

Graduate Student Supervision Policy

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- 1 Purpose** The purpose of this policy is to set out the eligibility criteria for Supervisory Privileges and to set out the expectations for Graduate Student supervision.
- 2 Scope** This policy applies to Academic Staff Members.
- 3 Definitions** In this policy:
- a) “Academic Staff Member” means an individual who is engaged to work for the University and is identified as an academic staff member under Article 1 of the Collective Agreement.
 - b) “Collective Agreement” means the collective agreement between The Faculty Association of the University of Calgary and the Governors of the University of Calgary in effect at the relevant time.
 - c) “Co-Supervisor” means an individual who is named as Co-Supervisor and serves as a second Supervisor of a Graduate Student.
 - d) “Graduate Program Director” means the Academic Staff Member appointed by a dean or department head to administer a graduate program.
 - e) “Graduate Student” means a student registered with the Faculty of Graduate Studies.
 - f) “Instructor Ranks” means the positions of Instructor, Senior Instructor and Teaching Professor.
 - g) “Professorial Ranks” means the positions of Assistant Professor, Associate Professor and Professor.

- h) “Supervisor” means a qualified individual, who is normally an Academic Staff Member, who serves as the primary mentor to a Graduate Student, oversees the Graduate Student’s academic progress, and serves as chair of the Graduate Student’s supervisory committee, where applicable.
- i) “Supervisory Privileges” means the privilege granted to a qualified individual to supervise masters and/or doctoral students within the parameters of a program's supervisory policy.
- j) “University” means the University of Calgary.

4 Policy Statement

- 4.1 The University is committed to providing the consistent and high quality supervision that is critical to Graduate Students’ success.
- 4.2 Expectations for Supervisors and Co-Supervisors are set out in the [Best Practices for Supervisors](#). Provisions in this policy and the related procedure respecting the granting, renewal, and formal evaluation of Supervisory Privileges apply to the granting, renewal or formal evaluation of Supervisory Privileges for all Academic Staff Members, including Academic Staff Members serving as Co-Supervisors.

Eligibility for Supervisory Privilege

- 4.3 An Academic Staff Member in the Professorial Ranks (including a member of the Senior Leadership Team holding a concurrent academic appointment) is eligible to hold Supervisory Privileges.
- 4.4 An Academic Staff Member in the Instructor Ranks is eligible to hold Supervisory Privileges if the appropriate Dean recommends Supervisory Privileges and indicates graduate supervision comprises a component of workload for this Academic Staff Member.
- 4.5 An emeritus faculty professor, or adjunct or clinical appointee who has experience and continuing research productivity in the Graduate Student’s field of interest, or a faculty member from another recognized institution holding equivalent supervisory privileges, may also be appointed as a Supervisor on a case by case basis. A Co-Supervisor who is an Academic Staff Member and has unlimited Supervisory Privileges must be appointed under such circumstances.

Granting of Supervisory Privileges

- 4.6 A Dean, Associate Dean or Department Head, in consultation with the Graduate Program Director, may recommend an eligible Academic Staff Member for Supervisory Privileges. The recommendation should specify whether the Supervisory Privileges:
 - a) are limited to a number of Graduate Students;
 - b) are limited to a level of Student;
 - c) require a Co-Supervisor;
 - d) require a mentor; or
 - e) are unlimited.

The Dean, Associate Dean or Department Head who recommended any limitations on an Academic Staff Member's Supervisory Privileges may, at any time, recommend lifting any of the limitations.

- 4.7 The Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies will grant initial Supervisory Privileges for a renewable five year term on the recommendation of the appropriate Dean, or delegate. The Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies will lift limitations on a Supervisor's Supervisory Privileges on the recommendation of the appropriate Dean, or delegate.
- 4.8 Graduate programs will maintain their own supervisory policies, which cannot contradict this policy. These supervisory policies will specify criteria for granting limited or unlimited Supervisory Privileges and will set out a maximum supervisory load.
- 4.9 Prior to being granted Supervisory Privileges for the first time by the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies, all prospective Supervisors must either attend a University Supervisor Development Workshop or complete an approved on-line supervisor development program.

Prohibited Relationships between Graduate Students and their Supervisors, Co-Supervisors, or Supervisory Committee Members.

