GUIDELINES FOR NEW GRADUATE STUDENTS
Department of Civil, Geological and Mining Engineering

2019/20

Polytechnique Montreal
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A Word of Welcome

We are pleased to count you among the graduate students of the Department of Civil, Geological and Mining Engineering (CGM)! The CGM department hosts:

- 41 professors, active in research
- 2 types of master’s diplomas (Applied Sciences or Engineering).
- 22 technicians
- 9 members of the office staff
- 2 coordinators (one in education and one in technical resources)
- 754 undergraduate students in three programs (Civil, Geological and Mining Engineering)\(^1\)
- 210 students in the second cycle (166 in Civil Engineering, 44 in Mineral Engineering)
- 128 students in the third cycle (75 in Civil Engineering, 53 in Mineral Engineering)
- 5 Canada Research Chairs

A word on this guide

This guide is intended to complement the many resources that are at your disposal on the Polytechnique Montreal website. Its aim is to make your life easier by anticipating some of your questions and to help you avoid problematic situations that may arise from a lack of information. The rules that apply to you are those presented in the Directory of Graduate Studies corresponding to the year of your admission. It is your responsibility to inform yourself of these regulations. Please do not hesitate to contact the human resources department or the Registrar for clarification.

Upon your admission, you will be paired with a professor who will be your director of studies/research. In a research program, it is also possible to have a co-director(s) of research. In addition to your director of studies/research, the graduate program coordinator and the graduate student records officer will offer support.

\(^1\) Statistics of the fall quarter 2019.
For the Civil Engineering Program:

- Professor Yves Comeau (yves.comeau@polytechnique.ca), Coordinator of Graduate Programs in Civil Engineering, room B-424.4.

- Ms. Adèle El-Murr (adele.el-murr@polymtl.ca), Officer of Graduate Student Records in Civil Engineering, room B-342.3.

For the Mineral Engineering program:

- Professor Robert Chapuis (robert.chapuis@polytechnique.ca), Coordinator of Graduate Programs in Mineral Engineering, room A-351.5.

- Ms. Sooraya Balgobin (sooraya.balgobin@polymtl.ca), Officer of Graduate Student Records in Mineral Engineering, room A-354.

We hope that this guide will be useful to you.

Happy reading!
1 - The GO-POLY website

In accessing the GO-Poly website (https://www.polymtl.ca/rentree/), you will find a wealth of useful information concerning the period prior to the start of the school year.

Here is a screenshot of the site:
2 - Choice of and changes in course selection

At the beginning of each semester, you must confirm your registration in your student folder via the site https://dossieretudiant.polymtl.ca/WebEtudiant7/poly.html. Before the beginning of the registration period, you will receive an e-mail from the Registrar (sent to your Polytechnique e-mail address) inviting you to do so.

Once your registration is confirmed, you will be able to select courses in Polytechnique’s online student portal by choosing the function Change of course selection (Modification de choix de cours). This can be found in your student folder and is accessible until the deadline specified on the calendar. During this period, you can also modify your course selection. Here, it is important to understand your study plan (Plan d’études)!

Attention: there are strict deadlines! Each semester’s period of registration and amendment of course selection is indicated on the academic calendar (https://www.polymtl.ca/etudes/cours/horaire-des-cours/calendriers-universitaires-et-dates-importantes).
3 - Study Plan: Everything You Need To Know

As a graduate student, you must prepare a proposal for a study plan and have it approved by your director of studies or research, as well as by your program’s Coordinator of Graduate Programs (CPÉS). The study plan is a document that indicates the academic (courses, internships, projects and workshops) and possible complimentary academic activities that will need to be successfully completed in order to obtain your diploma. It should be submitted, at the latest, before the course change deadline during your first semester (see the dates on the academic calendar).

