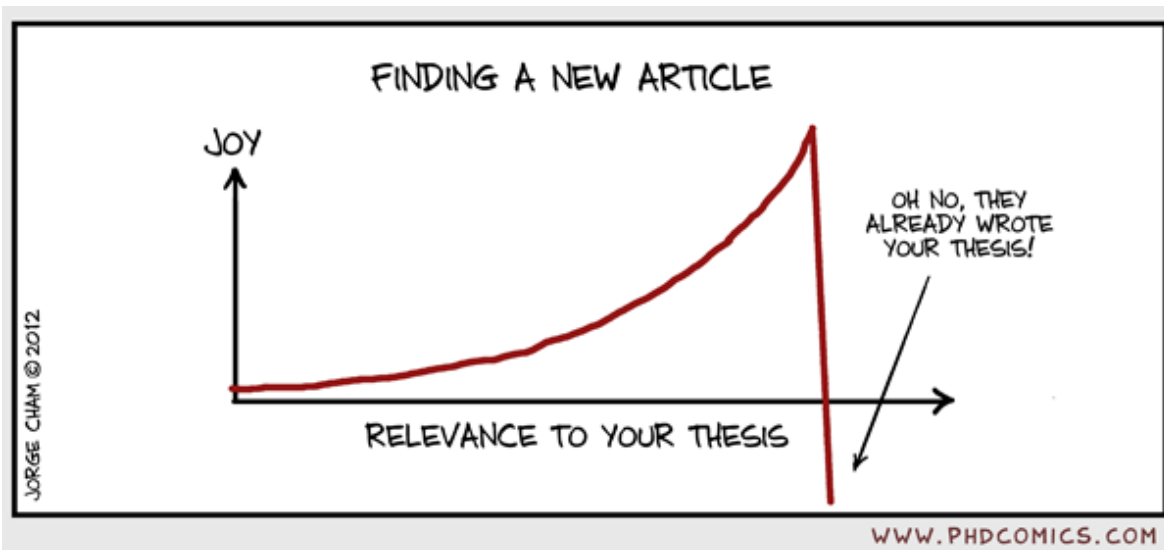


Biology Graduate Student **Survival Guide**



A useful guide to graduate students in the
Dalhousie Biology Department

Brought to you by your 2022-2023 BOGS Executive
<https://dalbogs.weebly.com/2022-2023.html>

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A Message from BOGS

Welcome to the Department of Biology at Dalhousie and by extension the Biology Organization of Graduate Students—also known as “BOGS”. All biology graduate students at Dalhousie are automatically members of BOGS and directly contribute to the society’s programming for students via \$10 of their university fees. The purpose of BOGS is to support the interests of graduate students within the Biology Department. This means that elected society executives represent student voices at departmental meetings, called Committee Of the Whole or “COW” meetings, and aim to provide many formal and informal opportunities for biology graduate students to meet and network with peers.

This booklet is designed to be helpful as you progress through your academic program within Dalhousie Biology. We've included many details on how to settle into your lab, your program, the university and Halifax! You can also explore content on who can help you, and where to get even more useful information.

Graduate student life is much more than academics alone! To get the most out of grad school we encourage you to interact with peers. For example, this includes other grad students within your lab and within the rest of the department. More experienced grad students can often be your best support system and have a wealth of information for navigating graduate school. An easy way to get to know your peers is to attend weekly BOGS events including 3:30pm Friday Informal Seminar Hours or “FISH” and “Biocoffee” hours each Tuesday at 10:30am (held bi-weekly during the summer term). These events take place in the 5th floor biology lounge of the Life Science Centre (LSC) with email notifications sent out prior to events.

★ **Important!**★ Don't miss out on email alerts...be sure that you are signed up for biology grad student emails by contacting Carolyn Young in the main biology office.

We are always looking for those interested in becoming active student leaders. For those of you eager to become more involved in BOGS, please track down one of our executive members (emails are on the next page). We'd love to have your help!

Another group who supports you on campus is DAGS—the Dalhousie Association of Graduate Students (<http://www.dags.ca>). DAGS represents all Dalhousie graduate students not only within Dalhousie, but also at the provincial and national levels.

We hope you have a successful time here at Dalhousie, and we look forward to meeting you at upcoming events. **Remember that we are here to represent you, so please let us know how we can help...**

Welcome aboard!

