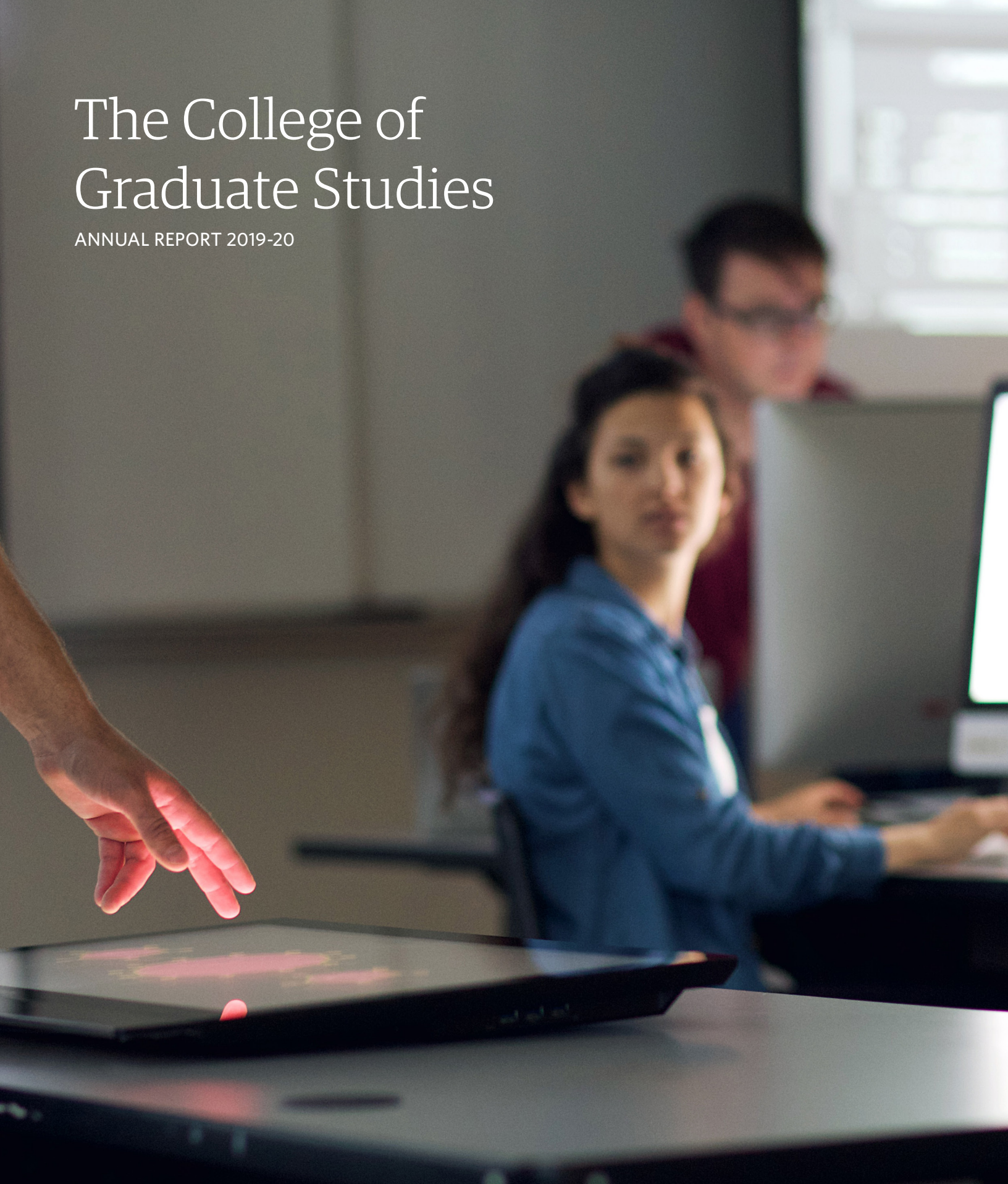


# The College of Graduate Studies

ANNUAL REPORT 2019-20



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

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# Message From The Dean

Graduate students and postdoctoral fellows are the pulse of research, teaching, and public engagement at the University of British Columbia Okanagan. In partnership with community organizations, industry and government, and through mentorship of internationally renowned faculty, they are advancing technologies, developing healthcare techniques and approaches, designing infrastructure, and producing creative and artistic works in response to regional and global realities. The College of Graduate Studies is committed to recognizing, supporting, and forming effective responses to graduate student needs during this time of worldwide change.