Since your director of studies or research will need to approve your study plan, it is important to communicate with them beforehand in order to fill out the appropriate form. The form can be found on https://www.polymtl.ca/etudes/programmes/etudes-supérieures. If you are enrolled in the Diploma of Higher Specialized Studies (DESS), the Professional Master (M.Eng.) or the research-based Master (M.Sc.A.) programs, you must fill out the study plan form in the second cycle. If you are registered in a doctoral program, you must complete the study plan for the third cycle. The study plan for students enrolled in accelerated programs is outlined in detail in Section 7.1.

3.1 - Prerequisites

The acronyms of graduate level courses contain either numbers in the 6000s or 8000s and are designed for students with appropriate prior training in the field. Courses in the 8000 level may be included in the options that are available to undergraduate students, therefore the acronyms for the prerequisite courses are listed in the course description on the Polytechnique website. For 6000-level courses, it is very rare that the acronyms of the prerequisites are indicated in the course description, not because the course requires no prior knowledge but because the majority of these prerequisite courses are conducted outside of Polytechnique (and therefore the course acronyms vary).
The following provides an example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CIV8440</td>
<td>Mécanique des roches en génie civil</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Automne 2019</td>
<td>Maria Helena Leite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Préalables(s): CIV3415 et 70 crédits pour les étudiants au baccalauréat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the example above, knowledge about soil mechanics is essential for course CIV6414. However, no prerequisites are indicated because these prerequisite courses are taught outside of Polytechnique and have different acronym systems.

Attention: The fact that no prerequisite course appears in the description of a 6000-level course does not mean that there is prior knowledge required! Please ensure you have the knowledge necessary in order to increase your chances of success. When in doubt, discuss with your director of studies/research.
3.2 – Course Categories

In your study plan, there are 3 categories to consider:

- Mandatory courses (OBL),
- Mandatory complementary courses (CC) and
- Courses outside of the program (HP).

Only the courses listed in the mandatory category (OBL) will be recorded and will contribute towards your diploma. The courses listed in the mandatory complementary category (CC) and outside the program (HP) do not count towards your diploma or affect the calculation of your grade point average. The courses outside the program may be language courses or courses to address a deficit in prior knowledge, for example.

Unless you are enrolled in modular programs that have a particular structure (Professional Master (or DESS) module in Civil Engineering, Environmental Engineering or Project Management), you will have some flexibility in the choice of courses listed in the OBL category, but there are some constraints to be respected:

- Any study plan in the second cycle (DESS, M.Eng., M.Sc.A.) must include a minimum of 6 credits from courses in the 6000s;
- Any study plan in the third cycle (PhD) must contain a minimum of 9 credits from courses in the 6000s;
- The program structure must be respected.

3.3 – Change of course category

As soon as you have confirmed your registration, you can add courses to your student folder in Polytechnique’s online portal. However, if the courses added are not the ones included in the study plan, they will be automatically categorized as being outside of program (HP) and will neither count towards your diploma or your cumulative average. The deadline to change the category of a course for a given semester is indicated on the academic calendar. After the deadline, the course will remain HP and will not count towards your diploma. Be careful: it is not possible to change the category of a course after the deadline, and especially not to a session (i.e., fall, winter, summer) other than when the course is offered.
3.4 - Courses outside of Polytechnique

Regulation 6 of the Directory of Graduate Studies stipulates that “a study plan may include a maximum of 15 credits of academic activities that are not listed in the Directory of Polytechnique Montreal and will be followed in another establishment. More specifically, graduate course credits may be earned outside the institution as course or project credits earned on an international exchange".

Registration for a course outside of Polytechnique must be completed through the Interuniversity Cooperation Office (BCI) site. To be able to register for these courses, they must appear on your study plan.

Learn about the deadlines for course registration in the institution that interests you and make sure you change your study plan in advance so that your request to the BCI is approved.

3.5 - Changes in your study plan

Over the course of your studies, it may become necessary to amend your study plan. The reasons may vary: there is an opportunity to do an internship rather than a project, a course will not be offered during the planned semester, you want to take a course outside of Polytechnique, or you need to improve your skills in English or French, to name a few. You can at any time make modifications to your study plan with the approval of your director of studies/research and using the appropriate form.