BOGS

BOGS Executive

President	Ellie Weise	EMWeise@dal.ca
Vice-President	Brent Robicheau	br209559@dal.ca
Treasurer	Emily Yeung	emilyyeung@dal.ca
Secretary	Samantha Crowley	samantha.crowley@dal.ca
Grad. Admissions & Scholarships Rep.	Scott Pollara	sc938541@dal.ca
Social Coordinators	Shelby Clarke Jasmine Talevi	shelby.clarke@dal.ca jasmine.talevi@dal.ca
BioBeer Coordinator	Scott Pollara [interim]	sc938541@dal.ca
BioBall Coordinator	Shelby Clarke	shelby.clarke@dal.ca
FISH Coordinators	Samantha Beal Samantha Crowley	samantha.beal@dal.ca samantha.crowley@dal.ca
BioCoffee	Jasmine Talevi Amy Irvine	jasmine.talevi@dal.ca amy.irvine@dal.ca
Intramurals Coordinator	Scott Pollara	sc938541@dal.ca
Equality Diversity, and Inclusion & Advocacy Coordinator	Kate Ortenzi	ortenzi@dal.ca

★ Opportunities Available ★

We are still seeking two **Lett Symposium Coordinators**, two **TA representatives**, and a second **EDI & Advocacy Coordinator** for the 2022/23 academic year. Contact the BOGS President (Ellie Weise) to be nominated for our upcoming bi-elections (to take place early this Fall 2022).

Upcoming Events

Every Tuesday

At 10:30am: **BioCoffee**: coffee and tea, 5th floor lounge (Biology Wing, LSC).

**Note that this event is held bi-weekly during the summer term.

Every Friday

At 3:30–4:30pm: **Friday Informal Seminar Hour** (FISH): 5th floor biology lounge (LSC)

At 4:30pm: **“BioBeer” Social Networking**: 5th floor biology lounge (LSC) or elsewhere as advertised via email to biology graduate students. Note that BioBeer is held less consistently during the summer term and if held is typically advertised on Facebook.

Special Yearly Events

Date	Event	Location
FALL SEMESTER		
September	DAGS Orientation “O-week” Events	Various on Campus
September	Biology Grad Student Orientation	5th floor lounge
September	Meet the profs at Faculty FISH Talks! Followed by Welcome BioBeer	5th floor lounge
Early Fall (mid-September)	Biology Graduate Students Retreat (lots of fun and not to be missed!)	for e.g. Harrison Lewis Coastal Discovery Centre, Deanery Project, etc.
October	BioWeen–BOGS Halloween Party	5th floor lounge
December	Holiday Party	5th floor lounge
WINTER SEMESTER		
TBD	Curling	Halifax Curling Club
March	Mooseheads Hockey Game	Scotiabank Centre
April	Lett Research Symposium	TBD
April	BOGS Annual General Meeting	5th floor lounge
TBD	BioBall	TBD

And many more!!! Watch your email inbox for event notices or check out the [BOGS website](#) or [Facebook group](#) for the latest news.

Guide for New Students

Welcome to the Biology Department! We're glad you chose Dalhousie for your graduate studies. Although our graduate program is designed to be relatively flexible, it is necessary to have some rules to maintain high academic standards and consistency. This section of our Survival Guide is intended to help you become familiar with the most important procedures within the biology department. If you need a more detailed account of rules and regulations, you will find them set out formally at this link: [Biology Graduate Students Information](#). This website is a great tool and contains different forms and information you will need for the program. An additional excellent resource to survive and thrive in graduate school is this [Do's and Don'ts of Graduate School](#) document assembled by some past/current biology grads. Check it out!

Navigating Your Degree

To reduce some of the uncertainties you may feel in starting a new program, we have listed below the main events, milestones and important things to take care of during your time at Dalhousie. It may help to keep this as a checklist as you progress through your studies toward graduation.

BEFORE ARRIVAL

1. Finances

- a) **Securing funding:** As a biology graduate student, your supervisor must ensure that you earn a minimum TAKE-HOME stipend of \$20 800 per year (or \$21 800 per year for A- students). **It is important that you recognize this is the amount you will take-home in pay after tuition is deducted, but before any fees (e.g. DSU or health care plan) are deducted.** Meaning, that you may initially see a larger number stated on your pay-stub and (or) on acceptance letters from the university. You are responsible for discussing with your supervisor where these funds will come from and you may negotiate to earn more than the minimum stipend amount. For example, supervisors have been known to top-up student salaries by \$1000-2000 per year. Your supervisor may have a research grant already secured for your project and stipend, or you may need to secure scholarships to help cover, supplement, and/or increase your stipend (this will depend on your individual situation). The Faculty of Graduate Studies has compiled lists of funding opportunities for graduate students, including those tailored for [Master's](#) students, [PhD](#) students, [international](#) students, and students of [diverse](#) backgrounds. You can also touch base with the BOGS VP to view the **Award Repository** of successful awards to help you write grant applications. ★ We encourage you to discuss stipends as early as possible with your supervisor and the departmental administrator (Chris MacNeil) to avoid any misunderstandings or surprises. ★

