

## GUIDE TO BEST PRACTICES, ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES – SUPERVISORY RELATIONSHIPS AT THE GRADUATE LEVEL

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# GUIDE TO BEST PRACTICES, ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES: SUPERVISORY RELATIONSHIPS AT THE GRADUATE LEVEL

Are you a master's (thesis option) or doctoral student, a thesis director, a member of a thesis advisory committee or head of a graduate studies program? This document was created for you. You will find best practices and useful resources related to supervisory relationships at the graduate level.

Good supervision is at the very heart of success for all students and, although students are responsible for their academic progress and success, they will need resource people to help them in their efforts and guide them in research requirements. Additionally, a mutual understanding of the expectations of the parties involved is essential to prevent misunderstandings. The supervisory relationship is based on healthy collaboration between the student and thesis director(s), with mutual and complementary rights and responsibilities.

These best practices do not replace the policies, regulations nor collective agreements of the University of Ottawa (UO), and do not have legal value. If there is ambiguity between the statements contained herein and any policies, rules or regulations of the UO, the latter shall prevail.

## PREAMBLE

The Ontario Graduate Council has published a document on the principles for graduate supervision at Ontario's universities ([Principles for Graduate Supervision at Ontario's Universities, published : June 26 2023](#)). This document is the result of a collaboration between several Ontario institutions and is intended to reflect best practices at the provincial level. These best practices guide is a version adapted for the UO.

**This guide does not apply to master's students with a major research paper or project.** Please refer to [Academic Regulation C-8 Major Research Paper](#).

## VALUES

The University of Ottawa shares the values cited on the first page of the document on the *Principles for Graduate Supervision at Ontario's Universities* produced by the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies. In short, all parties responsible for the supervision of graduate students are required to adhere to the fundamental values of higher education cited in the document as well as the following values:

- 1) Collaboration: relationships between students, thesis directors and thesis advisory committees must be focused on collaboration, with the aim of sharing and developing knowledge.
- 2) Respect: Interactions between students, faculty and staff must always be characterized by respect and consideration for others.

- 3) Open communication: students and thesis directors must always strive to communicate in an open and transparent manner.
- 4) Inclusion: Diversity of perspectives and ideas is essential to creating new research ideas. The supervisory environment must encourage expressions of diversity from all parties.
- 5) Integrity: Maintaining high ethical standards is essential in the supervisory relationship. Students and faculty must respect ethical standards related to research, their profession, and the treatment of each other.

## A. Students: BEFORE starting a graduate program with thesis writing

- Before applying for admission to a thesis program, students must ensure that they have:
  - examined their academic and professional goals realistically;
  - researched the targeted program;
  - become acquainted with the regulations and requirements of the desired program in order to satisfy them in a timely manner;
  - understood the yearly time commitment dedicated to thesis work (i.e., full-time enrolment in a program is equivalent to a full-time job, where thesis work will involve a large portion of that time);
  - noted the financial obligations for planning purposes for the duration of the program;
  - Read the documents [Essential Requirements – Master’s Thesis](#), [Essential Requirements – Doctoral Thesis and Essential Requirements – Comprehensive Exam \(Doctorate\)](#) in order to become familiar with the requirements of these activities.
- Students must ensure that they engage in the field of study that excites them sufficiently to sustain their interest throughout their studies. They will be able to determine this by speaking with fellow students and faculty members conducting research in the same area. The information gathering stage should be completed before contacting a potential thesis director.

### Identifying a Thesis Director

- The student must identify a thesis director to supervise their thesis project. Graduate supervision is one of the most important aspects of graduate studies since this person plays a key role in guiding the research. Note that, in some programs, the selection of the thesis director takes place during the admission process in consultation with the Vice-Dean and/or admission committee. Please confirm the relevant process with your intended program.
- A professor is not required to agree to supervise the work of a student if it seems to the professor that the collaboration will not be fruitful due to a lack of compatibility or, insufficient resources.
- A student could, in some cases, have more than one thesis director. The mention of a thesis director in this document implies the possibility of co-supervision.
- [Information to collect before contacting a potential thesis director.](#)
- [Professors, by research interests.](#)
- [Professors, lists via faculty websites.](#) Choose the faculty of your interest and visit their page that lists the faculty members.

### Following your Meeting with a Potential Thesis Director, Ask Yourself the Following Questions:

- Am I interested in this professor's research and the ideas expressed in their seminars, publications and conferences?
- Do we have common research principles and ideals?
- Do I believe this professor would be interested in my ideas?
- Do I know the professor's academic qualifications?