Some advice: when you go to see your director with a request to change your study plan, explain the reasons for your request and bring along the previous versions of your plan so that it is easier to monitor its progression.

3.6 - Exemptions, equivalencies, transfers

Article 5.3 of the General Regulations of Graduate Studies presents the definitions and conditions for obtaining exemptions, equivalences and transfers of course credits. Your requests must be approved by your director of studies/research, the CPÉS and the Registrar.
Students who have taken graduate-level courses during their baccalaureate at Polytechnique

Regulation 5.3.7 stipulates that a student in a graduate program may obtain credits from graduate-level courses that were completed during their bachelor’s program at Polytechnique Montreal, provided that they were successfully completed with a minimum B grade. To do this, you must obtain the permission of your director of studies/research and the corresponding coordinator of graduate programs. For more details, please consult regulation 5.3.7 of the Graduate Study Guidelines (https://www.polymtl.ca/rechercheg/annuaire).

Doctoral students

Some specific rules that apply to the exemptions of course credits in a doctorate program are presented in Article 73.1.1. This regulation indicates that a doctoral student may be exempt, in part or in total, from 15 credits over the course of the program; however, from the fall semester of 2019, any student wishing to benefit from the exemption scholarship, compensating for the lump sum amount required by the Government of Quebec, cannot ask for more than 6 credits of exemption. This means that the rules for this award have been modified for students admitted following the fall semester of 2019. Thus, "this scholarship will be awarded in the first year of study and will be renewed each semester up to the end of the program, on the condition that the student achieves, at Polytechnique Montreal or another university, a cumulative average minimum of 3.0/4.0 in at least 9 credits of compulsory courses credited to his/her study plan during the first 3 semesters of registration. Upon failure to meet these conditions, the allocation of the scholarship will end automatically as soon as the following semester begins."²

For students admitted to a PhD program before the fall 2019 semester, the rules in force at the time of admission apply and the exemption from the differential fees applies as long the student meets the deadlines to complete his/her studies. The exemption of course credits must be requested at the time of application for admission or during the first 2 semesters of your study and must be approved by your director of research and the Registrar.

² From https://www.polymtl.ca/etudes/dispositions-financieres/details-des-droits-de-scolarite-et-autres-frais/etudes-superieures
We recommend that you discuss with your director of research prior to applying for exemptions. For example, did you take the course that you want to request an exemption from a long time ago? Could it be interesting to re-take it in order to be well prepared for your literature review?

Your study plan must be approved by your director of studies/research. Only the courses listed in the OBL category are recorded and count towards your diploma and your cumulative average. You have deadlines to respect: choosing and modifying courses, filling out the study plan in your first semester of registration, and changing a course category. The courses "outside of Polytechnique" must be indicated in the study plan.
4 - Projects and internships in the professional master’s program

The professional master’s program includes 6 to 15 project or internship credits. The projects are offered under 4 codes: CIV6901, CIV6902, CIV6903 and CIV6910, corresponding to 6, 9, 12 and 15 credits, respectively. These projects are carried out under the direction of your director and include an upper level study concerning an engineering problem and the drafting of a project report.

Polytechnique’s internship website (https://www.polymtl.ca/stages-et-emplois/etudiants-stages) indicates that the internship option enables students to “participate in one or more projects of research, development, design, application, implementation or evaluation. The internship must be carried out in agreement with the director of studies. It must be relevant to the discipline and training and can be done full-time or part-time”. Internships are offered under course codes CIV6966s or CIV6972s referring to full-time or part-time internships, respectively.

In addition, several combinations are possible to supplement the 45 credits required in the program:
- 30 course credits and 15 project credits;
- 33 course credits and 12 project or internship credits;
- 36 course credits and 9 project credits;
- 39 course credits and 6 project credits.

The 3-credit course CIV6918 - graduate studies project\(^3\) can be taken to provide the following combination:
- 30 course credits, 12 internship credits and a 3-credit graduate studies project.

