

## The Doctoral Supervisor: Roles and Expectations

The main role of the supervisor is to provide guidance, instruction and encouragement regarding the research activities of the doctoral student. Supervisors are sufficiently familiar with the field of research to provide exemplary guidance and/or have a willingness to gain that familiarity before agreeing to act as supervisor. Supervisors are expected to engage in the following activities with Doctoral Students:

**REGULAR CONSULTATION<sup>1</sup>:** Regular consultation may be defined as:

- Getting to know doctoral student, establishing clear and realistic expectations, and modes of communication
- Establishing a supervisory committee
- Consulting regularly to discuss progress at different stages of the program
- Outlining, early on, the requirements of ethics approval and discussion about academic integrity
- Choosing externals for the Portfolio and the Dissertation defence
- Assisting doctoral students in being aware of program requirements, deadlines, sources of funding, dissertation format and style, et cetera;

**FEEDBACK FOR REVISIONS:** Feedback for revisions may be defined as:

- Providing timely feedback on written and creative work according to stages of work.
- Responding in a timely and thorough manner to written work with constructive suggestions for improvement.
- Explaining what first drafts should look like.
- Helping doctoral students learn the voice or style associated with the discipline.
- Protecting doctoral students from arbitrary changes in the research direction (at the discretion of the supervisor).
- Discussing the feasibility of the student's plan to ensure timely degree completion.

**AUTHORSHIP & INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY:** Authorship and intellectual property may be defined as:

- Discussing with doctoral students one's co-authorship philosophy and expectations.
- Discussing the intellectual property (IP) matters that may arise in the course of studies, such as authorship in publications, order of authors, ownership of data and research results, and patent rights.
- Acknowledging appropriately the contributions of the doctoral student in presentations and in published material, in many cases via joint authorship (scholarly credit).

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:** Professional development may be defined as:

- Suggesting courses or experiences that doctoral students need to improve their skill sets, knowledge and attitudes or to gain broader exposure to the field and to the research process.
- Clarifying one's willingness, or not, to help doctoral students prepare submissions to journals and conferences.
- Upholding and transmit the highest professional standards of research, scholarship and integrity.
- Encouraging doctoral students to make presentations of research results within the University and to outside scholarly or professional bodies, as appropriate.
- Encouraging doctoral students to get involved in the life of the department/school/faculty and the University.
- Encouraging doctoral students to participate in activities that enhance their academic experience.

**CONFLICT RESOLUTION:** Conflict resolution may be defined as:

- Endeavouring to achieve consensus and resolve differences when there is a conflict of advice or expectations on the part of the supervisor and the committee member(s).

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<sup>1</sup> For further detail: See pages 9-11 of *Handbook on Graduate Student Supervision: Nurturing and Managing the Supervisor and doctoral student relationship* (2014)