- b) **How much are you actually getting paid?** As a graduate student, your gross stipend earnings (i.e. every dollar given to you through the university) is considered 'income' but you still pay tuition out of this pot of money. Therefore your **net stipend**, also called "take-home stipend" (as mentioned above) is generally calculated as: $\text{Gross Stipend Per Term} - \text{Tuition Per Term} - \text{Student Fees (if not covered by Supervisor)} = \text{Net Stipend or "Take-home Stipend" Per Term}$. You can then divide your Net Stipend Per Term by 4 to get your approximate monthly take-home pay (there are 4 months per term). You should also note that tuition may be automatically deducted from your gross stipend (which is supervisor-sourced) for the term OR automatically paid for by a scholarship you hold (for e.g. NSERC), but this will only occur properly if all necessary paperwork has been filed on time. You will also need to discuss with your supervisor whether your "tuition amount" will also cover your other Student Fees (e.g. health plan, Student union fees, etc.). Depending on your individual case, you can factor this into the equation above for your net stipend pay. Also note that Student Accounts will send an emailed bill at the beginning of each term informing you of your tuition and fee amounts for the term. Ensuring that your stipend paperwork is filed on time, and understanding what your supervisor's contribution to your tuition will cover, will allow you to properly interpret this bill and ultimately help you avoid accidentally overpaying tuition and/or fees. For example, STUDENT ACCOUNTS WILL SEND A BILL EVEN IF YOUR TUITION AND/OR FEES WILL BE AUTO-DEDUCTED FROM YOUR STIPEND FOR THE TERM (which is the case for nearly all graduate students).

★ It is an extremely good practice to verify with your supervisor and the department administrator how much your take-home pay will be, since this can be very unclear, and must be at least the minimum listed above. You can contact the biology administrative officer Chris MacNeil (Chris.Macneil@dal.ca) to ask about your stipend (make sure to CC your supervisor). It is also good practice to confirm with Chris MacNeil before making any payments to the university; do not assume that dealing with student accounts is the same process as experienced during an undergraduate degree—you are now a grad student *and* a university employee! ★

- c) **Setting up your pay (i.e. making sure you can get paid via direct deposit):** To set up electronic payments, bring (or send) a void cheque to Aileen Patterson in the main office and explain your situation (email: Aileen.Patterson@Dal.Ca). Explaining your situation is important since Aileen also organizes the pay for teaching-assistants. You should also clarify with Aileen whether you need to fill in any Canadian Government forms for tax deductions from your pay cheque. You can download a direct deposit void cheque template with the required information from most major banking websites.
- d) **Getting paid:** If everything above goes as planned, you will receive your stipend payment monthly (near the 27th day of the month). Other pay (such as TA pay) is generally paid out on a different schedule (i.e. bi-weekly). You can check your pay stubs in the DalOnline portal (dalonline.dal.ca), but notably, these tend to be

released late in the month (near the 20th). Click on the “Employees” tab, then “Employee Dashboard” which should open a separate window where you can find various information about your pay. Under “Job Summary” you should see all your “jobs” listed- this includes teaching assistantships AND your stipend (which should be listed as something like “Research Scholarship”). If your stipend or another position is not listed, you should reach out to your supervisor/TA course instructor/Chris MacNeil **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!**

2. Registration

- a) **Class selection:** Start off by meeting with your Faculty Advisor (this is usually your supervisor, but for students who have a primary supervisor that is located outside the Biology Department, your Faculty Advisor will be your “internal” supervisor). Discuss the classes you need and those you want to take over your entire graduate program, not just in the first year. The graduate calendar is available online at: <https://academiccalendar.dal.ca/Catalog/ViewCatalog.aspx>.

As a graduate student, you need to register for REGN 9999 (everyone) as well as BIOL 9000 (Master’s) or BIOL 9530 (PhD) every semester (including the summer semester!). In your first year, you will also have to take a few other courses. All new graduate students (MSc and PhD) are required to take BIOL 5700 (Communication Skills), and MSc students are required to take BIOL 5710 (Graduate Modules). Note that if you are an incoming PhD student who already has a Masters degree, you may not have to take Modules.

- b) **Registering:** You will register for courses through DalOnline. Click on “Web for Students” > “Registration” > “Register for Classes,” which should open up a new tab. Click “Register for Classes” in the new tab window, select a term, and press “Continue.” In the box near the top of the screen, you can search for courses by name, course number, or CRN (which you can find in the timetable). Once you find a course, click the “Add” button, which should add the course to the window in the bottom right of your screen. Make sure to press the “Submit” button at the bottom right to complete your registration for all your courses (they should say “Registered” in green under “Status”).