The 2019/20 College of Graduate Studies (CoGS) annual report highlights how UBCO continues to support graduate students and postdoctoral fellows. The College has streamlined thesis and dissertation examinations and reframed student and faculty assistance for more expeditious application processing. Policies and committee structures were modified and will continue to evolve to support the newly mounted Faculty of Science and Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, evolving out of the Irving K. Barber School.

The College continues to work in parallel with Aboriginal Programs & Services, the Centre for Scholarly Communication, and the Disability Resource Centre to develop pathways and find innovative supports for graduate students and postdoctoral fellows.

This year the College embarked on a campus-wide knowledge-gathering initiative. UBCO has ambitious plans for graduate students, and our goal was to gain a collective understanding of the supports needed to move towards [Outlook 2040's](#) vision. Through conversations with faculty members and graduate students, we are better positioned to support all aspects of graduate education including: professional



development training, retention, supervision, awards and finances, and degree completion. Our [Designing for 2040](#) document identifies a campus collective framework poised for remarkable growth.

UBC Okanagan is highly sought after for graduate education. This past year new doctoral programs in Nursing and Computer Sciences were approved and both programs experienced robust numbers of applications. The College of Graduate Studies looks forward to welcoming the first cohort of these students, alongside our 453 incoming students in September 2020.

This year will start differently than in the past, with most classes in 2020 Winter Term 1 being hosted through virtual learning paradigms. The College of Graduate Studies has worked diligently to be responsive and forward-thinking in addressing the uncertainties arising from the global health pandemic of the Coronavirus disease (COVID-19). The College aims to deliver an unparalleled university experience that will enable the continued creation of research and scholarly output that reaches broadly for lasting and meaningful change.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jennifer M. Sakabi". The script is fluid and cursive.

# Empowering graduate students to exp

We partner with UBC Okanagan's campus groups and academic and administrative units on initiatives and activities that support graduate students and postdoctoral fellows in acquiring skills and competencies necessary for achieving success in rapidly changing academic and professional landscapes.

## Quick Facts



**1065**  
GRADUATE  
STUDENTS



TOP 3 COUNTRIES  
CANADA  
INDIA  
IRAN



**19**  
GRADUATE  
PROGRAMS

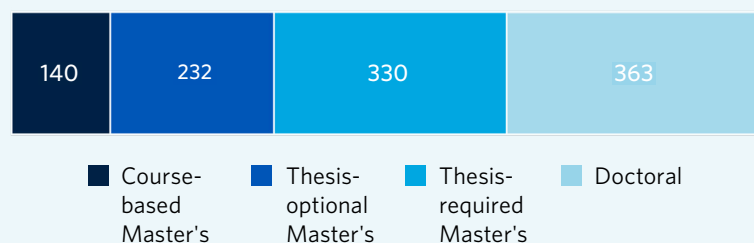


**2100**  
ALUMNI

NUMBER OF STUDENTS



GRADUATE STUDENT DEGREE NUMBERS



# lore, innovate, & challenge ideas

## Meet the Team



### PAUL SHIPLEY, ASSOCIATE DEAN

Paul Shipley is the Associate Dean of the College of Graduate Studies, and an Associate Professor of Chemistry in the Barber School. He represents the College at the University and externally on curriculum, student, and admission initiatives. The Associate Dean also develops and coordinates workshops and other programs for graduate students and faculty. He works with the CoGS team to support students and supervisors in degree progression and completion.



### DEANNA ROBERTS, DIRECTOR

Deanna has been with the College of Graduate Studies since 2016. She is the senior non-academic administrator responsible for business processes and services related to graduate student administration and graduate student awards. She shares responsibility with the Dean and Associate Dean for advancing the College's and the University's goals with respect to graduate student programming and services and manages the daily operations of the CoGS office and staff team.



### ALICIA MEEHAN, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR ADMISSIONS & RECORDS

Alicia has been with the College of Graduate Studies since 2011. Alicia leads the admissions & records team who are responsible for graduate student administration from application through graduation. Alicia also works closely with the Dean, Associate Dean, and other campus partners to manage complex and sensitive graduate student cases.



