**Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics and Occupational Health**

**THESIS SUPERVISOR NOMINATION FORM**

Students are initially advised by their Degree Program Advisor. The advisor’s role is to counsel the student about his/her academic program and also to mentor the student. The relationship between the advisor and the student can last for the student’s entire academic program although, once a supervisor has been approved, they normally take on the primary mentorship role.

Ph.D. and M.Sc. students are supervised by a thesis supervisor and thesis supervisory committee as described in section “Thesis Information” of the departmental web site ([www.mcgill.ca/epi-biostat-occh/student-affairs/academic-information/thesis](http://www.mcgill.ca/epi-biostat-occh/student-affairs/academic-information/thesis)). Meetings with all members of thesis supervisory committees are recommended as frequently as necessary to ensure efficient progress of the thesis research. A minimum of twice a year is generally considered to be the norm.

To help you narrow down the list of possible supervisors, you are encouraged to contact the professors within the various areas of faculty research that interest you. You can also network with the faculty members, program advisors and other students. If you wish to be supervised by an Associate Member, you can contact the Student Services Office for assistance.

Your thesis supervisor must be a McGill faculty member with an appointment in the Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics and Occupational Health. Please use the forms on the second page of this document to notify the department of your proposed supervisor.

These issues are to be discussed between the student and the supervisor at the earliest opportunity after admission to ensure timely progress through the degree program. Unresolved issues should be reviewed periodically and agreement achieved as soon as possible. It might be helpful to attach to this checklist detailed minutes of discussions held and decisions made, as appropriate.

* Course plan: courses; credits by semester
* Thesis timeline: dates for protocol; completion
* Thesis format: classical or manuscript based
* Authorship: number of expected papers; content, journals; first, senior, corresponding author; number of presentations, content, conference locations, costs
* Thesis project: possible topics; primary or secondary data collection; holding rights & responsibilities
* Members of supervisory committee: proposed; confirmed
* Committee meetings: number and timing; by semester
* Funding: personal, project
* Ethics approval: timing
* Office hours: hours, open door
* Absences: sabbatical; holidays; conferences

Deadline for initial submission of Thesis Supervisor Nomination form:

M.Sc. & Ph.D. students – February 15 of their first year in the program

M.Sc. Epidemiology Intensive students – October 1 of their first year in the program

Completed and signed forms are to be submitted as follows:

M.Sc. students: [gradcoord1.eboh@mcgill.ca](mailto:gradcoord1.eboh@mcgill.ca)

Ph.D. students: [gradcoord2.eboh@mcgill.ca](mailto:gradcoord2.eboh@mcgill.ca)

Initial submission of the form must include supervisor’s name and signature. Committee members may be named later but within 6 months of initial submission (3 months for M.Sc. Intensive students).

If the choice of supervisor(s) is approved, the milestone will be marked as complete in MyProgress and the approved form uploaded in the system. The name of your supervisor(s) will also appear on the MyProgress page.

If revision is needed, the student will be informed by email, with copies to the supervisor(s).

A supervisor with six or more students at the M.Sc./Ph.D. level must attach a letter justifying taking on an additional student.

The Chair makes the final decision. If the proposed supervisor is considered ineligible for a particular student at this time, the Chair will inform the faculty member in writing, giving the reasons for this decision. Any and all appeals will be handled by the departmental Chair, who has the final word.

**Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics and Occupational Health**

**THESIS SUPERVISOR NOMINATION FORM**

*Please complete and forward by email to the Student Affairs Office*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Initial Submission | Revised Submission (please highlight changes) |