These questions are important and will ensure a good foundation for the supervisory relationship. It is also important that you think about pragmatic questions, such as:

- Will this professor have enough time to supervise my work?
- Will they report on my progress in a timely manner?
- Do they understand the level of supervision I need?
- Is their supervisory style right for me? (See management styles in the frame below)
- Would I be comfortable working with this person for my thesis?
- Can they provide me with adequate research infrastructure?
- Can they offer me funding opportunities in the form of research grants or help guide my search for financial support?
- Will the funding I will receive be sufficient for the duration of my studies?
- Will they give me the opportunity to participate in networking opportunities (e.g.: conferences) and publications?
- [Questions to ask after the meeting with the potential thesis director](#)

### Management Style of Thesis Directors

We generally notice four supervisory styles, all with advantages and disadvantages. Ideally, thesis directors will adapt their way of supervising to the learning needs of students throughout their academic career. Note that several interpersonal factors such as the expectations of thesis directors, their personality, or their way of working can influence their way of supervising research and the completion of a thesis.

**Directive style:** Directs students through each stage of the research until the writing is completed. Students are followed step by step and meet frequently.

**Advisor style:** Directs students when developing the project, acts as an advisor during the intermediate stages and becomes more directive again during writing.

**Guiding style:** Directs more closely during the initial stages of research, then gradually becomes less directive as students find their way.

**Non-directive style:** Allows students to be independent throughout the project. Generally, contacts are less frequent.

Note: If you work in an environment with several people, or in a research team, and you are in contact with colleagues (e.g.: senior graduate students, postdocs) acting as mentors or exercising certain supervision responsibilities, it is your responsibility to validate with your thesis director any directive that will influence your research career. Peer interactions are strongly encouraged. However, your supervisory relationship is with your thesis director who is, in the end, the one responsible for supervision.

## B. STUDENTS

### THE BEST PRACTICES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS ARE:

#### Know your obligations, roles and responsibilities

- Be duly enrolled in your courses or research activities each term.
- Complete an annual progress report.  
(Ref. : [C-4 Academic Standing for Graduate Studies | About us \(uottawa.ca\)](#))
- Respect the policies, academic regulations, university regulations and those of your program.  
(Ref. : [Policies and Regulations | About us \(uottawa.ca\)](#) )
- Know and respect the regulations and the principles of ethics and responsible conduct.  
(Ref. : [Policy 115: Responsible Conduct of Research](#))  
(Ref. : [Policy 130 - Student Rights and Responsible Conduct | About us \(uottawa.ca\)](#))  
(Ref. : [Research data management | Library \(uottawa.ca\)](#))
- Use resources responsibly.
- Contribute to maintaining a safe environment and show respect towards others.
- Demonstrate academic integrity (honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility) in all aspects of their roles and responsibilities.
- Respect cultural diversity and demonstrate intercultural curiosity.
- Update your personal contact details in your University Student Center (uoZone).
- Complete your annual progress report.
- Complete the checklist form in section H of this document with your thesis director(s). Update the form on a yearly basis, or as needed.

#### Plan your tasks and activities

Plan your path together with your thesis director.

- Quickly clarify expectations of the supervisory relationship. Some discussion points:
  - identifying learning accommodation needs
  - the supervisory style
  - the frequency of meetings and the development of a schedule
  - Intellectual property
  - the material resources necessary and available to complete the research
  - the method of operation (deadline for submitting corrections, making appointments, etc.)
  - constraints on both sides (e.g.: prolonged absence for sabbatical, stay abroad, etc.);
- Establish a detailed research plan and a realistic timeline and maintain relevant documentation  
(Ref.: [C-4 Academic Standing for Graduate Studies | About us \(uottawa.ca\)](#))
- Discuss with your thesis director the amount of time you plan to devote to coursework, thesis work, and other relevant tasks (e.g., professional training).
- Act on this plan and revise the plan as necessary (e.g., responsibilities often change at the start of a new term, with new courses and professional training opportunities).
- Determine the courses and other training to follow in relation to your program, previous training and professional intentions.
- Make time with your peers, find opportunities to collaborate with your peers. Do not underestimate the importance of maintaining sustained contact with peers to counter isolation.
- Prioritize networking because publications cannot replace professional interactions and exchanges with colleagues, faculty, and staff.

