

Interdisciplinary Combined PhD Option

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The Home Program is also the “fall-back” program in the event that the student wishes to discontinue in the combined option.

Partnering Program: For the purposes of the Interdisciplinary Combined PhD Degree Agreement Form, “Partnering Program” will refer to the second graduate program.

### 1. Rationale for an Interdisciplinary Combined PhD Option

- 1.1. Many current and emerging areas of research and professional practice are at the intersection of existing disciplines.
- 1.2. Advanced knowledge and research expertise that spans disciplinary boundaries is needed to effectively respond to emerging cultural, social, and scientific needs.
- 1.3. The creation of new interdisciplinary graduate programs would not provide the flexibility or responsiveness required to address these growing needs.
- 1.4. This option will be unique in Canada and will provide an innovative and competitive advantage for Western and its graduates.

### 2. Program Structure

- 2.1. The student shall have two supervisors – one supervisor with doctoral membership in each graduate program. In exceptional circumstances, a single supervisor, with doctoral membership in both programs may be approved by the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (SGPS), conditional upon the supervisory committee representing both programs.
- 2.2. One of the two programs will be identified as the “Home Program” for the purpose of registration and administration.
- 2.3. Programs are encouraged to “share” or “merge” some of their usual requirements.
  - For example, a required course in one program can also be counted as an optional or elective course in the second program.
- 2.4. One thesis is to be completed; the thesis must meet the expectations of both programs, the content of the thesis should represent a blending of the disciplines.
- 2.5. The composition of the examining board for the dissertation will include representation of both participating programs and disciplines.
  - Some variation from the usual PhD Examination Board structure may be needed to achieve this; such variation must be approved by SGPS.