★ Remember to register for your appropriate fall, winter, and summer courses! It is important that you register for your mandatory courses (namely REGN 9999 and BIOL 9000 or 9530) before posted deadlines to avoid delays in your stipend pay. Note that there can also be different deadlines for registration depending on whether you have a scholarship or not. ★

3. Teaching obligations

Graduate students are required to TA for two semesters. This TA requirement is not specific to Dalhousie nor is it specific to Teaching Assistantships; if you find an Instructor position, even if at another university, this will count towards your TA

requirement. Contact the Teaching Assistant Coordinator (Allison Schmidt, Tel: (902) 494-1638, Allison.Schmidt@dal.ca) about TA-ing for the upcoming year. Do this *as soon as possible* since the deadlines for applications are July 15th for fall and winter, and April 15th for Spring and Summer. Online application forms can be found at http://admin.biology.dal.ca/TA/TA_form.php. You should also receive a [TA handbook](#) from the Biology department when you confirm you will be attending Dalhousie. Waivers can be requested if you have a lot of prior TA experience (contact the Graduate Director: Daniel Ruzzante).

UPON ARRIVAL

1. **Arrival on Campus:** Usually grad students will arrive on campus in September, but sometimes as early as the preceding May. Early arrival (organized through your supervisor) can allow you a head start on your thesis research but the academic year and classes do not begin until early September. While beginning in September is most common, students may also begin in January, at which time winter classes also begin.

Lost?! Dalhousie Campus Map:

<http://campusmap.dal.ca/>

2. **New Student Interviews:** In early September, you will be asked to arrange a time for an interview with the Graduate Coordinator (Daniel Ruzzante). At this interview, your class selection and overall graduate program requirements will be nearly finalized (see "ATC" below). In your second year and beyond, you will be asked to have an continuing student interview with one of your stream chairs (discussed later) to review your progress.
3. **Healthcare:** When you register as a full-time student you are automatically enrolled in the Student Union Health Plan and Student Union Dental Plan (this includes international students). However, if you register as a part-time student, or if you are a full-time student beginning in January, you must OPT IN to the plan. If you already have health and/or dental coverage you may be able to opt out of the plan. Health plans typically help to cover the cost of prescriptions; trips to the dentist, eye doctor, and other health providers (e.g., physiotherapist, dietitian, private psychotherapist, and many more); and travel health insurance. For full details on what is covered, and your yearly allowances for different services, see www.studentvip.ca/dsu. International students should pay close attention to the opt out deadline for mandatory international health insurance (about \$1800 a year), as you can opt out if you have your own insurance or the [Nova Scotia MSI Card](#) (Medical Services Insurance). MSI is a provincially-funded program which provides hospital and medical care free of charge. It does not pay for prescription drugs or

other health benefits covered under the DSU plan. International students can apply immediately to the MSI Card when they are hired as Teaching or Research Assistants at Dal. Otherwise there is a 12-month wait period.

4. **Student Card (DalCard) and Keys:** You can obtain your ID card at the DalCard office (6230 Coburg Rd., located in Howe Hall). Your student card provides you with access to the Dalplex, a bus pass ([U-PASS](#), unlimited pass to use the bus and Halifax harbor ferries for the Fall and Winter terms), and library loaning privileges. Many stores, events, and activities in and around Halifax also have student pricing, just show your student card. You should also visit the Biology Stores (on the 1st floor of the biology tower of the LSC) to acquire keys and signing privileges on your supervisor's account, note that each key requires a \$10 deposit.
5. **Mailbox:** Visit Carolyn Young in the main Biology Department office to make sure you have a mailbox assigned. Supply an address for forwarding mail, if necessary.
6. **E-mail and Internet:** An e-mail address can be obtained by visiting [MyDal](#). See the people at the computer help desk in the Library to get your computer connected to campus wireless. They can also help you make an email alias, so that emails show up as your name instead of your NetID. In general the info used to login to your email is the same info used to login to wireless internet on campus.
7. **Departmental Communication:** If you are not already receiving biology graduate announcements and news through email, contact Carolyn Young (carolyn.young@dal.ca) with your email address to be added to the grad list server. If you need to send an announcement/message to all biology grad students, ask Carolyn or Aileen to forward your email to the graduate students. For example, this often includes messages like "looking for an apartment/roommate; see details".
8. **Society Fair:** A great way to get involved in the Dalhousie student community is by taking part in some of the 250+ student societies. See what's out there by going to the society fair in September (watch for updates on location in the Weekly DalNews emails). Learn something new, engage in social justice issues, connect with others of your faith, and make new friends at the same time!