### Develop financial strategies

- Establish a financial strategy for the duration of your studies.
- Find out about the different sources of financing. Explore possible sources of funding from non-profit or government organizations or other organizations directly or indirectly related to the field of research.  
(Ref.: Online scholarship application tool: [Applying for scholarships and awards | Study \(uottawa.ca\)](#))
- Apply to various scholarship competitions from the UO. Plan according to the deadlines of the various competitions. Allow enough time to ensure you have the most competitive application possible.
- Respect the standards and deadlines of funding organizations for obtaining a scholarship or grant.

### Communicate efficiently

- Ensure effective communication with your thesis director. Collaboratively establish a climate of trust and mutual respect allowing open communication.
- Maintain regular contact with your thesis director and respond within reasonable (pre-established) deadlines to your questions or comments.
- Meet regularly with your thesis director, keep a report of the discussions, and take into account the directives or corrections proposed.
- Allocate reasonable (pre-established) deadlines for your thesis director to provide feedback.
- Quickly inform your thesis director of any circumstances that may interfere with your detailed research plan.
- Discuss possibilities for disseminating your research results.

### Are you planning to work remotely (if permitted)? How to plan and communicate remotely with your thesis director

- Make sure it is possible to work remotely in your program via discussions with your thesis director and the director of your graduate program. There are university programs and regulations that limit telework in certain cases (e.g., in person courses, most teaching assistantship positions). Identify reasonable and achievable tasks and/or goals.
- Discuss with your thesis director how you will remotely access the resources you need to continue moving forward with your research. Ensure IT supports are in place to access data/resources remotely.
- Take appropriate [steps to secure your data/information](#) so that it is not easily accessible by any third party.
- Check that your thesis director has your current contact details and share them with other members of your research group if necessary.
- Familiarize yourself with reliable and recommended telecommunications platforms at the UO so that you can connect on time and without technical difficulties.
- Avoid isolation.

### Plan your professional development

- Discuss your career plan and professional development needs with your thesis director. Your professional development plan can have two components, academic and non-academic, to consider the fact that the majority of those starting graduate studies will have a career outside of academia.
- Prepare a skills' development plan in line with your professional goals.
- Know the resources available to you to develop your transversal skills with a view to an optimal professional integration, whether it is a career in the industry or outside the academic environment.

- Use relevant resources and follow the training provided to better equip yourself for integration into the workplace.

[Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies Transferable Skills Program \(TSP\)](#)

#### Be committed and ensure your well-being

- Establish a dedicated workspace and create a work routine by identifying reasonable and achievable tasks/goals. (Ref. : [S.M.A.R.T. Objectives](#) )
- Balance your professional and personal life. Stay connected with friends, family, colleagues, and community members to limit feelings of isolation, which can negatively impact your personal well-being. Plan times to socialize.
- Take breaks and build downtime into your schedule.  
(Ref.: [Pomodoro technique](#))
- Join support groups or research communities to help with feelings of isolation. Participate in conferences and workshops.  
(Ref.: [Writing cafés | University of Ottawa \(uottawa.ca\)](#))
- Your mental and physical well-being is important. Use UO services and resources necessary for your mental and physical well-being.  
Ref.: [Health and wellness | Campus life \(uottawa.ca\)](#)  
Ref.: [Mental health and wellness | About us \(uottawa.ca\)](#)  
Ref. : [Student Health and Wellness Centre - Mental Health | Campus life \(uottawa.ca\)](#)  
Ref.: [Immediate support | Campus life \(uottawa.ca\)](#)  
Ref.: [Index des ressources pour étudiant\(e\)s - Santé et mieux-être | Vie sur le campus \(uottawa.ca\)](#)  
Ref.: [Athletics and recreation | Campus life \(uottawa.ca\)](#) )

Note: Your autonomy and ability to take charge of your career path are key factors that have a direct impact on your success in graduate studies. The success of your research project is not only determined by the various types of educational, social, and financial support that the UO offers you, but also by your interests, your energy, and your motivation, as well as by the scope of your research, your thesis subject, and the quality of your research.

