ORIENTATION FOR NEW INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Winter 2020

Thesis Master and Ph.D

BIENVENUE À POLYTECHNIQUE!
YOUR HOST

Amélie Ferland
International Students Advisor

Contact
AGENDA

Part I
1 pm – 3 pm

• Introduction
• Important dates and first steps
• Budget
• Academic success

break

Part II
3h30 pm – 5pm

• Insurances
• Immigration
• Cultural adaptation
• Student life
LET’S INTRODUCE OURSELVES!
PRESENTATION

Available on the international students home page
http://www.polymtl.ca/etudiants-internationaux/en
INFORMATION ON BACK-TO-SCHOOLS EVENTS

www.polymtl.ca/rentree
• Back-to-school information booths
• international students website
FIRST STEPS

Who has not retrieved yet their online access code?

Student File (Dossier étudiant in Quick Links):

– confirmation of registration, Important! Confirm your registration each term!
– updating of your personal info Important! Check and update it!
– course selection,
– account balance ($),
– non-official grades transcripts,
– printing of non-official study attestation

Poly Email: Important! Check it everyday!

Do you need help? Visit the Back-to-school website
## IMPORTANT DATES AND FIRST STEPS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Until January 21</th>
<th>Until January 31</th>
<th>From February 7 to 28</th>
<th>March 17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Letter of admission, passport, CAQ/CSQ, study permit or permanent resident card  
• Confirmation of registration, adding your course selection and withdrawing from a course without mention on your transcript  
• Study plan | • Signature of code of conduct (electronic signature - [Moodle](#)) | • [Tuition fees](#) payment period | • Deadline for withdrawing from a course without fail (mention « R » on your transcript) |
MONEY MATTERS...
REALLY MATTER
Tuition fees are payable each term

How does it work? Base amount fees (Québec, French and Francophone Belgian citizens) + differential fees for international students

Research Master:

- Program tuition (first 4 terms): base amount + differential fees
- 5 differential fees exemption scholarships from the Registrar’s Office available from the second term, renewable each term.
- Research activities (terms Terms 5 and 6), base amount without differential fees

All information, in our website
PhD

- Fixed amount to be paid every term
- All the students registered in the PhD program are exempt of differential fees by Polytechnique

Maintaining of the exemption is conditional to:
- Completing at least 9 course credits during the first 3 terms of registration in your program, with an average of at least 3,0/4,0.
- Otherwise, the exemption of differential fees will end as of the following term.

All information, in our [website](#)
# Example of Yearly Budget

**Single person:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tuition</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.Sc.A.</td>
<td>$20,400</td>
<td>$9,000 (1 course-based term + 2 research-based terms)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>$3,600</td>
<td>$3,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health insurance / dental insurance</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>$1,100 aprox/year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Living expenses (housing and bills, food, clothes, school supplies, transportation, leasures, etc.)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>around $16,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• The *loans and bursaries program* of the Quebec government is limited to Canadian citizens and permanent residents

• **The financial assistance given by the professor in Master's and PhD research:** discuss with your professor if there are conditions associated

• **If you have a scholarship,** it comes with conditions: knowing them and respecting them is your responsibility!

[More on financial questions](#)
SUCCEDING AT POLYTECHNIQUE!
YOUR CO-HOST

Professor Olivier Henry
Graduate studies program coordinator
Chemical Engineering
UNDERGRADUATE & GRADUATE ENGINEERING PROGRAMS IN QUEBEC

1\textsuperscript{st} cycle : Short Program (15 credits)
Certificate (30 credits)
Bachelor degree (120 credits)

2\textsuperscript{nd} cycle : Microprogram (15 credits)
DESS (30 credits)
Master degree (45 credits)

3\textsuperscript{rd} cycle : PhD (90 credits)
What is a credit?

- 1 credit ≈ 3 hours of work per week
- 9 to 12 credits per term ≈ 27 to 36 hours of work per week

Program, department
AER, CIV, ELE, GCH, IND,
INF, MIN, MTH, LOG, PHS, SSH, etc.