Draft professional master’s project

The objective of your professional master’s project will be defined based on a discussion with your director of studies. You can suggest topics which are of interest to you, but your director may also propose topics. In all cases, it is important that the objectives and methodology of the project are clear and that the number of weekly hours planned for the completion of the project is consistent with the number of credits for the project. Thus, for projects of 6, 9, 12 and 15 credits, the number of weekly hours should be on average, 3

\(^3\) The course CIV6918 - graduate studies project may not be included in the study plan of the research master’s or PhD students.
18, 27, 36 and 45, respectively. Polytechnique indicates that "the student must register only once in the course of their masters in the semester where they submit the project report". If you are not able to finish your report at the end of the planned semester, the Registrar will give you the grade IV (incomplete) and you will have two additional semesters to submit your report.

Internships

In order to register for a course, it must be included in your study plan and must be approved by your director of studies. In addition, before beginning an internship semester, you should have completed a minimum of 9 credits in your program. Neither Polytechnique nor your director of studies is obliged to find you a placement. You have to find an internship placement by yourself or through the website of the Internship and Job Services of Polytechnique (https://www.polymtl.ca/stages-et-emplois/etudiants-stages). There, you will find the descriptions for graduate level internships, including their duration, pay, deadlines, procedure for registration, and approval and evaluation of the internship.

During your internship period, you will need to provide a form called "Statement of Mandate", signed by your company’s supervisor and your director of studies. This document defines, among other things, the tasks to be performed, outcomes and the objectives of the internship with respect to professional, technical and inter-personal skills. Make sure you understand all the steps involved in the process because it might become difficult to complete all the steps in time if you begin too late.
5 - Definition of the research subject and time frame

Any student enrolled in a research-based program must submit the form "Research Topic and Time Frame" to the Registrar. The form must be completed and signed by the student, the director of research and the coordinator of graduate programs. This form is available on [https://www.polymtl.ca/etudes/programmes/etudes-superieures](https://www.polymtl.ca/etudes/programmes/etudes-superieures). Articles 55.2 and 76.2 of the Handbook of Graduate Studies state the deadlines for filling this form for research-based master’s and doctorate programs: before the end of the second semester of studies (for research-based master’s students) and before the end of the third semester of studies (for doctoral students).

Even if it is possible to submit the “Research Topic and Time Frame" form to the registrar during the periods mentioned above, it is strongly advised to discuss the form completion with your director of research at the beginning of your studies. On the form, you will need to indicate the title of your thesis, research objectives, proposed methodology and your choice about whether to draft a traditional thesis or one by articles. It is in everyone’s interest to complete these steps as soon as possible because it will allow you to better align yourself with the work to be done.
6 - Scoring System

The scoring system at Polytechnique is presented on their website: [https://www.polymtl.ca/etudes/programmes/notes-et-evaluation](https://www.polymtl.ca/etudes/programmes/notes-et-evaluation). The following summarizes the most important points in the grading system.

6.1 - Scores and Thresholds

The professor responsible for a course calculates the final grade for each student from the evaluation results obtained during reviews and various exams/tests. These grades are then converted into letter grades in the following manner:

- The professor determines the lower thresholds for grades A and D based on the distribution of grades, where the grade corresponds to the rate of passing marks;
- The interval between these two thresholds is then divided into 6 equal parts.

This system allows the teacher to adjust the passing score on the basis of the results obtained by the class.

Each letter is associated with a number of points as follows:

A* = 4.0 points; A = 4.0 points; B+ = 3.5 points; B = 3.0 points; C+ = 2.5 points; C = 2.0 points; D+ = 1.5 point; D = 1.0 point; F = 0.0 point.

The letter A* indicates exceptional results and is also worth 4 points in order for the averages to always be calculated out of 4.

6.2 - Cumulative Average

The cumulative average is calculated in the following manner:

\[
MC = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n} \text{mark obtained in class}_i \times \text{number of credits associated with course}_i}{\sum_{i=1}^{n} \text{number of credits associated with course}_i}
\]

Where \(n\) is the number of mandatory courses (OBL) appearing on the student record.
7 - Accelerated programs

Polytechnique offers 4 accelerated programs:
- BDI - Bachelor degree-DESS integrated;
- BMI - bachelor-master integrated;
- MDI - master-doctorate integrated;
- Direct passage from the baccalaureate to a doctorate.