DEGREE MILESTONES

1. **Supervisory Committee:** A couple of months into your degree you should be considering whom you wish to form your Supervisory Committee (at least two people in addition to your supervisor, and at least half of the committee must be Dalhousie faculty). Your supervisor can help you with this decision.
2. **Admission to Candidacy Exam (ATC):** Your ATC examination normally takes place within nine months of your program's start date. You will be responsible for developing a research proposal in advance of the examination, and should be prepared to present and 'defend' or respond to questions about your proposal

during the exam. There are [online forms](#) which give you instructions about the research proposal which must be submitted for the ATC. One of the purposes of this exam is to ascertain that your research plans and abilities are suitable for your course of study. It is also a chance to practice a written and oral proposal, and it affords you the opportunity to discuss your work with other researchers. Details concerning the format of the ATC exam and written proposal will be outlined in the core Communications course, and usually by your supervisor. It is also helpful to speak to other grad students who have already done their ATCs and can share their experiences and advice. This [form](#) should be affixed to the front of your proposal package.

Additional information can be found here: [Admission to Candidacy Guidelines](#)

3. **GSIS Progress Reports:** Prior to your program's anniversary start date you are expected to prepare an annual Progress Report. These are submitted through the DalOnline Portal (see GSIS section once logged in). Deadlines will depend on your start date, and whether or not you have a certain scholarship. You should clarify early on (via email) with the faculty of graduate studies (FGS) scholarships liaison officer if it is unclear when your yearly GSIS Progress Report is due. You should also budget extra time for your supervisor and the graduate director to assess your online progress report before the relevant due date. ★ Note that FGS expects students, supervisors, *and* graduate directors to have approved progress reports before posted deadlines. ★
4. **Preliminary Examination:** All PhD students must also complete a Preliminary Exam at least one year prior to their defense and no earlier than 2.5 yrs into their program (counting from the start date or from the ATC exam date for transfers of MSc to PhD). The Prelim Exam includes a written essay and a more formal progress report than that which is typically given in the yearly online progress reports. There is an [online form](#) which outlines the criteria for each portion of the preliminary exam. Additional information can be found here: [Preliminary Exam Guidelines](#) (Section 12)
5. **Sharing Your Work:** Most graduate students will have the opportunity to present some of their thesis results at at least one conference (or a few!). For an easy, low-stakes presentation opportunity, apply to present at the Friday Informal Seminar Hour talks or the [BOGS Annual Lett Symposium](#). ★ If you'd like to head out of town to present at (or attend) a conference or workshop, there are travel and professional development grants available through [DAGS](#) and [FGS](#).★
6. **Defending Your Thesis:** To learn more about preparing to submit and defend your completed thesis, check out this summary of general [info](#) (points 14-16), thesis [regulations](#) from FGS, and [forms and documents](#) from FGS.

For more details on graduate student forms and program guidelines, visit: [Graduate Forms and Guidelines](#)

Events & Workshops

There are many different events and workshops on and around campus that could be of interest to graduate students. Here is a non-exhaustive list of some!

Departmental Events

FISH: “Friday Informal Seminar Hour” is an hour-long seminar session on Friday afternoons that is organized by BOGS and features a variety of different speakers (mainly students!). Generally these talks take place in the 5th floor biology lounge, and are often streamed on Zoom as well. Information about FISH talks is emailed out weekly to the department, so keep an eye on your email if you’d like to attend!

Departmental Seminars: these talks feature researchers from all over the world, and generally take place on Thursday mornings. Again, keep an eye on your email since information is sent out about these talks weekly during the academic year.

Thesis Defenses: For a better idea of what your final thesis defense is going to feel like, it’s a great idea to attend a few from your peers’ defenses. All upcoming thesis defenses are advertised through email (sometimes as email reminders and also via event listings within regular FGS generated newsletters).

Other Dalhousie Events

Make an effort to break yourself out of the “biology bubble” and attend some presentations from other departments. A large part of the required course BIOL 5700 (Communication Skills) is to summarize and evaluate academic presentations throughout your first two semesters. Many presentations are listed on the Dal Events page (<https://events.dal.ca/>), and individual department websites each have their own events calendars as well (links to some are listed below)

Oceanography:

<https://www.dal.ca/faculty/science/oceanography/news-events/events-calendar.html>

Psychology and Neuroscience:

https://www.dal.ca/faculty/science/psychology_neuroscience/news&events/events-calendar.html

Earth and Environmental Science:

<https://www.dal.ca/faculty/science/earth-environmental-sciences/news-events.html>

College of Sustainability:

<https://www.dal.ca/faculty/sustainability/ess-lecture-series.html>

Professional Development Opportunities

Centre for Learning and Teaching: Being a teaching assistant (for at least one year) is one of the requirements for biology graduate students. If you're interested in gaining knowledge and skills about the practice of teaching, the CLT has a fantastic series of workshops as well as an annual conference. Check out their [events](#) list. Considering working as a Professor, Course Coordinator, or Lecturer at some point in the future? The CLT also offers a [Certificate in University Teaching and Learning](#) to help prepare graduate students for a career in higher education.