### NATHAN SLETTEN, MANAGER ANALYTICS & AWARDS

Nathan has been with the College of Graduate Studies since 2017 and upon entering the College was a recent graduate from our own UBC Okanagan campus. He is responsible for the administration, adjudication and design of graduate scholarship and award programs. Nathan also manages, analyses and offers interpretation of graduate student data to support strategic decisions regarding graduate student funding and business processes.



### HALEY ALLEN, MANAGER COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT

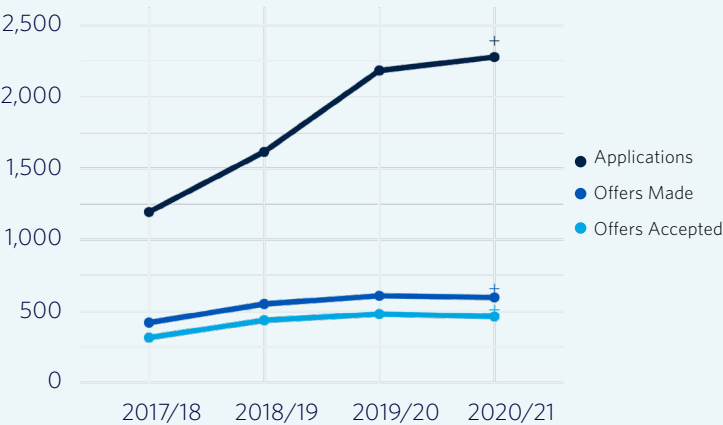
Haley is the newest member of the College of Graduate Studies' leadership team, joining in October 2019. She is responsible for planning and managing strategic communication initiatives and ongoing operational communication needs. Haley is responsible for coordinating graduate events, including 3MT, orientation, and workshops. Additionally, she oversees the College's website, social media accounts, and email newsletters.

# Providing efficient and effective service to faculty, & students

## Applications & Admissions

Over the last four years, CoGS has seen a substantial increase in applications for graduate studies. In 2019/2020, CoGS received over 2250 applications: this represents a 132% increase in applications since 2016-17. Additional to the highly sought after graduate programs, the number of postdoctoral fellows doubled on campus in 2019/20. Aligning with this growth are the services to support the diverse needs of programs and trainees.