## C. THESIS DIRECTOR BEST PRACTICES ARE:

#### BEFORE accepting the candidate under your direction

- Discuss with the candidate your philosophy of supervision of graduate students.
- Discuss with the candidate your performance expectations for the students you supervise. This can include challenges with research, copyright, course selection, scholarship applications, and even how to use your time.
- Encourage candidates to express their expectations for the supervisory relationship as well as for potential research projects.
- Ask the candidate about their career aspirations, to better understand their needs.
- If possible, offer to put them in contact with your current students to show them around the campus and/or laboratories.
- Read the candidates' reference letters before making your decision. If these letters are not yet available, it may be a good idea to contact one or two references provided by the candidate.
- If you are agreeing to co-supervise a student, you and the other thesis director need to clearly determine your respective active roles related to the thesis supervision and communicate this information to the student.

### Know your obligations, roles and responsibilities

- Supervise and support your student throughout their program, including the choice of courses, the formulation of a research project and the preparation of a plan for the evolution of the thesis with a view to the final submission.
- Stay on the lookout for any changes in rules, procedures, policies and/or regulations that may have an impact on the progress of your student.
- Stay on the lookout for training for faculty or updates offered by the [Teaching and Learning Support Service \(TLSS\)](#).
- Ensure that the research environment is safe, healthy, and free from harassment, discrimination, and conflict.
- Complete the annual progress report for your student.
- Complete the checklist form in section H of this document with your student(s). Update the form on a yearly basis, or as needed.

### Support the student in planning their academic path

- Discuss course choices and research activities with your student.
- Refer your student to the appropriate UO services.
  - Ref.: [Administration and services | About us \(uottawa.ca\)](#)
  - Ref.: [A-Z index of IT services | About us \(uottawa.ca\)](#)
  - Ref.: [Student resources index – Health and wellness | Campus life \(uottawa.ca\)](#)
  - Ref.: [Contact | University of Ottawa \(uottawa.ca\)](#)
- Help your student refine a relevant research topic.
- Meet with your student regularly, according to a schedule defined together.
- Provide feedback in a timely manner, within pre-established deadlines. These deadlines should be created in discussion with the student and will depend on the amount and type of feedback required.
- Discuss with your student their research progress and adjust the objectives for the current year. Document the objectives established for the following year at least once a year using the [Progress Report form](#). Carry out the required follow-ups.
- Participate in the selection of members of the thesis advisory committee (if applicable) and in the selection of members of the thesis jury.

### Support the student in their search for financial support

- Advise in the preparation of scholarship applications.
- Write relevant reference letters that demonstrate your student's research skills and potential, experience, and achievements.
- Inform students about any non-traditional funding (e.g.: MITACS) that you are made aware of via the University or colleagues (e.g.: professional associations, non-governmental organizations, charities, etc.).
- Offer funds or explore the possibility of offering funds from your research funds.
- Finance professional development activities such as participation in workshops or conferences, if resources permit.

### Communicate efficiently

- Set clear standards and expectations.
- Review and provide constructive criticism, in a timely manner, on submitted drafts, thesis and/or publications and on research techniques and methods.
- Hold regular meetings with students.

- Notify your student of any prolonged absence and arrange for a replacement to supervise the research work if necessary.

#### Supervising students remotely (if permitted)

- If your students must work or conduct research remotely, do everything possible to maintain the consultation/meeting/report schedule you have in place. Adjustments to account for time zones may be necessary in certain situations.
- Expectations for what can reasonably be accomplished remotely should be clearly communicated. Previous objectives/steps could be reviewed and adjusted accordingly.
- Discuss possible impacts on the activities and deadlines of collaborators or external partners, as well as any travel planned as part of the research. Develop strategies with the student to deal with them.
- If distance brings challenges and if the situation is temporary, find other research-related tasks that can be done (e.g., literature reviews, draft chapters/articles, data analyses) by the student.
  - *Example: Faculty of Medicine: Remote Supervision of Graduate Students and Postdoctoral Fellows - <https://www.uottawa.ca/faculty-medicine/graduate-postdoctoral/professors-hub/remote-supervision-graduate-students-postdoctoral-fellows>*

#### Advising the student on their professional development

- Play a mentoring role throughout the studies and help your student in their professional development. Inform them of the resources available internally.
  - [Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies Transferable Skills Program \(TSP\)](#)
- Communicate information to your student about conferences and venues of interest for publications.

#### Being committed to your role as thesis director

- Must consider the supervision of a graduate student as a partnership.
- Treat your student fairly, inclusively, and equitably.
- To the extent possible, encourage research experiences where your student may have opportunities to expand their research activities through the production of presentations or scholarly publications.
- Help and advise your student when they are writing articles and their thesis.
- Respect cultural diversity and demonstrate intercultural curiosity.
- Recognize that there is a power difference between you as the thesis director and your student and show respect for their rights as student.
- If necessary, consult the members of the thesis advisory committee or the director of the graduate program.