*please type this form*

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| Name (Last/First): |  | | | | | | | | | McGill ID: | | | | | | |
| McGill Email: |  | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Program: | Epidemiology  PhD  MSc Thesis  MSc Intensive  Biostatistics  PhD  MSc Thesis  MSc Non-Thesis | | | | | | | | | Date began in program: | | | | | | |
|  |  | | | | | | | | | Month / Year | | | | | | |
| Thesis Title: |  | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| Proposed Supervisor: | | | | | | | | | | McGill ID: | | | | | | |
| Email: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ***To be completed by proposed supervisor*** | | | | | | | | | Number of students currently supervised: | | | | | | | |
| Name | | MSc | | PhD | Entry  Date | | Expected  completion | | Name | MSc | | | PhD | Entry  Date | | Expected  completion |
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| Proposed Co-Supervisor: | | | | | | | | | | McGill ID: | | | | | | |
| Email: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| If not at McGill, please provide their affiliation: | | |  | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Proposed Thesis  Committee Members: | | |  | | | | |  | | | |  | | | | |
|  | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Funding amount provided to student and duration (if applicable): | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Source of funding (if applicable): | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|  | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Signatures** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Student: | | | | | | | | | | | Date: | | | | | |
| Proposed Supervisor: | | | | | | | | | | | Date: | | | | | |
| Proposed Co-supervisor: | | | | | | | | | | | Date: | | | | | |
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| **Office Use Only** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Approved by Director of Degree Program | | | | | | | | | Department Chair’s Decision: | | | | | | | |
| Referred to Department Chair (Number of supervisees exceeds 6) | | | | | | | | | Approved  Not Approved | | | | | | | |
| Signature: | | | | | | Date: | | | Signature: | | | | | | Date: | |

**Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics and Occupational Health**

**LETTER OF UNDERSTANDING**

**Addendum to supervisor nomination form**

This letter of understanding (LOU) is designed to promote dialogue between the supervisor(s) and the graduate student to define their expectations and to increase awareness of the rights and responsibilities governing the training program and the student-supervisor relationship. The aim is to avoid problems and to achieve a positive and mutually beneficial experience.

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| --- | --- |
| Student: | McGill ID: |
| Supervisor: | McGill ID: |
| Co-Supervisor: | McGill ID: |

**Responsibilities of the Student**

**1. Know about and follow Administrative Requirements**

* Maintain awareness of all policies, procedures and deadlines that affect you.
* Monitor and use your official McGill email address for official correspondence related to your program of study and registration as a McGill student. Regularly access and read the University’s Information Technology web page, including use of email (www.mcgill.ca/email-policy/policy). Consult official University documents and communicate with your program's administrators if you have questions or concerns.
* Maintain your registration throughout the duration of the program, including ensuring that visas and employment authorization documents, where required, are kept up to date. Advise the program administrators of any change in your registration status as soon as possible.
* Adhere to all deadlines and policies regarding registration, meeting your program’s requirements, thesis submission and, if necessary, leaves of absence or withdrawal.

**2. Maintain Accessibility and Communication**

* Keep in touch with your supervisor and program administrators. Provide your supervisor and program administrators with your permanent and current contact information and advise the supervisor of any prolonged absences.
* Engage in open communication and feedback with your supervisor on all issues, including your thesis research design and results, technical difficulties, other demands of the Program (courses, etc.), personal concerns affecting research progress and meeting the Program milestones (such as medical and family-related issues), expectations, and supervisory practices.
* Meet regularly with your supervisor and thesis committee to report on progress (minimum once per year); keep current with the MyProgress tracking program used by Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (GPS).
* Inform the program advisor or Student Services Office in a timely fashion, of any serious difficulties including illness, trouble with course work or other program milestones, or problems with supervision. Supervisory issues could include mismatch of interests, major professional academic disagreements, interpersonal conflicts, or potential conflict of interest situations. If a change in supervisor is warranted, the program advisor will assist the student in the process of identifying a new supervisor.
* Embrace diversity: You and your supervisor may differ in a variety of ways including race, age, gender, sexual orientation, religious/spiritual beliefs, (dis)abilities, and family structure. All of these factors influence and are a part of your cultural experiences. If you notice these differences, consider how they may positively and negatively influence your work together. You can learn a great deal from someone else’s cultural experiences and perspective, but such differences could also lead to miscommunications or differences in working styles.

**3. Perform Academically**

* Collaborate with your supervisor to select the members of your thesis committee.
* Prepare a research plan and timetable in consultation with your supervisor as a basis for the program of study, including any proposed fieldwork.
* Work diligently towards your program milestones and meet them. Be aware that continuing in the program requires satisfactory performance in course work and research. The failure policy of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies requires that students withdraw from the University upon a second failing grade, including supplemental exams, in any course(s) required for the program; a second unsatisfactory research progress report is also grounds for dismissal.
* Give serious consideration and timely response to comments and advice from your supervisor and members of the thesis committee.
* Apply to all appropriate sources of funding and provide adequate notice to your supervisor regarding required documents.
* If you are a doctoral student, prepare for and pass the comprehensive examination.