Faculty of Graduate Studies: Most of us don't plan to be in graduate school forever (right?!), so it is worth checking out the many professional skill-building opportunities available on campus, including:

- [Dal GradPD](#): a go-to hub to learn about professional development designed for your specific needs as a graduate student
- Enrol in the [Dal GradPD Certificate Program](#)
- Learn at your own pace: [Online professional development opportunities](#), e.g., via Mitacs
- [The OpenThink Initiative](#): apply to join a cohort of graduate students trained to share their knowledge and communicate their work with the public (includes a \$1500 scholarship!)
- [Three-Minute Thesis](#): practice your #scicomm by entering this competition to explain your thesis concisely to a lay audience

Interested in Outreach or Science Communication?

Within the University there are unique programs that can facilitate outreach and science communication opportunities:

- 1) [Diversity of Nature](#) can help you put together your own STEM workshop, classroom visit, lecture, or other type of outreach event *catered to racialized or underrepresented members of the community*. If you are interested in connecting with Diversity of Nature you can shoot a message to Melanie or Suchinta (melanie.massey@dal.ca or suchinta.arif@dal.ca). Diversity of Nature will cover the costs of your event, assist with logistics and development, and pay you an honorarium. *Students from diverse backgrounds (e.g. 2SLGBTQIA+, those with disabilities, neurodivergent individuals, underrepresented genders, and racialized individuals) are encouraged to apply, but this is not a requirement.*
- 2) [Ocean School](#) runs many different types of ocean-related outreach and science communication events. In addition to this, you can get in touch with Boris Worm who can assist you with acquiring a CBC/news outlet interview, writing a news release, or other forms of media production to explain your science.
- 3) [SuperNOVA](#) at Dalhousie is a youth outreach initiative that runs many different programs. If you'd like to get started with outreach, you can connect with them and discuss options (such as giving a talk about your career to girls, delivering a premade workshop, volunteering with their ongoing work, or employment.)

Living in Halifax as a Graduate Student

- 1. Finding Housing:** Check online for accommodations via [Kijiji](#), Facebook Marketplace, [Places 4 Students](#). For short-term housing check the Dalhousie classified ads. It's also worth checking in with students in the department to see if anyone knows of a place that's available: if you are a student who is starting in the future, feel free to reach out to BOGS representatives via email or join the Facebook group to see if current students can help with your housing journey. For example, you can post on the BOGS Facebook group or ask Aileen to send an email to all grad students that you are looking for an apartment.
- 2. Transportation:** Halifax is a small city. If you live close to campus nearly everything will be within walking distance. If you aren't so lucky to find a place downtown, Halifax Metro offers bus service within the city and adjacent areas. All full-time students are usually entitled to the [U-PASS](#). If you are flying to and from Halifax, the cheapest transport to the airport is the [city bus](#) (\$3.25), which usually takes an hour from downtown Halifax to the airport.
- 3. Student Health and Wellness Services:** Pursuing graduate school is an incredible opportunity to strengthen your knowledge about what you love in science and will bring you rewarding experiences for your personal and professional life. However, you will likely face challenging and sometimes stressful situations throughout your degree. You are not alone and there are resources readily available in case you need extra help from a professional hand. The **Dalhousie Student Health and Wellness Centre** is located on campus, and services offered include those covering mental health, medical health, sexual health, peer support, and LGBTQ2SIA+ services. Doctor appointments can usually be made 1-2 weeks in advance, although a limited number of same-day appointments are often available. Find more info [here](#). For mental health concerns specific to graduate students, there is often a [group counseling](#) "Graduate Student Drop-In" program.
- 4. Groceries:** There are many grocery stores in the area including [Pete's Frootique](#), [Sobey's](#), and [Atlantic Superstore](#). Don't forget to bring your student card to Superstore or Sobey's on Tuesdays for a 10% discount, and the Bulk Barn on Joseph Howe is a great source for inexpensive spices and grains with a student discount on Wednesdays. [Organic Earth Market](#) has a good selection of natural foods and [The Tare Shop](#) offers package-free food, home supplies, and personal care products with a 10% student discount on Tuesdays. For fresh, local food, check out Noggins Market on Coburg or the [DSU Farmer's Market](#). You can also pick up local produce at the [Halifax Seaport Farmer's Market](#) on Sat/Sun and at the [Dartmouth Farmer's Market](#) Saturdays. If you're short on cash, don't hesitate to check out the [Dal Food Bank](#).
- 5. Managing Finances:** Reimbursement for expenses (e.g., related to your research, travel, etc.) is processed via [Chrome River software](#), found on the main page of

