

Dual supervision guidelines

In case of dual supervision of a graduate student, the main co-supervisor is entitled “Supervisor” and the secondary supervisor is “Co-supervisor”. It is expected that the experience and expertise of the Supervisor and Co-supervisor are complimentary (for instance theoretical vs. experimental or field A vs. field B). It is expected that the Supervisor is the main contributor to the design of the thesis project, and that his or her expertise is critical and absolutely necessary for the research.

Both supervisors should sign a written agreement for co-supervision prior to an offer of admission. The agreement should contain the planned contributions from each supervisor including the student stipend support and project costs. If these plans change an amendment to the agreement should be made in writing and signed by both supervisors. The amendment may include a reversal of the Supervisor/Co-Supervisor roles due to changes in resource contribution. In the case where the Co-Supervisor decides to not continue supporting the project, the Supervisor is solely responsible for the student’s thesis work.

It is prudent to hold regular meetings involving the supervisor, Co-supervisor and the student, with written minutes generated by the student and approved by both supervisors. In the case of conflicting opinions between the supervisors on the scientific direction of the thesis project (e.g. project ideas, interpretation of results, future direction, etc.) that cannot be resolved between the supervisors, the supervisory committee should be consulted through an extra supervisory committee meeting to try and obtain a resolution. If the supervisory committee cannot resolve the conflict, then the Graduate Program Director should be consulted, and the procedures in section 7, “Conflict resolution,” of the Graduate Supervision policy of the Yeates School of Graduate Studies should be used. The aim of any resolution should be to protect the student from being adversely affected by the conflict, either personally or academically. Any changes to the supervision roles should be finalized by an amendment to the original written agreement that is signed by all parties and filed with the Program.