APPLICATION NUMBERS

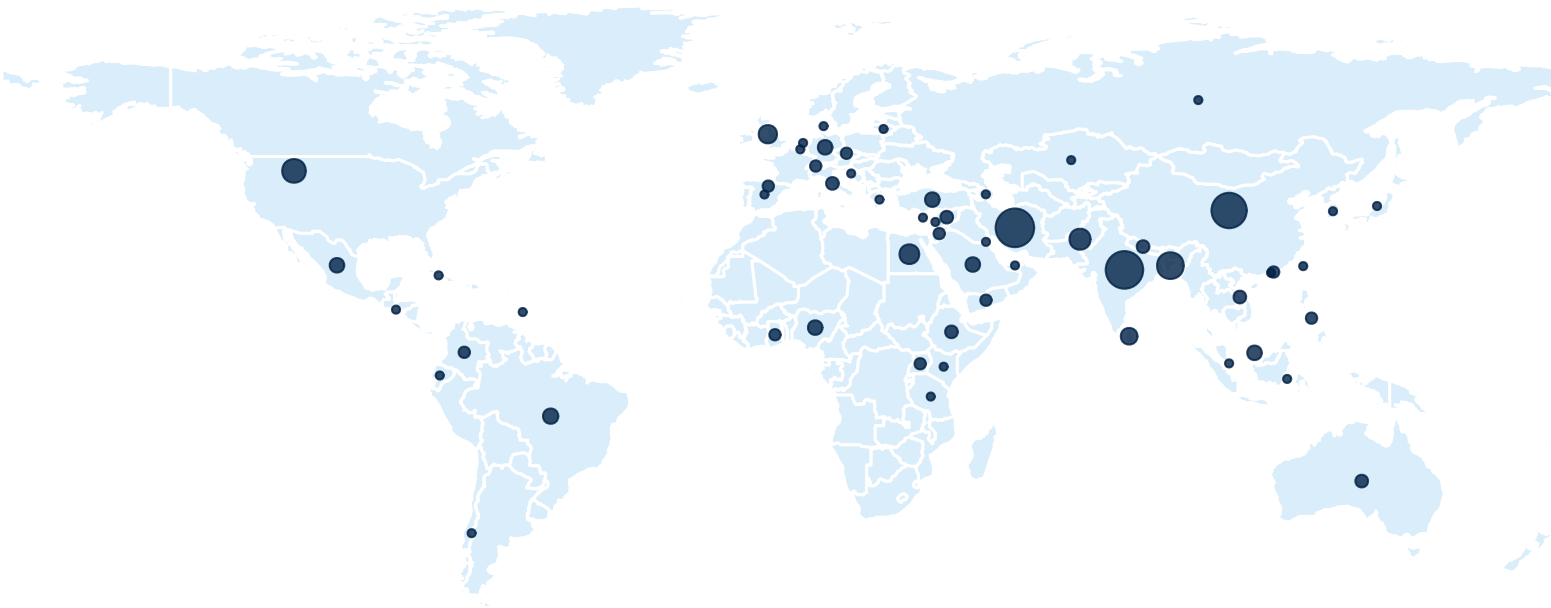


For 2020/21, the + is the projected value for the year as of June 16, 2020.

STUDENTS GRADUATED



FOREIGN COUNTRIES REPRESENTED



# es to support graduate programs,

## Workshops & Events

Each year, CoGS partners with groups across campus to host professional development and social events for graduate students and postdoctoral fellows.

In addition to our signature event, the Three Minute Thesis (3MT), we hosted a number of new events this year. This included the first campus-wide Postdoctoral Fellows Engagement Day and a Meet & Greet for CoGS staff, faculty, students, and trainees.



19  
TOTAL  
WORKSHOPS



146  
WORKSHOP  
PARTICIPANTS



### THREE MINUTE THESIS (3MT)

For the second year in a row, the UBCO's Three Minute Thesis competition was sold out. This year's event had the largest group of participants, with 11 students competing in the final. Biology student, Portia McGonigal, took home first place and the top prize of \$3,000.

[READ MORE](#)

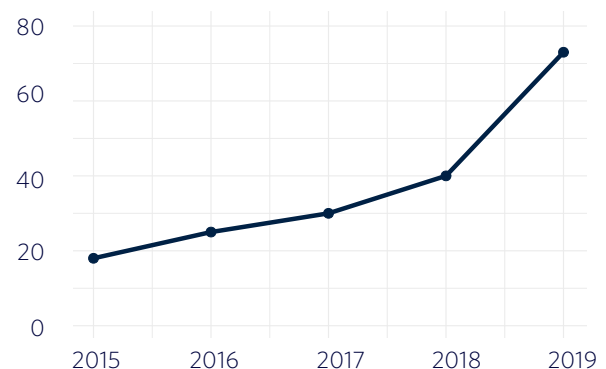
### POSTDOCTORAL ENGAGEMENT DAY

Over the last 5 years, postdoctoral fellows at UBC Okanagan have been on a steady increase. In response, CoGS hosted our first campus-wide professional development event for these trainees.

The event was designed to connect postdoctoral fellows to relevant supports and resources and also provide them with tangible tools for building their professional profiles, including well-taken headshots.

According to the follow-up survey, attendees were extremely satisfied with the event and requested similar activities and events in the future.

### POSTDOCTORAL GROWTH AT UBC



# Student Funding

The College of Graduate Studies (CoGS) is responsible for merit-based graduate awards at the University of British Columbia's Okanagan campus. Using UBCO's strategic objectives, CoGS allocates an awards budget to each Faculty that is used to support the recruitment and retention of graduate students.

CoGS has recognized the need to provide competitive graduate student financial support in order to attract top students to the university. In doing so, 2019-20 was an exciting year that brought with it exceptional growth in the funding sources that support our graduate students.