You will find more information on accelerated programs on https://www.polymtl.ca/etudes/particularites-des-etudes-superieures/cheminements-acceleres. Despite the information presented on this site, developing a study plan for the BDI or BMI programs often raises questions among students. The following information should help you understand these programs more clearly.

7.1 - Study plan for BMI (or BDI)

Of 120 undergraduate credits, 108 credits are compulsory and common to all students (yellow zone); the remaining 12 credits (blue zone) constitute what is called an orientation (custom or specialty), as shown in the following figure:
In a fast-track program for BDI or BMI, up to 15 credits may be counted towards both bachelor’s and master’s degrees. In order to obtain both degrees, all compulsory courses for the bachelor's degree should be successfully completed and total credits must be 150 for the BMI and 135 for the BDI.

The option that allows the student to take full advantage of the credits shared within both programs (15 credits) is 12 credits of choice (depending on the orientation or specialization) and 3 credits from a course appearing in the 108 compulsory undergraduate credits. However, not all orientation-specific courses can be accepted in your master’s study plan. Since you must choose optional courses before being admitted to the BMI, special attention should be paid when choosing courses if you want to take advantage of the 12 or more credits that are common to both programs. In order to understand this better, let us consider a few examples for the research and professional master’s programs.

**Research-based Master’s program**

As the research-based master’s program includes only 15 course credits, it is very important to make a judicious choice for the first 12 credits to ensure that these can be considered common to the two programs (i.e., bachelor’s and master’s). In addition, the orientation should be composed of 12 credits from course codes in the 6000s (minimum 6 credits) and 8000s. For the mandatory courses, the approval of the director of research is necessary (not a right of the student).

Example 1: 12 credits of choice (including 6 credits at the 6000-level and 6 credits at the 8000-level) + 3 compulsory credits from the yellow zone in the previous figure + 30 project credits.

Example 2: 12 credits of choice (including 3 credits at the 6000-level and 9 credits at the 8000-level) + 3 credits (level 6000) + 30 project credits.

Of course, any other combination respecting the structure of the master's program is acceptable. For example, it sometimes happens that a student decides to make a request for admission to the BMI later in their studies, in which case some completed optional course credits may not be approved by their Director of Research *a posteriori*. In this case, the student will be able to register to BMI by using less than 15 credits common to the two programs.
Professional Master’s Program

In the case of the professional master’s program, a minimum of 30 course credits must be successfully completed, so the choice of optional courses in the bachelor's program provides a little more flexibility. For example, if a student chooses the 12 credits pertaining to an orientation or specialization (12 credits, 8000-level), 18 course credits remain to be chosen, which can include the 6 mandatory 6000-level credits. It is also easier for the director of studies for a professional master’s program to accept that 3 of the compulsory bachelor's degree courses are contained in the 15 credits that are common to the bachelor's and master's programs. This is because in the remaining 15 course credits, the student will be able to take courses that are relevant to the chosen field of specialization.

The study plan form, available on https://www.polymtl.ca/etudes/particularites-des-etudes-superieures/cheminements-acceleres, is composed of 3 parts (those corresponding to the BMI are shown in the following figures):

- Part 1: Identifying 15 credits (or less) that are common to the two programs.
The credits that are common to the two programs will be completed in part during your enrollment in a bachelor's program (Section A) and then when you will be enrolled in a master's program (Section B). The marks that you receive during your bachelor's degree (Section A) will appear on your bachelor’s degree transcript and will also be included on the master’s degree transcript and identified with the letter Y. The same logic applies to courses listed in Section B: the marks obtained in these courses will appear on your graduate transcript and will also be included on your undergraduate transcript with the letter Y.

- **Part 2:** Listing other credits and activities necessary for the attainment of the master’s diploma.