**4. Conduct Research in a Responsible Manner**

* Uphold the academic integrity of the University. Understand what constitutes plagiarism, misconduct and cheating, and avoid these behaviors.
* Maintain a workplace that is safe, tidy and healthy.
* Comply with all policies on research ethics and procedures governing use of human subjects
* Follow good research etiquette. Respect the work and equipment of others, and show tolerance and respect for others sharing the same facilities. Discuss potential large costs or expenses when planning the research and prior to purchase. Be aware of the office operational rules and requirements. Maintain good records of each stage of research; ensure that records are appropriately stored and that they remain properly archived in the office. Understand that study records and materials are the property of the primary investigator although you have a right to retain copies of the records related to your thesis.
* Discuss with your supervisor any expectations and policies concerning authorship of publications, and issues surrounding copyright and ownership of intellectual property. Note, your thesis research must be publishable in the public domain, although you may request withholding of your thesis for a period of up to one year.

**5. Take Advantage of Opportunities for Professional Development**

* Develop professional skills, including presentation skills, writing reports and grant applications, preparation of your curriculum vitae, interviewing techniques and management skills including time management. Attend workshops offered through the university and department to develop and hone these skills.
* Attend departmental seminars. Also attend other journals clubs, seminars and colloquia around the university that are relevant to your professional goals.

**Responsibilities of the Supervisor**

**1. Follow Rules and Regulations**

* Be aware of and compliant with the University, Faculty of Medicine and EBOH requirements and procedures for graduate student supervision.
* Monitor the student's progress in achieving the milestones of their degree program. Participate in the MyProgress tracking procedures, including documenting thesis committee meetings at least once a year, to ensure that supervision and research objectives as well as realistic timetable for meeting objectives are clear, in writing and commonly understood by both the student and the supervisor. Any deficiencies should be documented early and remedial action identified in consultation with the student's thesis committee. Understand that dismissal of a student from the program for lack of performance in research can be requested only after two unsatisfactory research progress reports by the thesis committee to the Graduate Program Director (GPD).
* Understand that the professor/researcher must meet the qualifications and standards of performance in carrying out supervisory responsibilities. The GPD, in consultation with the Graduate Program Committee, determines and regularly reviews supervisory privileges of each supervisor in EBOH according to experience, performance, availability of resources and number of students supervised. Limitations on supervisory privileges may be imposed on supervisors who demonstrate a pattern of problems in their relationship with graduate students. These limitations may include requiring a co-supervisor, limiting the number of students (or their program level), requiring actions to improve supervisory skills, or suspending privileges.

**2. Maintain Accessibility and Communication**

* Maintain open communication with the student on all issues, including expectations and supervisory practices.
* Be available for regular consultation with the student and the student’s thesis committee, where applicable.
* Be sensitive to other program requirements, including course work, in your expectation of the student’s time management. Keep in mind that passing grades (B- or better) are required for students to maintain their good standing in the program. Reasonable time must be available for students to attend classes, study, and prepare assignments.
* Examine thoroughly all written material relevant to the thesis/research project submitted by the student and provide constructive suggestions, orally and/or in writing, for improving the work, when necessary.
* Together with the student, outline an appropriate timetable for the provision of work for review and for feedback, depending on the deadlines and the nature and length of the document. In general, it would be appropriate to provide written or oral comments to the student within two to four weeks of receipt of the submitted material according to the nature of the document, but it is recognized that on occasion, a longer response time may be needed because of other commitments of the supervisor. The student and supervisor should bear in mind that relying exclusively on oral comments or summaries of discussions can be problematic in the event of conflict.
* Inform the Student Services Office or GPD in a timely fashion, of any serious difficulties that may arise in supervision. These include mismatch of interests, major professional academic disagreements, interpersonal conflicts, or potential conflict of interest situations. If a change in supervisor is warranted, the program advisor will assist the student in finding a new supervisor.
* Inform the student of any prolonged absences, including sabbatical leaves, and make satisfactory alternative supervisory arrangements as required.
* Be on alert for and acknowledge any personal difficulties of the student and refer them to the Program Advisor or GPD and/or appropriate university student services for support.
* As a supervisor, you will encounter students from different cultures and backgrounds. It is important to discuss expectations, identify shared values, and try new approaches to supervision whenever they might be feasible. More information on cultural sensitively can be found at <http://www.mcgill.ca/gradsupervision/supervisors/interacting-> supervisees/student-diversity.