**450**  
AWARD  
APPLICATIONS  
ADJUDICATED



**74%**  
INCREASE OVER  
PRIOR YEAR

## NEW AWARDS FOR 2019/2020

- 3** INTERNATIONAL DOCTORAL FELLOWSHIPS AT \$25,000 PLUS TUITION
- 8** ABORIGINAL DEAN'S ENTRANCE FELLOWSHIPS AT \$10,000
- 34** INTERNATIONAL FOUR-YEAR DOCTORAL PARTIAL TUITIONS AWARDS
- 18** BRITISH COLUMBIA GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIPS AT \$15,000
- 7** KILLAM DOCTORAL SCHOLARSHIPS, 2 HIGHER THAN THE PREVIOUS YEAR
- 84** TRI-COUNCIL AWARDS, 25 HIGHER THAN THE PREVIOUS YEAR



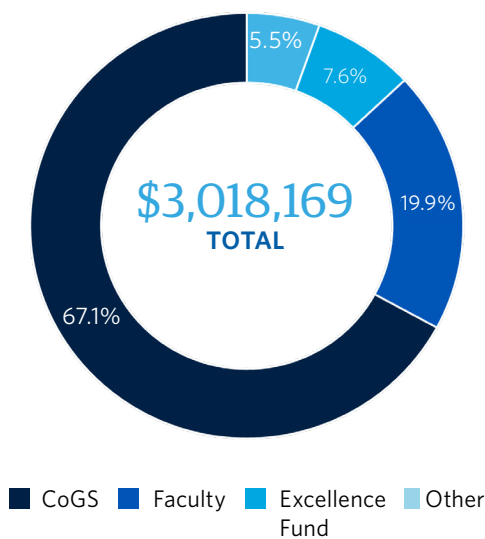
### STUDENT HIGHLIGHT

My name is Liam R. King, I am nêhinaw-michif (Swampy Cree-Metis). I grew up in a small mountain town in the West Kootenay's called Montrose, B.C. I currently live in Vernon, B.C., with my wife, our two children, and our dog and two cats.

My current research focuses on the ways that digital media influences identity development in young Indigenous men and the impacts this has on their health and wellness. For my master's thesis, I have collaborated with the Aboriginal Programs and Services center at UBC Okanagan and we have received a CIHR grant to work alongside young Indigenous men in the local area.

Being awarded the Aboriginal Entrance Fellowship at UBC Okanagan has been pivotal in allowing my family to thrive during my master's degree. This award has given me time and space to enjoy my growing family while also receiving an education.

### SOURCES OF INTERNAL GRADUATE AWARD FUNDING



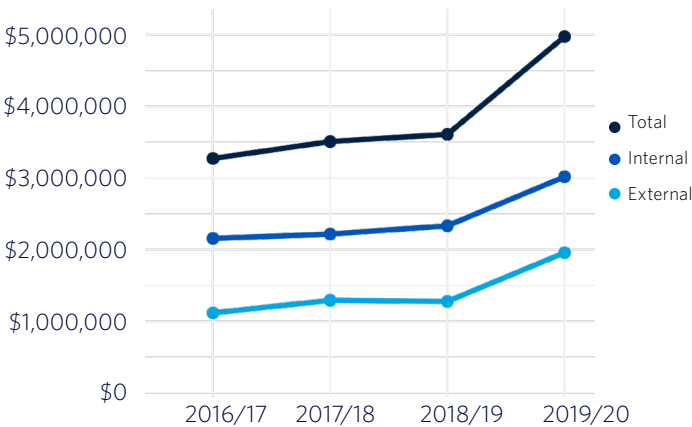
**\$410,353**  
EXTERNAL FUNDING  
CHANGE OVER PRIOR  
YEAR