- 4.10 Individuals must decline to supervise, co-supervise, or become a member of a supervisory committee for a Graduate Student with whom they have, or have had, a close personal relationship, including a romantic, sexual, or familial relationship.
- 4.11 If a close personal relationship develops between a Supervisor, Co-Supervisor, or supervisory committee member and a Graduate Student, the Supervisor, Co-Supervisor, or supervisory committee member involved in the close personal relationship must immediately disclose the relationship in writing to the Dean of their Faculty, or to the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies. Failure to disclose a close personal relationship could lead to disciplinary action, in accordance with University policies or procedures and any applicable Collective Agreement.
- 4.12 Following disclosure, the Supervisor, Co-Supervisor, or supervisory committee member will:
 - a) immediately remove themselves from all supervisory and professional duties related to the Graduate Student;
 - b) create a plan with the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and the Dean of their Faculty for recusal that will be signed by the Supervisor and the Graduate Student. If a new Supervisor will be required, both Supervisors must agree to the recusal plan; and
 - c) help ensure that any financial, research, intellectual property, and authorship commitments made to the Graduate Student are considered in the recusal plan, in order to minimize, to the extent reasonably possible, any adverse effect on the Graduate Student's financial situation, intellectual property rights, publication record and academic progress.

Renewal and Formal Evaluation of Supervisory Privileges

- 4.13** Supervisory Privileges will be subject to renewal every five years. At least six months prior to the expiry of a Supervisor's Supervisory Privileges, the Faculty of Graduate Studies will alert the Graduate Program Director of the upcoming expiry. In consultation with the appropriate Dean or their delegate, the Graduate Program Director will review the supervisory record.
- 4.14** If the review of the supervisory record does not identify any concerns the Graduate Program Director and Dean/delegate will recommend renewal of the Supervisor's Supervisory Privileges to the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies will renew the Supervisory Privileges for another renewable five year term.
- 4.15** If a review of the supervisory record identifies concerns, such as a pattern of Graduate Student withdrawals or changes in supervision, a pattern of protracted times to candidacy or completion (beyond the norm in the graduate program and not attributable to specificities of the area of study), the Dean of the Supervisor's faculty will initiate a formal evaluation of the Supervisor's Supervisory Privileges.
- 4.16** Outside of the five year renewal process, a formal evaluation of Supervisory Privileges may be initiated by the Dean of the Supervisor's faculty:
- a) upon receipt of a written complaint relating to supervision;
 - b) when the Office of Diversity, Equity and Protected Disclosure has determined that a responsible allegation has been made relating primarily to graduate supervision and the allegation is best addressed through a formal review of Supervisory Privileges; or
 - c) in response to what the Dean of the Supervisor's faculty perceives to be a pattern of serious conflicts or negative outcomes relating to Graduate Student supervision since the most recent renewal of privileges.
- 4.17** Formal evaluations of Supervisory Privileges will be conducted under the Procedure for the Formal Evaluation of Supervisory Privileges.
- 4.18** Removal of Supervisory Privileges should occur only in exceptional circumstances, or when remedial or mentoring efforts have not changed the patterns or concerns that initiated the formal evaluation.

Continuity of Supervision

- 4.19** In agreeing to supervise a Graduate Student, an Academic Staff Member is committing to supervising that Graduate Student through to completion of their degree or withdrawal from the graduate program. A Supervisor may be released from this commitment only if:
- a) the Faculty of Graduate Studies requires the Graduate Student to withdraw;
 - b) the Supervisor has disclosed a close personal relationship in accordance with 4.11-4.12;
 - c) the Faculty of Graduate Studies determines that there are exceptional circumstances and grants the Supervisor permission to discontinue supervision of a Graduate Student; or
 - d) the Supervisor leaves the University.

- 4.20** If a Supervisor leaves the University, the Graduate Program Director, the graduate program and the Faculty of Graduate Studies must arrange for alternative supervision, if required.

Financial Commitments

- 4.21** When a Supervisor offers financial support to a Graduate Student, a Supervisor makes a commitment on behalf of the University. This commitment should be co-signed or otherwise approved by the Graduate Program Director.
- 4.22** A Supervisor should clearly state in the offer of financial support any expectations associated with the financial support arrangement such as the Graduate Student's continued registration and progress in a graduate program and contribution to the Supervisor's research program.
- 4.23** In instances of breakdown of the Supervisory relationship, financial exigency or other circumstances, it is the collective responsibility of the Supervisor(s), the graduate program(s) and the Faculty of Graduate Studies to ensure that financial commitments are met.