your myDal Hub (scroll down to the “Employee Support” list). You will be required to add a grant code for the account you are expensing; get this from your supervisor or the person that you are being reimbursed by beforehand. The Biology Department has the [Lett Fund](#) available for students nearing the end of their program who are running out of stipend funding (as soon as you find yourself in this circumstance contact Chris MacNeil). These funds are also accessible to international students needing emergency financial support with some of the additional burdens associated with visas, etc. (Again, contact Chris MacNeil if this applies to you). There are also bursaries available via the [DSU](#), with specific options for [students with disabilities](#) and [international students](#).

6. Fun Stuff...

- a. **Dalplex:** Full-time students are automatically members of [Dalplex](#), where you have access to the fitness hall, fieldhouse, pool, and group fitness classes. Students have access to the Sexton campus gym as well.
 - b. **Intramurals and Clubs** – Dalhousie offers 17 recreation clubs, from scuba diving and sailing to cricket and fencing! If you’re interested in a particular intramural, let your BOGS Intramurals Coordinator know and we’ll do everything we can to set up a team, and even cover registration fees!
 - c. **Other fun stuff around the city:** Check out [Halifax Public Libraries](#) to access additional community resources, or take advantage of their free events, DIY Maker space, study spaces, etc. Check out [The Coast](#) for guides to the best music, food and activities Halifax has to offer. Halifax also has a great arts scene. Check out the [Bus Stop Theatre](#), [Neptune Theatre](#), and the [Dalhousie Arts Centre](#). Don’t miss [Nocturne](#) in October, Halifax’s annual art at night event! The music scene in Halifax is nationally renowned. The [Halifax Pop Explosion](#) showcases over 150 bands at 18 venues over several days in October. Beyond pop, the Coast’s [Music Section](#) has all of your needs covered from opera to grunge to folk. Check it out! If you like rock climbing, the [Rock Court](#) in the basement of the Dalplex is a great place to start. Climb Nova Scotia is also a superb resource for both new and experienced climbers, taking people out to local bouldering areas on Thursday nights and arranging various instructional clinics. Check out the [CNS website](#) for more details. Halifax is also home to one of the oldest learned societies in Canada, the [Nova Scotian Institute of Science](#), which offers public lectures and excursions.
7. **Food on Campus:** In addition to the Cafeteria and Tim Hortons found in the LSC, you can grab a bite at [The Grawood](#), King’s Cafeteria, the SUB Cafeteria, [the Loaded Ladle](#) (vegan food by donation), and many others on campus.
 8. **Writing Centre:** Would you like to improve your writing skills? Is English your second language and want to receive some advice to master that final paper or

dissertation? The Writing Centre offers free service of one-on-one consultations. More info [here](#).

9. **Study Skills & Tutoring:** Personal coaching and free workshops are offered to you to help boost your academic performance while you are at Dal. Info [here](#). Check your email and the weekly DalNews for upcoming workshops and courses through the Writing Center, Center for Learning and Teaching, and more. There is also the [Accessibility Centre](#) which can help with accommodations for classes and writing exams, as well as assistive technology. They advocate for student access, inclusion, and [accommodation](#) support, offer [workshops](#), and more.

DID YOU KNOW? (Random Fun/Useful Facts)

You can walk from the LSC to the Killam Library UNDERGROUND (i.e. out of the rain)! You can also go to the Aquatron via an underground tunnel - take the LSC elevator to the "first" floor.

(Ask your labmates or refer to the campus [map](#) for more details)

Dalhousie recycles paper, glass, and pop cans all over campus and composts food waste in some locations.

There is a little museum, the McCullough Museum, on campus in the LSC. Check it out!

Key Biology Graduate Program Administrators

Who to see when you have an issue...

Graduate Coordinator (Dr. Daniel Ruzzante)

- Progress Reports
- Appeals/Grievances/Problems
- Establishes Curriculum (with Graduate Directorate)
- Conducts Evaluations and Interviews New Students in September
- Assists Graduate Students (e.g. examinations, deadlines, supervisors, theses)

Phone // 494-1688

Email // daniel.ruzzante@dal.ca

Graduate Secretary ([Carolyn Young](#))

- Can forward emails to various Biology listservs including all graduate students.
- Organizes Scheduling of Interviews, ATCs, and Preliminary Exams
- Compiles Student Records from September Interviews
- Prepares Lists of Graduating Students
- Initiates Progress Report Preparation
- Informs Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS) as necessary
- Takes Minutes at Graduate Directorate Meetings
- Prepares Graduate Class Calendar entry
- Updates Procedures Manual

