

## **Guidelines Regarding Supervision**

Supervision is central to educating doctoral students to become high quality research scholars. Responsibility for supervision is primarily with the supervisor(s), supported by the supervisory committee. Overriding policy regarding supervisors and supervisory committees is set by the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) in Section 8.1 of the Graduate Program Manual (<https://www.ualberta.ca/graduate-studies/about/graduate-program-manual/section-8-supervision-oral-examinations-and-program-completion/8-1-supervision-and-supervisory-committees>). These guidelines are prepared to highlight important matters for the PhD Program in Business.

### Timing of Supervisor and Supervisory Committee Appointments

Every doctoral student must have a supervisor, although a student can have more than one. Students who do not have a supervisor cannot continue to be registered within the PhD program. When recommending admission to an applicant, each department in the Business PhD Program accepts the obligation to supervise the applicant when s/he enters the program. The initial supervisor shall normally be identified in the offer letter to the student, and this appointment will have been based on consultation among the student, the faculty representative in the student's proposed specialization, and the Associate Dean of the Business PhD Program. If this is not possible, an interim academic advisor should be appointed by the department. Supervisor(s) must be appointed within the first 12 months of the student's program following the procedures approved by the Dean of the Business Faculty and submitted to FGSR. Final approval is given by FGSR.

Every doctoral student must have a supervisory committee of at least three members, including all supervisors, by the end of the first year of the doctoral program and well in advance of the candidacy examination. The committee must be approved by the Associate Dean of the Business PhD Program and FGSR.

### Eligibility for Appointment

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 Business 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.

Supervisory committee members serve as *ex officio* members of the students' candidacy and final examination committees. As such, they must be qualified for these committees by being active in the student's research area or bringing relevant expertise to the committee.

#### Responsibilities of the Supervisor(s) and Supervisory Committee

There are a variety of styles that can be used when supervising doctoral students. These range from laissez faire, where it is the student's responsibility to advance their research and the supervisor responds to student requests, to highly directive and structured, where the supervisor sets clear, regular goals for the student. The supervisory relationship can be enhanced when supervisors and students are aware of their preferred styles and work out in advance how they will work together.

It is the responsibility of the supervisor(s), and the supervisory committee where applicable, to:

- (a) Guide the student in setting and modifying, if necessary, the student's program plan, including courses to be taken, teaching and teaching assistant requirements, research

- assistant requirements, and proposed dates of all examinations. This should be done in the first month after the student's entry to program. The teaching element of the program should be developed in consultation with the student's teaching mentor. The program plan must be approved by the faculty representative in the student's area of specialization and the Associate Dean of the Business PhD Program.
- (b) Inform the student about program requirements and regulations. These include academic ethics, research integrity, research assistantships, and teaching requirements. The [Checklist for Supervisors' First Meeting with Graduate Students](#) should be used to guide this conversation.
  - (c) Encourage and support the student in applying for awards, producing high quality research papers, and attending and presenting at major research conferences.
  - (d) Monitor the quality of the student's performance and inform the student of this assessment. This assessment should be based on the program plan specified in (a) above. The assessment must be formally communicated once a year to the area faculty representative in the student's proposed specialization and the Associate Dean of the Business PhD Program. If the performance is assessed as below the required standard, especially not maintaining adequate progress as identified in the program plan, the supervisor should immediately report this to the faculty representative in the student's area of specialization and the Associate Dean of the Business PhD Program.
  - (e) The supervisory committee must have a formal meeting at least once a year with the student, and this meeting should include a review of the student's program plan to ensure the student is making progress toward completion. Annual supervisory committee evaluation forms must be completed and submitted to the Business PhD Program office at the end of May. After the completion of the comprehensive examination, it is good practice for the supervisory committee and the student to meet at least three times each year.
  - (f) Discuss with the student issues around intellectual property rights and obligations, both generally and in relation to the specifics of joint research work arising from RA duties and the student's own research work.
  - (g) Help the student to obtain the best possible placement when the student and supervisory committee agree that the student is ready to seek employment.

If a supervisor will be away for more than two months, s/he shall provide in writing to the student and Associate Dean of the Business PhD Program, arrangements to provide satisfactory supervision during the period of leave. Also, the supervisor shall nominate a member, for approval by the Associate Dean of the Business PhD Program, to act on his/her behalf. If a student feels that arrangements have not been made to provide satisfactory supervision, the student should appeal in turn to the Associate Dean of the Business PhD Program and the Dean of FGSR.

### Responsibilities of the Student

It is in the student's best interest to be aware of regulations related to his/her program of study. The student must inform the supervisor regularly about progress. The student must also provide the supervisor with an annual report for distribution to the supervisory committee, the area representative in the student's department, and the Associate Dean of the Business PhD Program. The student shall also provide an annual report specifically about their summer research. The online FGSR graduate program manual has more information on graduate students' responsibilities. In general, students are expected to maintain academic standards and performance specified for the program.

### Resolving Conflicts

Students who feel that they are receiving unsatisfactory supervision should normally first express their concerns to their supervisor. If issues are not resolved, then the student should discuss the problem with the faculty representative in the student's specialization and, if necessary, the Associate Dean of the Business PhD Program, who will in turn discuss the student's concerns with the supervisor in an attempt to resolve the matter. If the issue cannot be resolved and a new supervisor is to be appointed, any recommendation for an appointment shall first be made through consultation between the student, the faculty representative in the student's area of specialization, and the Associate Dean of the Business PhD Program.