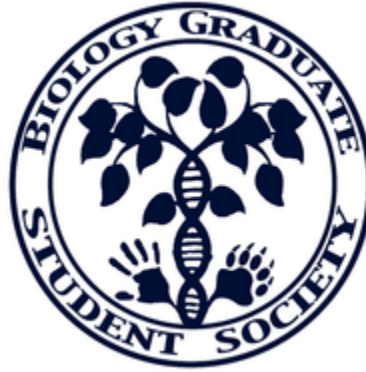


Congratulations on your admittance to UBC Okanagan!



As a biology graduate student, you are a member of the Biology Graduate Student Society (BGSS). The BGSS exists to be your link to the department and to create community among biology graduate students. We hold monthly meetings open to all members and organize a variety of social events throughout the year.

We are here to make your life better! Contact us if you have administrative issues, questions about campus life, would like to suggest an event, or are interested in getting involved.

Your Current BGSS Executive Committee:

President: Brontë Shelton, PhD Student, bronte.shelton@ubc.ca

Vice President: Selina Spence, MSc Student, selina.spence@ubc.ca

Treasurer: Sophia Kast, MSc Student, sophia.kast@ubc.ca

Senior Student-Faculty Liaison: Liam Johnson, MSc Student, liam.johnson@ubc.ca

Junior Student-Faculty Liaison: Diego Yusta Belsham, MSc Student, dayusta@mail.ubc.ca

Check out our website and social media to learn more about our team and our upcoming events!



[biogradsociety](https://www.instagram.com/biogradsociety)

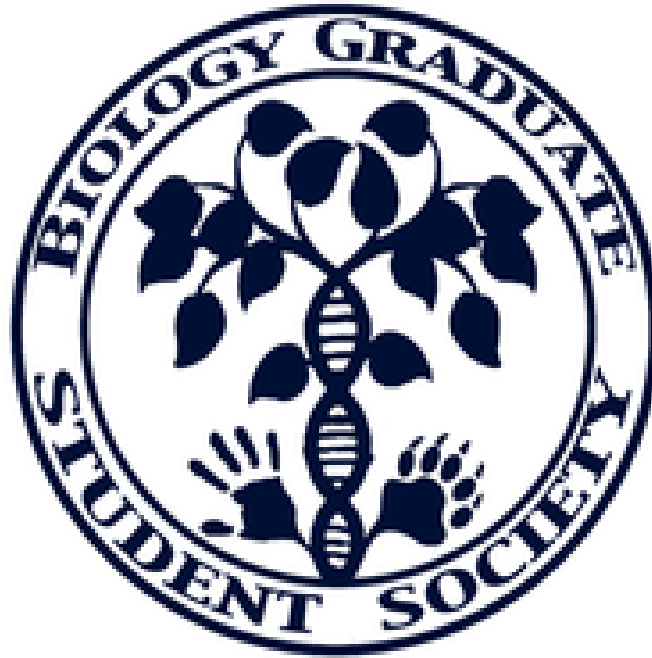


<http://biogradsociety.weebly.com/>



<https://www.facebook.com/biogradsociety>

UBCO Biology Graduate Student Guide



We have put together this guide in the hopes that it will help you get off to a smooth start at UBCO. Use the checklists to keep track of your onboarding tasks and trainings, take a virtual tour of the campus, and check out our resources on everything from healthcare to housing. We are excited to welcome you into the Biology graduate student community, and we look forward to meeting you at orientation!

Brought to you by the BGSS

2023

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Before You Get Here Checklist

- Activate your university email address
- Apply for your student ID [here](#) (you'll need to submit a photo!) so that you can pick it up when you get to campus (in the meantime, you can access a [digital ID](#) once your application is processed)
- Request access to the Graduate Student Spaces on campus with [this](#) form so that you can pick up your access card (SALTO card) at Orientation
- Register for your required program course (Masters BIOL599/PhD BIOL699) and any other classes you will be taking
- If you will be TAing during your first term, check the application deadline [here](#) and submit your application [here](#). Be sure to talk to your supervisor before signing up to TA.