**3. Provide and Convey Research Information**

* Provide guidance, instruction and encouragement regarding the student's research activities and professional development. Guide the student in the selection and planning of an appropriate research topic.
* Ensure that the student has information on relevant theories and the methodological and technical skills necessary for the research. Ensure that the student has access to intellectual resources and research opportunities.
* Discuss with the student, very early on, the University's policies governing copyright and intellectual property.
* Discuss *a priori* any specific expectations concerning authorship of publications, and issues surrounding ownership of intellectual property and disclosure (this may include patents/licenses).

**4. Contribute to the Student's overall Professional Development**

* Encourage the student to disseminate their research results through publications and conference presentations; to participate in the departmental/university seminars and colloquia, and to attend workshops on the professional skill development.
* Assist the student with applications for funding and with their next career step. Provide letters of reference and general advice on career development.
* Inform the student clearly and in a timely manner when academic performance is not meeting expectations. Work with the student to identify problems and find solutions, including bringing problems forward for discussion with the thesis committee.

**5. Provide an Appropriate Research Environment**

* Advise the graduate student on the standards for quality and style to which theses and papers for publication must conform and the rules and disciplinary convention of authorship.
* Ensure that the graduate student is informed of the best practices for the responsible conduct of research, including respect for academic integrity.
* Ensure the student obtains training and certification for research with human subjects.
* Maintain a professional relationship with the student. The University does not permit a professor/researcher to supervise any individual with whom they have a personal relationship that may constitute a conflict of interest. Should such an occasion arise, the professor/researcher must resign as supervisor. In such instances, the program director and advisor will assist the student in finding a new supervisor.
* Avoid conflicts of interest in proprietary research. Declare any business relationship with the student or research being conducted by the student. A professor /researcher must not supervise a graduate student who is employed in a company in which the professor has an interest.
* Research conducted by the student for their thesis must be publishable in the public domain.
* Be aware and respectful of reasonable times to completion for EBOH degree programs. Candidates for master's degrees must complete the degree within three years of initial registration. Candidates for doctoral degrees must complete the degree by the end of PhD7. Please note that students admitted after a master’s degree are normally considered to be PhD2 and not PhD1 (direct entry).

**6. Appropriate Policies for Financial Support**

* Ensure to the best of your ability appropriate funding to cover operating costs incurred by the student to carry out their thesis research. Graduate students have access to multiple sources of funding, including FRQS, NSERC, FRQNT, and CIHR awards, as well as TA positions, RA positions and Faculty of Medicine Studentship Awards.
* Understand and respect that a stipend is defined as an award paid to a student from a professor’s/supervisor’s research funds which “will assist the student in qualifying for a degree or other scholastic recognition in the field in which the research is being carried on.” Related effort may include research collaboration with the supervisor or others, developing techniques and methodologies, or gaining knowledge of scientific or scholarly ideas – as long as the objective is the student’s advancement towards education goals for the desired degree. Student stipends (awards) may not be associated to work-for-pay situations where there are assigned tasks and deliverables.
* Understand and respect that research and teaching assistantships (RA and TA positions) are an employment category and provides a student with payment for work performed. While RAs and TAs may provide a student with valuable research, scholarly or work experience, the activity is not intended to advance the student’s own research/thesis, or progress towards a degree.
* Respect the McGill Policy that in order to maintain full-time status, the graduate student should not work more than 180 hours per term over 15 weeks with 12 hours per week.

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| **Signatures** | | |
| By signing below the student and supervisor(s) acknowledge they have reviewed and discussed the information in the EBOH Letter Of Understanding. This document will take effect once the EBOH Supervisor Nomination form has been approved by the Department. | | |
| Student: | | Date: |
| Proposed Supervisor: | | Date: |
| Proposed Co-supervisor: | | Date: |
|  | |
| **Office Use Only** | |
| Date of approval of Supervisor Nomination Form: | | |