  ![Table](image)

- **Part 3:** Listing the remaining mandatory courses for obtaining the bachelor’s degree once admitted to the master’s program.

  ![Table](image)

### 7.2 - Choice of your director of studies or research

A judicious choice of the 12 credits of orientation or specialization is very important because your master’s study plan must respect the rules and must be approved by your director of studies/research. In addition, as soon as a student decides to enroll in the BMI program, it is important to contact the professors in the chosen field of specialization in order to discuss the choice of courses at the bachelor degree level.
7.3 - MDI

A student wishing to enroll in the Masters to Doctorate program has two options:

- Make a request for a change of program according to the conditions described in Article 7.11 of the Regulations of Graduate Studies. In this case, at the end of their PhD, the student receives only a doctoral degree.

- Enroll in the MDI (Integrated Master’s-Doctorate) program. This program is directed only at students who meet the criteria described in point M2 of the Modalities of Graduate Study regulations. Since it is an integrated program, it is possible for the student to meet all the criteria described in point M2 and obtain a Master’s degree during the realization of his/her PhD.

Attention: These regulations have been in force since the 2018-2019 academic year. If your colleagues say that they know someone who has obtained their master’s diploma without meeting the criteria described in M2, it is possible that this is true, but this will no longer be acceptable in the future.
8 - Duration of Studies

8.1 - Maximum Period

The Regulations of Graduate Studies state the time limits for each program as follows:

![Table: Limites de Temps](image)

The timeline of a program is counted from the first semester of registration in the program. Thus, for students in the BMI/BDI program, for example, during the first semester of registration in the master’s program, the student is still in the process of completing the 120 credits necessary to obtain the bachelor’s degree. In the same way, for a student who enrolls in a graduate program and who abandons their studies and then decides to re-apply for admission to the same program, the previously completed semesters will be counted and recorded towards the timeline. A timeline of a few semesters in a program may also consider the semesters corresponding to an interruption of studies, as explained in section 7.2.

If you are enrolled in a research-based master’s program and you have not submitted your thesis before the end of your 4th semester of studies after your first registration in the program, you must submit the form "Work-plan to Complete Master’s Research Studies". The form must be completed and signed by you (the student), your research director and the appropriate coordinator of graduate programs. On this form, you must specify the steps required for you to finish your thesis as well as the number of semesters required while respecting the maximum period of 6 semesters.
8.2 - Interruption of Studies

As indicated in Article 7.9 of the Regulations of Graduate Studies, it is possible for a student to request an interruption of studies. However, the corresponding semesters for an interruption of studies, for reasons other than those cited in the Article 7.9.2, will be recorded in the timeline of the program.

8.3 - Request for an extension of the maximum period

According to Article 10.2 of the Regulations of Graduate Studies, "Exceptionally, the Registrar may grant, only once, the extension of the maximum period in accordance with the laid-out procedures. To do this, students, with the support of their director of studies or research, must submit their request before the expiration of their candidacy. The requested extension may not exceed 1 semester for students enrolled in the research-based master’s program and 3 semesters for students in the doctoral, professional master’s and DESS programs."

It is important to be aware that, to be accepted, the request for an extension of the maximum period must be accompanied by a realistic plan demonstrating that you intend to fulfill the conditions necessary to obtain the diploma associated to the program of studies.

What should you do if you are unable to fulfill the requirements of graduation in the period of extension that was granted to you?

The regulations stipulate that once the period of extension of the maximum period is completed, the student who cannot graduate will be expelled from Polytechnique Montreal. There is, however, an article in the regulations of graduate studies which states that "exceptionally, it is possible, in certain situations where the limits have been exceeded, that a student may request for an exception to the application of a regulation. In such a case, the student must make a written request to the Director of Graduate Studies to justify the reasons for such a request and attach a document of support signed by their director of studies or research and the director of the department concerned (this last document is not required in the case of a free student)."
There is no guarantee that such a request will be accepted and when it is, a single supplementary semester is generally granted.

