Ethics and Scientific Integrity Day: Averting conflict and knowing where to go for help

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What is the Office of the Student Ombuds?

- We offer **advice and support** on academic and disciplinary issues.

- We are **advocates for fairness and equity**, working to strengthen the collegial relationship between students and the university.

- We act as an **impartial third party** to any conflict or dispute involving students and the University.

- We are a **source of information** on University regulations and policies.

- Our service is **confidential and free**.

- We are **independent** from the faculties and from the student associations (GSA and SU).

- We are **accessible** to all students (undergraduate, graduate, and post-doctoral) and located in an accessible area.
Understanding expectations to avoid conflict: Things you should discuss with your supervisor early in your program.

1. How frequently do you expect to meet with your graduate students?

2. How many hours of work per week do you expect from a graduate student?

3. What is your preferred mode of communication? (i.e. in person or via e-mail)
Things you should discuss with your supervisor (continued)

4. What are your timeline expectations for completion of the various stages of my program?

5. How available will you be to meet, discuss, answer emails?

6. What are your expectations in terms of publications and conference presentations?
Tips to diffuse conflict

• Deal with problems early – do not let them persist or worsen.

• Deal with problems appropriately – do not start by calling the president of the university.

• Talk to your supervisor openly and directly.

• Do not assume your supervisor knows that you feel there is a problem.

• Act professionally (even when the other person does not).

• Preserve the supervisory relationship whenever possible.
Where to go for help when things go wrong? First empower yourself with information

The Calendar, the Graduate Program Manual, the Code of Student Behaviour, and the GSA AEGS Collective Agreement:

• Outline the steps, procedures and policies for graduate programs
• Spell out the roles, rights and responsibilities for supervisors, students (including as teaching and research assistants), and departments and faculties
• The Calendar is found online at:  
  http://www.registrarsoffice.ualberta.ca/Calendar.aspx
• The Graduate Program Manual is found on the FGSR webpage at:  
  http://www.gradstudies.ualberta.ca/gpm.aspx
• The Code of Student Behaviour is found at:  
• Your GSA 2014-2016 AEGS Collective Agreement (for TAs and RAs) is found at:  
Getting Help

Seek assistance from a third party if you can’t resolve the conflict:

- Graduate Coordinator
- Department Chair (when Graduate Coordinator is unavailable)
- Graduate Ombudsperson
- FGSR Associate Deans

Other Resources

- The Graduate Students’ Association (GSA) (labour issues and advocacy)
- The Office of Safe Disclosure and Human Rights
- International Student Services (visa and study permit issues)
- The Student Success Centre and the Centre for Writers (writing and other academic guidance)
- Counselling and Clinical Services (Mental health assistance)
- Student Legal Services of Edmonton (legal advice in non-criminal matters)
My Contact Information

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