First Week Checklist

- Obtain your SALTO cards (one card for graduate spaces and another for all other access)
- Obtain your Student ID at the pickup day (watch for an email!) or at UNC 214
- Activate your bus pass (you pay for it in your student fees!) by taking your student ID to the Student Union Office on the first floor of UNC
- Ask your supervisor to request access to any relevant lab spaces for you (after this, many requests for access can be made yourself)
- Active your Workday Account
- Complete Workday tasks such as accepting your offer letter, inputting your banking information, and working through the training modules (this and the above task are necessary to receive paychecks!)
- If you are paid by the university, you are eligible for an @ubc.ca email instead of an @student.ubc.ca email. Log in to your UBCO MyAccount to activate this alias, but note that it will be deactivated when your paid appointment ends.

First Month Checklist

- Register in and complete any required trainings for your lab work or TAing such as the [Biosafety Training](#) and [Chemical Safety Training](#) (a.k.a. WHMIS)
- Check out the Resources page on the BGSS website for links to optional things such as making your own UBCO email signature!

Finding Your Way Around Campus:

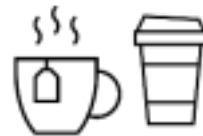
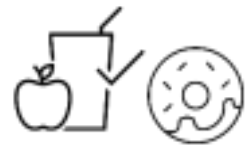
Check out the [campus map](#) or take a [virtual tour](#) for help finding your way around!

Most biology offices and labs are found in:

- The Science building (SCI)
- Arts and Science Centre (ASC)
- Fipke Centre (FIP)

Food and Coffee

- University Centre (UNC):
 - On the first floor there is a food court with several options including burgers, sandwiches, stir fry, and a salad bar, as well as booths serving sushi, soups, and Indian food.
 - The Well (our campus pub) is also on the first floor and has a variety of pub fare and beverages. Note that it's cash only.
- Sunshine Food Court
 - Location: Administration Building
 - Options include sandwiches, soups, a carving station, burgers, fries, and serve yourself coffee.
- Comma Cafe
 - Location: The Commons
 - Serves fair trade coffee + espresso drinks, pastries, and hot food
- Starbucks
 - Location: First floor of Fipke
- Tim Horton's
 - Location: Library entrance
 - Check out the Live TimCam at the bottom of the current students page to avoid long lines: <https://ok.ubc.ca/current-students/>
- Check out this [website](#) for a more complete list of food places on and near campus



Healthcare

Students Union Health and Dental Insurance

As part of your tuition, you pay into a health insurance program. However, you can opt out of this in September if you already have health insurance from a different provider. For more information about the insurance and opting out, visit the [Student Care](#) website.

Health Clinic on Campus

The health clinic is open all year, Monday-Friday from 9am-4pm. The primary health and clinic nurses are available by appointment or on a walk-in basis. They can assist with a variety of things, but if you need a prescription you will have to see a physician. The physician's hours vary, so it's best to call ahead and book an appointment (phone number: **250-807-9270**). The clinic is on the third floor of UNC, room 303. See the website for more information:

<http://students.ok.ubc.ca/health-wellness/welcome.html>

Counseling on Campus

Across the hall from the Health Clinic is UBCO's counseling service. They have counselors and psychologists who are trained to help you deal with anything from anxiety & stress to depression and crisis counseling. Read more here:

<http://students.ok.ubc.ca/health-wellness/counselling.html>

Grad students experience some of the highest rates of depression in any adult group so if you're feeling down, know that you're not alone and there are people here who want to help!

Walk-in Clinics in Kelowna

There are many walk-in clinics in Kelowna – check the MediMap below or do a quick Google search of the one nearest to you.

<https://medimap.ca/clinics/walk-in-clinics/bc/kelowna>

To see which clinics are the least busy and avoid long waits, check out this website:

<https://bc.skipthewaitingroom.com/city/kelowna/all>

Transportation

Buses

As a UBCO student, you pay for a bus pass with your student fees at a reduced rate. Take advantage of the pass if you can. The pass is only valid during the Fall/Winter Semesters. If you want a summer pass, it is cheap (around \$63 for 4 months) and can be purchased at the end of the winter semester. You will need to reactivate your bus pass on your Student ID card at the beginning of each school year. Check out the bus schedule and trip planner [here](#)

Commuting

If you want a parking pass, you need to go online or see the people at the Parking Office (Unit A101 in the Lower Cascades residence buildings). Get your pass as soon as the parking passes go on sale as they sell out fast. Parking passes for September typically become available mid-late August. You will most likely be added to a waitlist. For details check out the [Parking Services](#) website.