## D. THESIS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The thesis advisory committee (when there is one) are the people, alongside the thesis director(s), who guide the student from the start of their research until the final submission of the thesis. It is established by the thesis director(s) in consultation with the student and is approved by the Graduate Program Director. The committee should consist of members (experts) knowledgeable in the areas important to the research topic.

#### Roles and responsibilities of thesis advisory committees

- Guide the student from the start of their research until the final submission of the thesis.
- Provide advice to the student on planning their thesis and on their research and writing work.

- Make yourself available to discuss ideas or to offer advice on other matters related to the thesis and research.
- Be part of the jury (except for the thesis director), responsible for evaluating the thesis at the end of the course.

#### Meetings with the thesis advisory committee

The committee meets according to a schedule set by the committee itself, generally once a year, or as established by the program. Usually, it is up to the student to call the meetings. The student can request additional meetings as needed. Please note that official leaves on the part of a professor or the student may affect this schedule.

The thesis director, the graduate program director or the thesis advisory committee may request that meetings be convened at shorter intervals if the progress of the research work becomes a source of concern.

Example of a thesis advisory committee's agenda:

- Purpose of the meeting;
- Review of the points discussed during the previous meeting and progress made so far;
- Discussion and clarification of the topics to be covered, ideas and questions that arise;
- Next steps arising from the discussion;
- Establish the documents to be submitted before the next meeting and the deadlines for submitting documents.
- Agree on the date of the next meeting of the thesis advisory committee.

## E. THE ACADEMIC UNIT (SCHOOL OR DEPARTMENT)

#### Roles and responsibilities of academic units (schools or departments)

- Present clear objectives and concrete information regarding the structure of your program (e.g., overview of requirements, options, and deadlines).
- Define criteria for evaluating program requirements, including courses, comprehensive exams (if applicable), research activities and progress reports.
- Make available to all students the research interests of the faculty so that they can identify their thesis director in an informed manner.
- Develop and implement policies relating to financial support offered to students and communicate them well.
- Inform students of important deadlines that concern their academic record (e.g., external scholarship applications, submission of progress reports).
- In addition to thesis directors doing so, communicate information about conferences intended for graduate students.
- Monitor and evaluate student research progress at least once a year. Review and, if necessary, add comments to the student progress report form.
- Provide all new students with an orientation session.

Note: Graduate studies program directors and the office of graduate studies office help academic units meet these roles and responsibilities.

## F. SITUATIONS OF CONFLICT (RELATIONAL DISPUTES)

Occasionally, the mentoring relationship faces challenges. A conflict can arise when an action, gesture or word is perceived with an intention of aggression or a lack of respect from the other towards oneself. When such a situation arises, avoid responding out of emotion, denigrating the person, or taking revenge. These reactions are undesirable and should be avoided. Also, you should not suffer in silence. We encourage the following steps to resolve conflicts in the supervisory relationship. Some examples of conflict are: rare or absent communications, lack of repeated follow-ups, lack of supervision, hurtful comments, personal criticism that gives the feeling of harming the person instead of being exclusively interested in the work, perception of abuse of power, etc.

### **STEPS TO RESOLVE A CONFLICTUAL SITUATION**

The steps listed should be followed gradually, but we recognize that some situations will not allow this. If you or someone you know is experiencing discrimination, harassment or sexual violence, you can contact the Human Rights Office directly ([To Book an appointment | About us \(uottawa.ca\)](#)).

At any time during the process below, any party may consult the Office of the Ombudsperson. The Office offers an independent, impartial, and confidential service to all members of the university community to help them find fair and equitable solutions (<https://www.uottawa.ca/about-us/office-ombudsperson> ).

During all stages of dispute resolution, the student may be assisted by a person of their choice. The student's use of dispute resolution provisions has no impact on their grades or their academic career.

#### **Step One: Discussion between the parties involved**

Anyone experiencing relationship conflict should first attempt to resolve the matter amicably between the parties involved.

If possible, we should curb any impulsive reactions and take a step back to think more objectively about the situation. Do not wait for the conflict to resolve itself by the simple passage of time, because it risks escalating and being difficult to resolve.

To address the disagreement in your relationship, do not hesitate to ask direct questions, but formulated in a positive way to show that there is no doubt about good intentions. These questions will naturally lead into discussion of the relationship itself. Here is an example question: How do you think we could work more efficiently?

