

Regulations on Graduate Student Supervision

1. Principles
 - 1.1. Supervision is a recognized aspect of the academic duty of teaching.
 - 1.2. Supervision involves responsibilities on the part of both the supervisor and supervisee.
2. Supervisors and Supervisory Committees
 - 2.1. Although procedures and timeframes for choosing supervisors and supervisory committees may vary across programs, they must be consistent within a particular program and must be made clear to students. Units should consider the availability of student support, research facilities, space, and availability of potential supervisors in determining the number of students admitted into the program.
 - 2.2. Graduate supervision is recognized as an integral part of the academic responsibility of professors in academic units where supervision is the normal practice, and must be considered in the allocation of workload, as should the teaching of graduate courses.
 - 2.3. Thesis supervisors must be chosen from full-time tenure-track or tenured academic staff, or ranked contract academic staff who have research as part of their duties. Supervisors should have competence in the student's proposed area of research. When a thesis supervisor retires or resigns from the University, they cannot act as sole supervisors but may serve as co-supervisors, with the unit's and GPS's consent.
 - 2.4. Emeritus Professors may not act as sole supervisors but may serve as co-supervisors, with the unit's and GPS's consent.
 - 2.5. Adjunct Professors may not act as sole supervisors but may serve as co-supervisors, with the unit's and GPS's approval. After approval, a letter of agreement, signed by the co-supervisor and the supervisee, must be submitted to GPS. If problems arise, the McGill supervisor will be held accountable to McGill policies and regulations.
 - 2.6. The academic unit must ensure continuity of appropriate supervision when a student is separated from a supervisor – for example, when the supervisor is on sabbatical, leaves McGill, or retires.
 - 2.7. PhD students must have a supervisory committee consisting of at least one faculty member in addition to the supervisor(s). The supervisory committee must provide, on a regular basis, guidance and constructive feedback on the student's research ([Graduate Student Research Progress Tracking](#)).
 - 2.8. GPS strongly recommends that all parties engaged in supervisory roles sign a [letter of understanding](#) with each supervisee.
 - 2.9. The Chair of the academic unit should ensure that procedures are in place to address serious disagreements that may arise, for example, between a student and a supervisor or between a supervisor and committee members. Such procedures should involve a neutral mediator, such as the Graduate Program Director, who will ensure that all sides of a dispute are heard before any decision is made. If the issue cannot be resolved at the unit level, then an Associate Dean from Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies should be contacted.
3. Orientation
 - 3.1. Supervisees: Graduate students must participate, before registration, in a mandatory online orientation that includes sections on supervisee responsibilities.
 - 3.2. Supervisors: Professors who have not yet engaged in graduate supervision at McGill are required to participate in a supervisory orientation approved by GPS. Professors who have not supervised for 5 or more years must meet with their Chairs to determine if such orientation is necessary.

Legislative History:

Senate - Approved: September 17, 2003

Senate - Amended: October 22, 2014

Senate - Amended: March 23, 2016