All semesters from your first registration to a program are included in the timeline of a program, except those where an interruption of studies corresponding to the cases described in Article 7.9.2 has been obtained. You can submit a request for an extension of the maximum period according to the terms of Article 10.2 of the Regulations of Graduate Studies. Acceptance by the Registrar is not automatic. After this extension, only an exception from the regulations can be invoked, and there are no guarantees. This is to be avoided!
9 - Program Change

Under certain conditions, as indicated in regulation 7.11 for graduate studies, a student enrolled in a graduate program can change their program by presenting a new application for admission. Carefully read the regulations in order to ensure that you are eligible under all the terms and conditions before submitting your request.

When applying for a change of program, all courses with a minimum C grade from the program you wish to leave can be included in the transfer request, if they comply with the structure of the desired program and are approved by your director of studies/research. If you have completed all the compulsory credits for the program to which you want to transfer, the cumulative average of these courses must be sufficient for graduation in the new program. For example, if you have completed 15 course credits in a DESS program and you want to request a change to a research-based master’s program, you must have a cumulative average minimum of 3.0/4, which is the minimum average required for graduation in the desired program.

Particular attention should be paid to Article 7.11.3, which deals with the recognition of previous semesters. When you make a request for a change of program, you will need to specify the number of previous semesters that you want to be acknowledged or recognized:

- A minimum of 1 semester (9 credits) transferred to the study plan;
- A maximum number of semesters completed in the program you wish to leave (limited to 4 semesters).

Attention: It is very important to understand that the recognized semesters from the previous program will be considered in the timeline for the maximum period of study. In other words, your program timeline does not start over in the new program. You can run into some problems if this rule is not well understood.
Here are two examples of the type of problems you can run into:

Example #1: A master’s student in his 3rd semester of studies makes a request to change to a PhD program and demands that his 3 completed semesters be counted towards his PhD. When he begins his doctorate program, he will be in his 4th semester and will have to complete his pre-doctorate exam during this semester, as stipulated in Article 75.3, which states that the pre-doctorate exam must be completed no later than the end of the 4th semester of study after the student’s initial registration.

Example #2: A master’s student in his 4th semester of studies makes a request to change to a PhD program and demands that his 3 completed semesters be counted towards his PhD. When he begins his PhD, he will already be in his 5th semester and will be in violation of Article 75.3.
10 - Financial Assistance and Work

In research-based programs (master's and doctoral), it is possible to obtain financial assistance from your director of research. If you are admitted to Polytechnique and you have requested financial assistance from your director of research at the time of application, your letter of admission will be accompanied by a department letter to tell you if this financial assistance has been granted, refused or if you need to discuss this with your director of research. In some cases, such aid has neither been granted nor refused and you should discuss with your director about the possibility to obtain funding.

When you receive financial assistance from your research director for a given period, it is important to note that funding has been granted on the premise of your performance; that is, excellent results in your courses as well as in your research. This financial assistance will be maintained during this period based on the availability of funds.

The amount of financial assistance suggested by Polytechnique Montreal is $21,000 per year for a doctoral program and $18,000 per year for a research-based master’s program. However, depending on the availability of funds from your director, financial aid of a smaller sum could be awarded to you. In addition, if you receive financial assistance, you must be enrolled in a full-time program and the rules and regulations of Polytechnique Montreal emphasize that: "students enrolled full-time must devote themselves entirely to the continuation of their study plans. They may, however, accept certain teaching responsibilities within Polytechnique Montreal, provided that these activities do not require more than nine hours per week and that they have obtained the authorization of their director of studies or research."

However, it must be noted that even if you engage in teaching activities with consent from your research director, you are working full-time and therefore the timeline of your program continues to be valid and this teaching opportunity may not be invoked to justify a delay in your studies.

Finally, if you receive financial help and you have an off-campus job or you accumulate numerous fellowships, it is important to discuss this with your director of research.

11 - Professor-student relationship
In order to ensure high-quality coaching of graduate students, Polytechnique has a policy on this subject: https://www.polymtl.ca/appui-pedagogique/politiques-et-reglements-importants-pour-lenseignement.