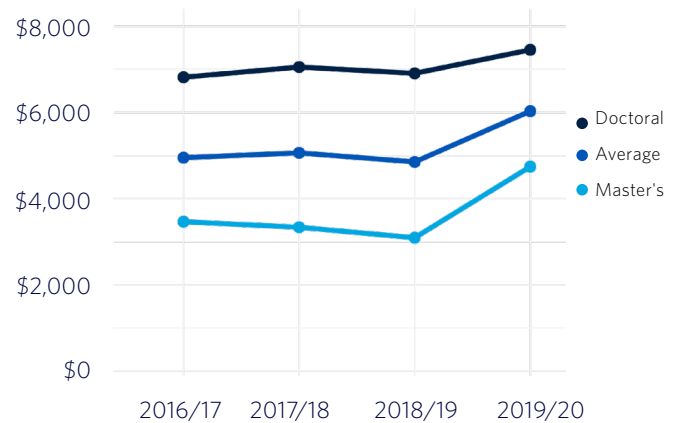
**\$6,031**  
AVERAGE AWARD  
FUNDING FOR ALL  
THESIS-BASED STUDENTS

\* includes internal, tri-agency and provincial awards

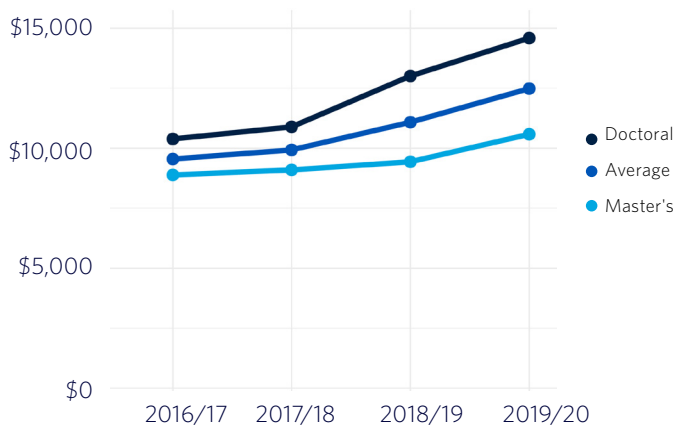
### SOURCES OF AWARD FUNDING



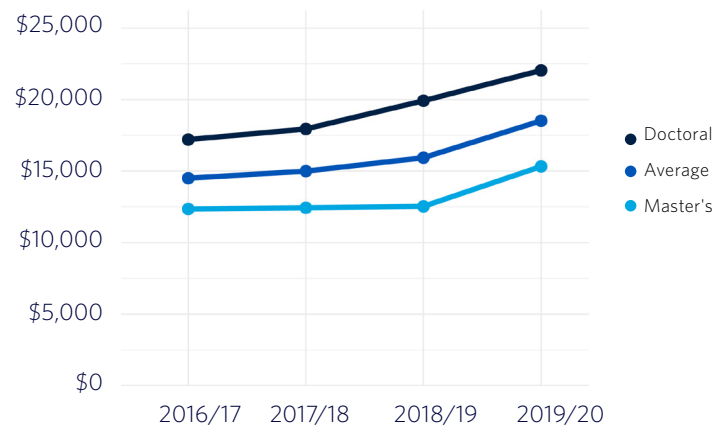
### AWARD FUNDING PER STUDENT



### ASSISTANTSHIPS PER STUDENT



### AVERAGE GRADUATE STUDENT FUNDING



# Student Success Stories



## Peaks and valleys lead to gold medal win for UBCO student

MIKE TYMKO

The award is presented to the university's most accomplished doctoral graduate each spring. Tymko, who has published more than 60 research papers, is beyond talented says his supervisor Professor Phil Ainslie. The pair have worked together since 2012, when Tymko, an undergraduate at Mount Royal University, was invited to join one of Ainslie's research expeditions to Nepal.

During his studies, Tymko trekked to Nepal in 2012 and 2016, as well as White Mountain, California in 2015 and Peru in 2018—where Tymko co-led more than 40 scientists at a research station at Cerro de Pasco.

Tymko is humbled by the gold medal win, and says, like the expeditions, this is not something you accomplish alone.

[READ MORE](#)

## The first MDS graduate to get a job

MOHSEN ZARDADI

Master of Data Science alumnus Mohsen Zardadi moved to Kelowna from Metro Vancouver to pursue a graduate degree and landed a job offer three months before he graduated. Now, he's settled in Kelowna with his family and works as a data scientist at TerraSense Analytics.

In one project, Zardadi works on military aerial surveillance systems to enable aircraft operators to analyze data in real-time and gain critical intelligence. Using airborne data and deep learning on cutting edge devices, he trains neural networks to track mobile targets and classify objects from different sensors in real-time.

[READ MORE](#)





## Doctoral Alumnus now a Horizon Postdoctoral Fellow

MATHIEU AUBIN

After attending the Textual Editing Modernism in Canada Summer Institute, Editing Modernism on and Off the Page in August of 2013 at UBC Okanagan, Mathieu Aubin was inspired by what UBC was able to offer its graduate students on its sister campus.

