

**PHD ADVISORY COMMITTEE GUIDELINES FOR MEMBERS**  
**Department of Microbiology and Immunology**  
**McGill University**

Each PhD student is assigned an Advisory Committee consisting of:

- the student's research supervisor
- two other faculty members

It is the student's responsibility to schedule meetings of his/her Advisory Committee each year.

Advisory Committee meetings consist of two parts. First, the student presents the progress of his/her research project when applicable and the future plans for the upcoming year to the Committee members. The presentation is followed by an informal discussion with Committee members.

**For candidates entering the PhD program with a MSc degree**, the first meeting takes place within the first term in residence. The student's presentation to the Committee members corresponds to his/her first PhD seminar (MIMM 611) and is graded by the Committee members.

The second meeting is held in the second year of residence prior to the first week of May. The student's presentation to the Committee members corresponds to his/her second PhD seminar (MIMM 612) and is graded by the Committee members.

The subsequent yearly meetings take place prior to the first week of May and are not coordinated with a seminar course. At these meetings, the student nevertheless should present the progress of his/her research project and future plans to the Committee members and the presentations are not graded.

**For candidates entering the PhD program through transfer from the MIMM MSc program**, the committee is formed before the second seminar (MIMM 612) in the MSc program, during which the student reports on the research progress accomplished to date and future research plans. The Committee members are part of the seminar grading panel for that public seminar, in addition to the regular members of the panel. The subsequent yearly meetings take place prior to the first week of May and are not coordinated with a seminar course. At these meetings, the student nevertheless presents the progress of his/her research project and future plans to the Committee members.

For each meeting, the student should prepare a brief outline, no longer than 8 double-spaced pages (including references and figures) describing the research progress made towards the previous year's objectives and future plans. The outline should be distributed to the Committee members at least one week before the meeting. The student should also fill out the appropriate sections of the PhD Advisory Committee Report (*PhD Advisory Committee Report.pdf*).

**As a member of the advisory Committee** you will have to assess the student's research progress, when applicable, and future plan for the upcoming year taking into consideration both the written outline provided and the oral presentation delivered. In some circumstances you will also have to assess the oral presentation on a Pass/Fail basis according to the criteria indicated on page 6 of the PhD Advisory Committee Report. This will serve as the student's evaluation for the MIMM 611 or MIMM612 courses.

It is important to keep in mind that these meetings are not exams. They serve to evaluate the student's progress but also to provide feedback and insight to troubleshoot and guide the progression of the student's research project.

**Progress tracking and evaluation.** At each meeting, the supervisor and the Committee members must complete page 5 of the PhD Advisory Committee Report. All parties, including the student, must sign the report. The supervisor must distribute copies of the signed report to the student, the Committee members, and the Course Coordinator. A student who does not agree to sign the form must write a statement detailing his/her objections.

A grade of PASS is assigned following deposition of a satisfactory report (excellent, very good or good) to the Graduate Program Coordinator. In the event that the research progress is considered not satisfactory, a new set of objectives should be developed at the meeting and recorded on the PhD Advisory Committee Report. These new objectives apply only to the next semester. Evaluation of progress should then take place after that semester has concluded, following the steps described above.

In the event that a report is not provided prior to the deadline, a grade of incomplete (HH) is assigned. In the event of an incomplete grade, the student must ensure that an Advisory Committee meeting takes place, and a report submitted, prior to August 1st at which point a PASS is assigned. In the event that an Advisory Committee Meeting does not take place within the required time, a grade of FAIL is assigned.

According to the regulations of the Faculty of Graduate Studies, two unsatisfactory progress reports may lead to the student being required to withdraw from the program.