AER8410 Commande de vol et de moteurs, 3 credits (3-3-3)

3 h of personal work
3h lectures
3h lab/tutorial

1, 2, 3, 4: B.Eng. only
6: Graduate studies
7: Graduate studies (PhD only)
8: Both B.Eng. and graduate
• Check that you have the knowledge and necessary background to successfully complete the courses in your study plan (possibility of taking undergraduate courses).
• Choose courses according to your level of studies and your program (8000 versus 6000)
• Take a reasonable number of credits: pay attention to the overload!
• Choose courses in a limited number of sub-specialties.
• To know more: watch the GO-Poly course on the study plan on the Moodle, Poly’s online teaching platform

**Note:** It is possible, with the agreement of your director, to make changes to your study plan during the program (pay special attention to first semester)
NOT SO FLUENT IN FRENCH?

Following courses in other anglophone universities:

• 15 credits maximum outside Polytechnique = 100%

**Be careful!** In some programs, there are mandatory courses that you must follow at Polytechnique.

Take note that some courses are also offered in English at Polytechnique (verify with your department).
# Grading and Evaluation System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Numeric Value for Average Calculation</th>
<th>Graduate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A*</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>Exceptional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>Very Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>Mediocre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>Failure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How does the grading system work?
FIRST SESSION – IMPORTANT RULES

Knowing the rules is your responsibility! \textbf{For example}: 

You must reach the \textbf{pursuit GPA} (after 9 credits): $> 2.75$

\textbf{F grades:}
- 1 \textit{F} (first): Exclusion ... unless authorized to pursue your studies
- 2 failures (same course or different ones): Definitive exclusion from the program

Request for \textbf{courses exemption in PhD}: to be requested at the beginning of the program (requires several approvals)
PhD students:

Reminder! You must complete at Polytechnique Montréal or another university, at least 9 credits of mandatory courses listed in your study plan during the first 3 terms of your program, with an average of 3,0/4,0. If you cannot meet this requirement, you will automatically lose access to the differential fees exemption scholarship as of the following term.
## TIME LIMITS AND INTERRUPTION OF STUDIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Normal duration</th>
<th>Maximum duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thesis Masters (MR)</td>
<td>4 to 6 trimesters</td>
<td>6 trimesters (2 years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PhD</strong></td>
<td><strong>8 to 12 trimesters</strong></td>
<td><strong>15 trimesters (5 years)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Extensions can exceptionally be given for a maximum of 3 trimesters for PhD and of 1 trimester for Masters thesis.
- Interruption of studies: maximum of 3 terms (consecutive or not)
## Getting Your Degree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>M.Sc.A. (45 cr.)</th>
<th>PhD (90 cr.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Academic success</strong></td>
<td>✓ 3.0/4.0 (15 cr.)</td>
<td>✓ 3.0/4.0 (15 cr.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Workshop SST</strong></td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pass the comprehensive exam</strong></td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>✔ at 4th term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Compulsory workshops</strong></td>
<td>✔ End of the 2nd term</td>
<td>✔ end of 4th term max</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thesis / Dissertation</strong></td>
<td>✔ Thesis (30 cr.)</td>
<td>✔ Dissertation (75 cr.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
UNDERSTANDING YOUR NEW ENVIRONMENT
CULTURAL ICEBERG

Surface culture (10%):
• Language
• Fashion
• Music
• Food
• Etc.

Deep culture (90%):
• Values
• Beliefs
• Perceptions
• Expectations
• Etc.

Adapted from: Stanley N Herman. TRW Systems Group, 1970
CASE STUDY #1

Louis is a very bright student currently enrolled in his second trimester in a Thesis Masters’ at Polytechnique. His program is demanding, but so far, he has been doing quite well. He is thus very surprised one day to receive an email from the Graduate Studies Direction, indicating that he is suspected of fraud in one of his classes.

The message indicates that Louis is reported to have in a final project summarized in his own words already existing material, without having properly cited the source. He is informed that he has 10 days to give a written answer in response to the fraud report, and that he could also be summoned to meet with the Student Discipline Committee.

Louis is in shock; he tells himself that there must certainly be a mistake. He values intellectual integrity and cannot believe what is happening. His first reflex is to go talk to the professor in the course. Louis very strongly defends his position: he indicates to the professor that he never had the intention to plagiarize, that he had worked extremely hard on this project and that there most certainly had to be another solution besides having to meet with the Student Discipline Committee. He asks whether he could pass a compensatory exam or whether he could simply redo his project.