Leaves of Absence

- 4.24** A Graduate Program Director and the Supervisor must ensure that the Graduate Student is provided with continued supervision during a Supervisor's long-term leave. If the Supervisor and any Co-Supervisor will be unavailable, an interim Supervisor may be appointed to ensure continuity in supervision.
- 4.25** Graduate Students should be informed well in advance about Supervisors' or any Co-Supervisors' plans for upcoming research or scholarship leaves.
- 4.26** When an interim Supervisor is appointed to cover a Supervisor's absence, the permanent Supervisor retains responsibility for the continued supervision of the Graduate Student.

5 Responsibilities

- 5.1** Supervisors will:
- a) complete the [Checklist of Expectations](#) between Supervisor and Graduate Student;
 - b) be familiar with the [Best Practices for Supervisors](#);
 - c) assist the Graduate Student with the selection and planning of a suitable and manageable research topic with due consideration of the resources necessary for completion of the research project;
 - d) be accessible to the Graduate Student for consultation and discussion of the Graduate Student's academic progress and research;
 - e) respond in a timely manner to written work submitted by the Graduate Student with constructive suggestions for improvement;
 - f) achieve consensus, resolve differences, or seek outside opinions (e.g., Graduate Program Director) when there is conflicting advice or when there are different expectations on the part of Co-Supervisors or members of the supervisory committee;

- g) be familiar with and abide by the rules and regulations of the Faculty of Graduate Studies, and the graduate program, including the chronological sequence of events and deadline dates in a Graduate Student's program;
- h) assist the Graduate Student to be aware of current program requirements, deadlines, sources of funding, and general expectations of examinations;
- i) complete the Supervisor's section of the Graduate Student's annual progress report and offer suggestions for improvement when deficiencies in progress exist;
- j) encourage the Graduate Student to make presentations of research results within the University and to outside scholarly or professional bodies as appropriate;
- k) acknowledge the contributions of the Graduate Student in presentations and in published material, including joint authorship, if appropriate; and
- l) discuss with the Graduate Student the Intellectual Property Checklist (available at <https://grad.ucalgary.ca/services/faculty-and-staff/supervisor-resources>) and conform to University and other policies regarding intellectual property, scholarly integrity (e.g. academic misconduct), and other policies applicable to the research environment including the Research Integrity Policy.

5.2 The Dean of Graduate Studies will:

- a) grant Supervisory Privileges and determine whether Supervisory Privileges will be revoked, limited or renewed upon the recommendation of the appropriate Dean, or delegate.
- b) decide whether Supervisory Privileges will be renewed following a review under 4.16; and
- c) remove limitations on Supervisory Privileges when recommended by the appropriate Dean, Associate Dean or Department Head.

5.3 The Dean of a Supervisor's faculty will:

- a) in consultation with the Graduate Program Director, make recommendations to the Dean of Graduate Studies regarding Supervisory Privileges;
- b) in consultation with the Graduate Program Director, review the supervisory record of Supervisors in their faculty at least every five years or in response to reported concerns; and
- c) initiate a Formal Evaluation of Supervisory Privileges when required pursuant to section 4.13.

5.4 The Graduate Program Director will:

- a) convey information about relevant policies, procedures and regulations to Graduate Students, Supervisors, Co-Supervisors and supervisory committee members;
- b) review and approve financial support agreements between Graduate Students and Supervisors;
- c) ensure that Graduate Students have appropriate supervision and supervisory committees (where applicable);
- d) review and approve documentation pertaining to the required Graduate Student annual progress reports, examinations, extensions, and Graduate Student leaves of absence;

- e) in consultation with the appropriate Dean review the supervisory record of the Supervisors and Co-Supervisors in their program as part of the five year renewal process; and
- f) recommend renewal of Supervisory Privileges when no concerns are identified.

5.5 The Department Head or Associate Dean of a teaching Faculty will:

- a) in consultation with the Graduate Program Director, make recommendations to the Dean of Graduate Studies regarding Supervisory Privileges.

6 Related Procedures [Graduate Supervisory Privileges, Procedure for the Formal Evaluation of](#)

7 Related Guidelines/Forms [Application for Renewal of Supervisory Privileges](#)

8 Related Information [Best Practices for Supervisors](#)

9 History

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