#### **Step two: Discussion with the program manager**

Note: If the thesis director is also the director of graduate studies programs, the student can contact the management of their academic unit.

If the dispute is not resolved at step one, the student and/or thesis director may make written representations to the director of the graduate program. The latter could proceed as follows:

- Invite the parties to a meeting to discuss the perceived or real conflict in order to obtain more information;  
Or
- If a single meeting including all parties is not possible, the program director will meet with the parties individually to obtain more information.
  - Subsequently, the program director will invite the parties to a joint meeting to continue the discussion;
- The program director will guide the discussion to find solutions to resolve the conflict and identify a list of potential resources;
- If the program director judges that the dispute falls under another university regulation, they will advise the parties on the steps to follow.

### Step three: Discussion with the Vice-Dean

If the dispute is not resolved in step two, the student and/or thesis director may make written representations to the Vice-Dean of Graduate Studies (or their equivalent) of the faculty where the student is enrolled. The Vice-Dean will consider the previous steps taken to attempt to resolve the dispute and will request details from the parties involved. The latter could proceed as follows:

- Invite the parties to a meeting to discuss the perceived or real conflict in order to obtain more information;  
Or
- If a single meeting including all parties is not possible, the Vice-Dean will meet with the parties individually to obtain more information;
  - Subsequently, they will invite the parties to a joint meeting to continue the discussion;
- The Vice-Dean will guide the discussion to find solutions to resolve the conflict and identify a list of potential resources;
- If the Vice-Dean determines that a solution to resolve the dispute is not possible or desirable to ensure positive supervision that promotes success, they may terminate the supervision relationship.
- If the Vice-Dean judges that the dispute falls under another university regulation, they will advise the parties on the steps to follow.

### **TERMINATION OF THE SUPERVISORY RELATIONSHIP**

If the supervisory relationship must be terminated, it is the joint responsibility of the graduate program director and the student to identify a new thesis director. If a thesis advisory committee is in place, supervision of the student's research can continue with one or more members of this committee, with their agreement. If it becomes impossible to find a new thesis director, the student will have to withdraw from the program.

### **AVAILABLE RESOURCES – RELATIONSHIP DISPUTES**

Confidential help resources exist for students and thesis directors when problems arise in their relationship (inspired 4.2 : [Policy 130 - Student Rights and Responsible Conduct | About us \(uottawa.ca\)](#))

- [Human Rights Office](#): to learn about the UO Regulations that affect their rights and obtain information on the resources, support, and services available to them based on their needs and circumstances.
- Student associations officially recognized by the UO offer students services aimed at promoting their rights, defending their interests, and keeping them informed (such as the [Student Rights Center](#)).
- Students and faculty can turn to the [Office of the Ombudsperson](#) regarding UO Regulations and to discuss issues affecting members of the University Community in the context of graduate studies' supervisory relationships.

## G. IMPORTANCE OF CONTINUOUS GRADUATE STUDIES' SUPERVISION

Although the student is responsible for their academic progress and success, they will need resource people to help them in their efforts and guide them in the mechanisms of the world of research. Consequently, a change of thesis director is generally only made in exceptional circumstances, for solid and unavoidable reasons (e.g., thesis director on extended leave of absence, retirement, severe conflict). In these cases, as discussed in the previous section, it is the joint responsibility of the graduate program director and the student to identify a new thesis director. If a thesis advisory committee is in place, supervision of the student's research can continue with one or more members of this committee, with their agreement. If it becomes impossible to find a new thesis director, the student will have to withdraw from the program.

## H. RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE IN SUPERVISION AND STUDENT EXCELLENCE

Some on-campus graduate programs give special recognition to excellence in graduate supervision. As a student, if you believe that your thesis director is a model to follow in terms of training and supervision, please contact the director of your graduate program to nominate your thesis director for such recognition. The acknowledgments section in theses also often reflects privileged relationships between the student and their thesis director.

As a thesis director, you must stay informed of the graduate student awards available for your program. Many academic units award prizes related, among other things, to student leadership in graduate studies, community involvement and research excellence. If your student excels in any of these areas, please nominate them for these awards. The University of Ottawa awards several prizes each year for the excellence of master's and doctoral theses.

[Appendix 1 – \(see document\)](#)

## GRADUATE SUPERVISION FORM: DISCUSSION POINTS FOR A HEALTHY WORKING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STUDENTS AND THESIS DIRECTORS (SUPERVISORS)