You can also rent bikes through [UBCycles](#) on campus and have bike repairs done, access after-trip facilities, and more!

Other Transportation

Bike Lanes:

<https://www.kelowna.ca/roads-transportation/active-transportation/bicycling/bike-routes-safety-tips>

Scooters: Kelowna is a part of a pilot that allows you to rent e-scooters for quick transportation.

Learn more at

<https://www.kelowna.ca/roads-transportation/active-transportation/shared-bikes-and-e-scooters>

Neighborhoods

- **Academy Way:** The closest off-campus housing (15-20 min walk to campus), a recently developed street that has many options for apartments, studios, and houses, but is relatively isolated from amenities. Housing companies include:
 - **VEDA Living** (single-person studio suites for students, utilities & gym included)
 - **University District** (Academy Hill, U One, U Two, U Three, etc.)
 - **Academy Ridge** (townhomes)
- **Downtown:** close to beaches, grocery stores, cafés, restaurants, pubs, and clubs, and has an express bus to UBCO (bus 97) that takes ~25 mins.
- **Capri:** on the south side of Highway 97 and east of the main downtown area. There are a lot of houses that rent out basements or walk outs. This area has a lot of stripmall and amenities. ~20 min bus ride to campus.
- **Glenmore:** a good location for access to grocery stores and food places, but more costly than many other options. Buses occur less frequently than in many other neighborhoods, especially on weekends and in the summer, but it's only a 15 minute drive to campus if you have personal transportation.
- **Pandosy Region:** close to downtown and a nice neighborhood. It is near several bus stops and shopping is conveniently close. It can be about a 35-45min bus ride from this area to campus. Close to the lake and ~20 min walk to the downtown area.
- **Rutland:** further from the city center but closer to campus, and usually less expensive. There are bus stops throughout Rutland, big grocery stores, a few restaurants, and lots of thrift stores in the area.
- **Black Mountain:** east of Rutland, this is a slightly more expensive neighborhood that is further from basic amenities but is still closer to campus.
- **Lower Mission:** further away and lacking convenient bus connections, this area is more costly but would give you good access to the beaches. There are a handful of grocery stores and restaurants nearby.
- **Upper Mission:** further away and lacking convenient bus connections, this area is past Lower Mission and generally more costly. There are a few amenities here but it is a ways away from many conveniences and a 20 minute drive from downtown.
- **Winfield:** the southern part of Lake Country, Winfield is north of campus. It is a quiet region, fairly isolated from downtown and other activities. You can find lakefront rentals here from Sept-June, but that is the main reason to live in this area. Bus service takes ~35-45min to campus, making this area better suited to those who have personal transportation.

Looking for Housing

The most frequently used sites for finding housing listings:

- [Facebook Marketplace](#) - check out the Property Rentals section on Buy and Sell Kelowna
- [Castanet](#) - a community website for listings and news, more people use castanet than Craigslist here
- [Craigslist](#) - a website for buying and selling
- [Kijiji](#) - similar to Craigslist



Housing Prices

A one-bedroom place should be around \$1400 - \$2000. A studio apartment will run about \$1000 - >\$1500. A room in a shared house will cost approximately \$700-900.

Check out the [Work BC Cost of Living Calculator](#) and the [UBC Okanagan Grad Student Cost of Living Calculator](#)

Other Resources

- The [International Student Guide](#) and [International Student Checklist](#) include many important tasks and timelines for International students
- If you have issues with email, WorkDay, or other UBC services submit a ticket on the [UBC Self Service Portal](#)
- If you have any problems while you are TAing - you are a member of a union! Reach out to the BCGEU via our bargaining chair Karen Whitehouse (karen.whitehouse@ubc.ca) or reach out to us and we will help put you in touch
- [The Centre for Scholarly Communication](#) offers many different workshops and one-on-one meetings to help with literature searches, editing, and writing advice.
- [The College of Graduate Studies](#) (COGS) website has resources for workshops, funding, and more
- To shop local, check out the [Kelowna Farmer' and Crafters' Market](#)
- Check out the [BGSS website](#) for additional resources, guides to Student Recreation, Events, and more!

If you have any questions, contact us at biogradsociety@gmail.com