Aubin completed his doctoral degree in November of 2019, and is now a Horizon Postdoctoral Fellow at Concordia University in Montreal. Aubin's dissertation examined the intersection between Vancouver's queer small presses and lesbian and gay liberation movements, and as a Horizon Postdoctoral Fellow at Concordia, he continues to pursue his passion by working with a new media: audio recordings of events that included LGBTQ2+ people.

[READ MORE](#)

## Percept Systems is one of few companies in Western Canada licensed for medical supply manufacturing

EPHRAIM NOWAK

UBC Okanagan alumnus Ephraim Nowak has mobilized his Kelowna company to produce more than 1,000 face shields per day in an effort to combat the COVID-19 outbreak.

"This was the right thing to do," says Nowak who completed his master's degree with UBCO's School of Engineering in 2018.

[READ MORE](#)



# Enhancing visibility of graduate education achieving institutional priorities

## Building for the future

In the fall of 2019, the College of Graduate Studies (CoGS) initiated campus-wide conversations with faculty members and graduate students to gain a sense of growth: funding, infrastructure, faculty and supervisor support, and graduate student support. Through 2019/20 CoGS undertook a number of initiatives.



### FUNDING

**Scholarship Revamp:** With the Irving K. Barber School of Arts and Sciences splitting into two independent faculties on July 1, 2020, we worked with the Barber School to discontinue existing graduate entrance scholarships and create two new graduate scholarship programs in the new Faculty of Science and the new Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

**Faculty of Creative and Critical Studies Graduate Fellowship:** CoGS also worked alongside the Faculty of Creative and Critical Studies to establish the Faculty of Creative and Critical Studies Graduate Fellowship, which provides awards between \$3,000 and \$7,000 to incoming and continuing students in the faculty.

**Entrance Scholarships:** CoGS adjusted all entrance scholarships to now be available for students starting in any intake period (September, May, January).

**COVID-19 Support:** CoGS worked with Enrolment Services to disperse approximately \$90,000 in bursaries and created 32 one-time Summer Interval Awards of \$3,000 to assist graduate students impacted by COVID-19.



### INFRASTRUCTURE

**Student Commons:** With the opening of the Commons Building, CoGS partnered with the Library to establish the Graduate Student Commons – a study space for graduate students, uniquely designed to foster collaboration and academic wellbeing.

**Graduate Workshop Room:** CoGS and the Centre for Scholarly Communications currently shares room COM 311. This room is used to host workshops for graduate students. This year, the room was made available as practice space for student's thesis or dissertation defence.

# n opportunities that contribute to

collective understanding of the supports needed to move towards Outlook 2040's vision. From these conversations, we identified four central pillars of growth within these four pillars of growth. As we move towards 2040, we will continue to focus on initiatives in these areas.



## FACULTY AND SUPERVISOR SUPPORT

**Graduate Program Development:** The College of Graduate Studies collaborated with faculties to launch two new PhD programs in 2020: The PhD in Computer Science, and the PhD in Nursing.

**Enhanced Communication:** To improve knowledge sharing, CoGS developed Behind the Door, a monthly high-level email to direct faculty to time-relevant policy and procedure information as well as deadlines and initiatives.

**Knowledge Gathering:** Through campus-wide conversations and consultation [Designing for 2040](#) was developed to build a collective framework to support the graduate student vision of Outlook 2040.

**Supervisor's Workshop:** In response to COVID-19, CoGS developed resources for faculty and supervisors to support the transition online. This included a webinar on Supervision in the COVID-19 Context done in partnership with Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies at UBC Vancouver.



## GRADUATE STUDENT SUPPORT

**Indigenous initiatives:** We continue to work with Aboriginal Programs and Services and Student Services to enhance supports for Aboriginal graduate students and create pathways for these students to progress through academia.

**IT Services:** Work continues on IT initiatives to better serve graduate students on campus. This includes advocating for UBC email addresses for all graduate students and installing digital signage to promote graduate student workshops and thesis defences.

**COVID-19 Response:** In response to COVID-19, a number of new initiatives were undertaken to support students. Deadlines for milestones were extended where possible to minimize the impact on graduate students. We also established procedures and guidelines to move defences online and digital document delivery for applicants. CoGS also put together a number of resources to support students through the transition to online, including documents on virtual defences and examinations, and blog post on working from home done in partnership with the Centre for Scholarly Communication.

