

## Supervision and Examinations

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The minimum requirements for all graduate programs are set by the Council of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research of the University of Alberta. In this Calendar the minimum requirements acceptable are outlined under the respective headings. Students should note that the individual graduate program may impose additional requirements.

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## Supervision and Supervisory Committees

### Departmental Regulations and Responsibilities

Departments are responsible for preparing a set of regulations and guidelines for supervisors and students. Guidelines should deal with the selection and functioning of supervisors and should outline the joint responsibilities of faculty members and graduate students. Options for students to pursue who believe they are receiving unsatisfactory supervision should also be specified.

### Appointment of the Supervisor(s)

Every student in a thesis-based program is required to have a supervisor. The department that admits a student to a thesis-based graduate program is responsible for providing supervision within a subject area in which it has competent supervisors, and in which the student has expressed an interest.

Normally there is only one supervisor. Departments may consider the appointment of more than one supervisor for a student.

Implicit in the admission process is the following: on the applicant's part, that there has been an indication of at least a general area of interest and, preferably, provision of some form of proposal, particularly if the program is at the doctoral level; on the department's part, that the application has been reviewed, the area of interest examined, academic expectations and potential performance considered, and that the department accepts its obligation to provide appropriate supervision for the applicant in the specified subject area.

It is expected that every effort will be made to arrive at a mutually agreeable arrangement for supervision between the student and the department. Students are normally involved in the process for selecting their supervisor(s) although this process varies from program to program.

The authority for the appointment of supervisors rests with the disciplinary Dean. Such appointment decisions are final and non-appealable.

Article 7.02.1 of the Faculty Agreement lists the "supervision of graduate students" as a form of "participation in teaching programs". It is expected that a department will monitor and review the performance of supervisors.

### Supervisors on Leave

It is the responsibility of supervisors to make adequate provision for supervision of their graduate students during their leave. Therefore, if a supervisor is to be absent from the University for a period exceeding two months, it is the supervisor's responsibility to nominate an adequate

interim substitute or indicate the means by which supervision will be maintained. It is the supervisor's responsibility to inform the student and the department in writing at the time the leave is approved.

In instances when an interim supervisor is appointed, they are not required to complete Supervisor-Student Guidelines since the primary supervisor relationship remains intact during the leave period. The interim supervisor may, however, be required to complete a [Progress Report](#) if their appointment coincides with the annual deadline and a previous report during the calendar year has not already been completed (e.g. by the supervisor prior to the start of their leave).

Supervisors planning to take a sabbatical should follow the requirements found in Appendix A.3 of the Faculty Agreement with respect to adequate advance arrangements for graduate students while a supervisor is on sabbatical.

## Eligibility for Appointment as Supervisor

Each of the following criteria must be met by at least one of the supervisor(s):

1. be a tenured, tenure-track, or retired faculty member, or a Faculty Service Officer, of the University of Alberta (current or retired categories A1.1, A1.3, or current category C1.1, as defined in the University's Recruitment Policy (Appendix A) Definition and Categories of Academic Staff and Colleagues);
2. be active in the general subject area of the student's research;
3. demonstrate continuing scholarly or creative activity of an original nature;  
and
4. either hold a degree equivalent to or higher than that for which the student is a candidate, or have a demonstrated record of successfully supervising students for the degree.

If one of conditions (2)-(4) is not satisfied by any of the proposed supervisors, then a departmental justification (with the proposed supervisors' CV) is put forward to the Dean of the department's Faculty for approval.

For supervisors from outside the University of Alberta, working with a supervisor at the University of Alberta, the means by which meaningful interaction can be maintained should be specified in writing to the student and the department.

## Timeline for the Appointment of Supervisors

Ideally, the supervisor for a thesis-based student, both master's and doctoral, should be appointed as soon as the student arrives to begin their program of studies. If this is not possible, an interim academic advisor should be appointed by the department.

The interim academic advisor or the graduate coordinator will be responsible for completing the Supervisor-Student Guidelines with the student in instances where a supervisor has not yet been appointed after the student's first 12 months in their program.

Supervisor(s) must be appointed within the first 12 months of the student's program following the procedures approved by the Dean of the department's Faculty and submitted to FGSR.

## Responsibilities Related to Supervision

The supervisor is directly responsible for the supervision of the student's program. Refer to [Responsibilities Related to Graduate Programs](#) for further regulations.

## Completion of the Supervisor-Student Guidelines

All students registered in a thesis-based program are required to meet with their supervisor (assigned at admission or with an interim academic advisor or the graduate coordinator if one has not yet been assigned - see [Timeline for the Appointment of Supervisors](#)) to complete the Supervisor-Student Guidelines as soon as possible after registration in the first academic term but no later than the submission of the first Progress Report, which is due in FGSR within 12 months from the student's program start date.

If there is a change in supervisor at any point in a student's program of study, the guidelines will be completed anew in accordance with the timeline noted.

Completion of the guidelines is required. In instances where the Supervisor-Student Guidelines are not submitted within the first 12 months from the student's program start date, the student's registration in subsequent terms will be restricted as a last resort and temporarily so as to determine a plan for completion. In these unlikely instances, FGSR will assist the student and supervisor(s) in the completion of the guidelines and remove registration restrictions immediately. Note: both the student and supervisor(s) will receive reminders to complete the guidelines in advance of any deadlines, allowing for inquiries to assist or to set out an alternate completion deadline.

If changes to the content of the Supervisor-Student Guidelines are made or required, these changes will be recorded on the student's Progress Report indicating both parties have discussed and mutually agreed to them.