- Keeps Registrar/FGS informed of changes to curriculum

Chair of Admissions and Scholarships Committee (Dr. Alastair Simpson)

- Deals with Admission and Scholarship Applications
- Allocates Scholarship Funds
- Ranks Students for Scholarships in conjunction with Scholarships Committee
- Prepares Information Brochure

Stream Chairs (Ecology & Evolution (A) - Dr. Mark Johnston, Dr. Hal Whitehead, Dr. Heike Lotze; Cell Molecular & Organismal (C) - Dr. Sophia Stone)

- Interview Continuing Graduate Students in Sept.
- Chair ATC Exams, Set Examiners for ATC and Preliminary Exams

Department Chair (Dr. Sophia Stone)

- Appoints Module Coordinator (currently Dr. Joe Bielawski) and Instructor for Communications Class (Dr. Daniel Ruzzante) with the consultation of the Graduate Coordinator (Dr. Daniel Ruzzante)

For additional resources, e.g., Biology Stores, Imaging Suite, Aquatron, etc., please refer to the [Biology Facilities](#) page.

Important Phone Numbers & Emails

The area code for all of Nova Scotia is (almost always) 902 (and rarely, 782)

People, Places, & Groups

[BIOLOGY DEPARTMENT](#)

Biology Dept. Office

Department Administrator

Graduate Coordinator

Biology Grad Admissions

Module Coordinator

TA Coordinator

Special Topics (see Grad Coordinator)

Stream Chairs 2022

Ecology and Evolution

Cellular and Molecular Biology

CONTACT INFO

902 494-3515 | biology@dal.ca

Chris MacNeil | Chris.MacNeil@dal.ca

Daniel Ruzzante | biolgrad@dal.ca

Alastair Simpson | alastair.simpson@dal.ca

Joe Bielawski | j.bielawski@dal.ca

Allison Schmidt | aschmidt@dal.ca

Daniel Ruzzante | biolgrad@dal.ca

Mark Johnston | mark.johnston@dal.ca

Hal Whitehead | hal.whitehead@dal.ca

Heike Lotze | hlotze@dal.ca

Sophia Stone | sophia.stone@dal.ca

[DALHOUSIE](#)

Faculty of Graduate Studies

Dean of Graduate Studies

Payroll Services

Hicks Building (Rm. 314)

494-2485 | graduate.studies@dal.ca

Marty Leonard | grad.dean@dal.ca

Hicks Building (1st Floor)

494-3700 | payroll@dal.ca

Killam Library Circulation	494-3617 killam.circulation@dal.ca
Kellogg Library Circulation	494-2479 kellogg.circulation@dal.ca
Computer Help desk (Killam Basement)	494-4357 support@dal.ca
Student Health and Wellness Centre	LeMarchant Place (2nd Floor) 494-2171
Dalplex (Athletics Centre) Information	494-3372 dalplexinfo@dal.ca
South House (formerly Dal Women's Centre)	1443 Seymour Street 494-2432
Dalout (LGBT Society)	Student Union Building 494-2190 dalout@dal.ca
Black Student Advising Centre	Student Union Building 494-6648 bsac@dal.ca
Indigenous Student Centre	1321 Edward Street 494-8863 isc@dal.ca

People, Places, & Groups Continued

GETTING SETTLED

Off-Campus Housing Office

Residence (Campus Housing) Office

[Metro Transit \(Bus Info\)](#)

Casino Taxi

[Driver Dave's](#)

INTERNATIONAL INTERESTS

[International Student Services](#)

English Tutoring (English as a Second Language)

[TESL Centre](#) St. Mary's University

[International Language Institute](#)

International Food Stores

Japanese and Korean food market

Ocomart: Korean Grocery

India Groceries (also has really good takeout!)

Mid-East Food Center

JJ Mart

Oco Mart

Ca-Hoa Grocery

CONTACT INFO Continued

Risley Hall (Room 1024)

494-2429 | och@dal.ca

Howe Hall

494-1054 | residence@dal.ca

490-8000

429-6666

441-4428

Killam Library (Room G25)

494-1566 | international.centre@dal.ca

420-5691 | tesl@stmarys.ca

404-8880 | study@ili.ca

7018 Chebucto Rd. | 455-8383

6303 Quinpool Rd | (902) 266-6278

2585 Robie St. | 423-6339

2595 Agricola St. | 492-0958

2326 Gottingen St.

6303 Quinpool Rd.

5483 Victoria Rd.

Taishan Asian Grocery
Loong 7 Mart

1312 Queen St / 6466 Quinpool Rd.
5640 Spring Garden Rd