large collection of science-based reference sources