The professor refuses and explains Louis that he should from now on avoid communicating with him on this topic, because this is what Polytechnique regulations state once a case has been passed on to the Student Discipline Committee. Louis finds this attitude to be very rigid, and he still believes that his professor should have first tried to understand his situation before resorting to such a drastic measure. He tells himself that his professor should have taken into consideration the fact that he is an international student and that consequently, one cannot expect him to be familiar with all the rules.
CASE STUDY #1

Questions:

• According to you, did Louis commit plagiarism?

• Why did the professor react this way?

• How would you have reacted if you had been in Louis’ place? Does that situation surprise you?
## Confidence towards authority/ Value placed upon written rules

We take for granted that the system is fair and that rules are reasonable.

Rules generally apply the same way to all.

You need to know and follow written rules to assert your rights.

Persons in position of authority often do not have the power to derogate from the rule.

CONSEQUENTLY...

Excuses that do not work:

• "I didn’t know ... », « nobody has told me... »
• "I have a friend who...“
• "But is there no way ... ?“
• "I will write to the Director!"

Core value: Individual responsibility

Ask questions and validate the information you have with the right person!
WHERE CAN I GET THE INFORMATION?

**Graduate Studies-general regulations**: on Polytechnique’s Registrar’s Office website

- To your student file officer
- At the Registrar’s Office

Don’t know who is the right person to answer your question, come to Student Services, we will tell you!
Online course and Code of conduct to be signed on your Moodle account by January 31
HOW CAN I AVOID PLAGIARISM?

• First step: know how to recognize it
  Polytechnique’s website on plagiarism and fraud prevention (in French). Go-Poly course on Moodle

• Second step: use ressources at your disposal:

  At the library:
  - Help with endnote (reference manager software)
  - Library staff

  Your complementary training (CAP workshops)

  Ask your professors!
Myriam is a new PhD student at Polytechnique. She is very pleased to work under the supervision of Professor Forcier, who is a leading expert in his research field.

The contact during the first meeting with Professor Forcier is positive. Myriam appreciates his casual manners, although this surprises her at first, since she was used to much more formal relations with her professors back home. During this meeting, prof. Forcier gives her her research project title and the objectives that she will have to meet, introduces her to a postdoctoral researcher working in his lab whom she can contact if she has questions. He tells her: “for our next meeting in one month, you will have to do a literature review on this topic and a workplan”.

Myriam leaves the meeting and starts researching articles related to her topic. After a while though, she feels that she can’t find articles that allow her to find the appropriate material to come up with a workplan. She sees the date of the meeting fast approaching, but she is too shy to bother Professor Forcier with her questions. She tells herself that at worst, she will bring the most relevant articles that she could find and that her supervisor will be able to give her more precise instructions next meeting.

She arrives at the meeting having done just her literature review. She can see that Professor Forcier is upset, although he remains calm, and he tells her: “I cannot come up with a workplan instead of you, it is your job! If you had questions, you should have come earlier to see me or the postdoctoral student that I introduced you to!”

Myriam is confused: on the one hand, she does not feel adequately supervised, and on the other hand, she feels that she does not meet the expectations of her director.
Questions:

• Why did Myriam react in such a way?

• Why did her supervisor react in such a way?

• How would you have reacted in Myriam’s place? Does this situation surprise you?
### SOME KEY CULTURAL NOTIONS

**Societies with short power distances**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The professor:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expects rather informal contacts with his students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expects the students to follow his teachings and advices, but also come up with some original contribution.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The student:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expects to be supervised and to be able to discuss their supervision needs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Believes that asking questions is normal and that by doing so, he is not questioning the professor’s abilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not expect the professor to have all the answers to his questions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MODE OF COMMUNICATION

• Explicit and direct, but not confronting

• « sandwich comment technique »
SUPERVISION TERMS AT THE GRADUATE STUDIES

Read the **Supervision Policy for Graduate students**

**Some ideas of topics** to be discussed with your research director
TIME FOR A BREAK!
SEE YOU AT 3:30PM!