There, you will find that "the policy recognizes that the relationship between a director/student is the essence of the coaching of a graduate student. The policy also recognizes that there are several forms of effective and successful mentoring. In order that the coaching relationship is the most harmonious, most transparent and efficient as possible, each director of studies or research and each student must ensure to give and to maintain the best conditions of organization and the best interpersonal relationship possible."

In this policy, the rights and obligations of each party are presented. Of course, the method of coaching should be considered as a function of the program in which the student is registered. For example, the framework for a student in the DESS program will require fewer professor-student interactions than that of a research-based master’s or PhD student. However, regardless of the program in which you are registered, it is important to discuss the important topics related to your program with your director of studies from the beginning. Some professors recommend their students to read a book on the coaching of graduate students at the start of their program, published by the International Press of Polytechnique.⁴

The site https://www.polymtl.ca/rechercheg/annuaire presents regulation 9 of the Regulations of Graduate Studies, which describes the coaching conditions and the obligations of the student and the director. If you are a DESS student, coaching will be more important at the onset of the program and at the time of the establishment of the study plan. Occasional meetings may be held for any changes that may be made to the study plan or if you are experiencing difficulties in your program. You must inform your director as quickly as possible if you foresee being in a situation where you are at risk of expulsion from your program of studies (failure of a course, for example).

For students in a professional master’s program, in addition to the cases cited for the DESS program, the professor and student must agree on the subject, objectives, methodology and the timeline for the project or internship’s work. Communication between professor and student will ensure that the work progresses well.

In research-based programs, the agreement between the research director and student is essential for a stimulating work environment. In this context, some professors will opt for a written agreement where the two parties may decide on a number of points as described below (the following list is not exhaustive):

✓ The study plan
  • Courses and mandatory educational activities
  • Complementary and non program courses
  • Courses outside Polytechnique

✓ The research project
  • Definition of the topic of research (form to fill)
  • Objectives of the project
  • Expectations of the professor
  • Methodology
  • Deliverables and timelines

✓ Means of mentoring (regulation 9 of the Directory of Graduate Studies)
  • Frequency of meetings
  • Means for communicating

✓ Financing studies
  • Amount and period of allocation
  • Rules for obtaining a scholarship
  • Conditions for the maintenance of financial assistance
  • Possibility to work as a grader, lecturer, laboratory demonstrator

✓ Resources available to the department to support studies and research project
  • Support personnel: technicians, Officer of Student Records.
  • Laboratory equipment
  • Software

✓ Intellectual property
• Order of the authors in the publications
• Number and type of publications to aim for

✓ Participation in events for the dissemination of research results and funding for these kinds of activities.

It is a good idea to discuss these points or subjects with your director and to decide which are of concern to you with regards to your studies. Experience shows that many problems in the relationship between a student and director can be avoided through communication—the more the problem persists, the more difficult it becomes to find a solution. In addition, when a problem occurs or when you anticipate a problematic situation, be pro-active and talk to your director. If measures to correct a situation must be taken, it is important not to wait until the last minute because it could then be too late to act.

If despite all efforts to communicate with your director, you feel that a problem persists, you can contact the coordinator of the graduate studies of your program. If necessary, they will guide you to other personnel in the department within Polytechnique.

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5 The regulations of Polytechnique do not stipulate the number of journal articles or conferences required for a master’s or doctoral thesis (including articles).
Clearly defined research objectives, methodology, work and timelines should be discussed with your director at the beginning of your studies. A strong agreement with your director of studies/research is essential for your studies to run smoothly. Be proactive: Do not wait until a disagreement occurs or the maximum time limit forces you to act.
12 - Plagiarism and fraud

Article 11 of the Directory of Graduate Studies addresses the issue of plagiarism and fraud. Be sure to understand this regulation and do not take it lightly—the consequences for plagiarism or fraud are severe, including possible expulsion from the program. If you have doubts about a particular situation, take a moment to reflect and check: something may be considered plagiarism, even if you consider it not to be.