Faculty of Medicine Graduate Student – Mentorship Compact

This document outlines the rights and responsibilities of all individuals involved in the graduate programs within the Faculty of Medicine. The purpose of this document is to identify the expectations of all parties regarding best practices in the hope of achieving greater accountability, higher-quality education, and a better training experience for graduate students. All aspects of this document apply to both full and part-time graduate students.

The Faculty of Graduate Studies
The Faculty of Graduate studies (FGS) ensures that all graduate programs follow FGS Guidelines and Policies, maintaining an academic environment that is fair and equitable.

The Department
The Department Head of each department within the Faculty of Medicine ensures that the graduate program adheres to FGS guidelines and policies, as well as to their departmental supplementary regulations. The Graduate Chair of each department is responsible for acting as the liaison between the department and the FGS, notifying students and faculty of regulation or program changes, informing students of available professional development workshops and helping to orientate graduate students in the program. The graduate program is committed to providing students with a formal education in a specified field, including the skills required to function independently upon graduation. It is expected that individuals pursuing a graduate degree program take responsibility for their research, personal and professional development and conduct, in accordance with university policies.

Mentoring
A vital component of the graduate program is the establishment of a positive mentoring relationship between the student, supervisor, and advisory committee. The role of the supervisor and advisory committee is to assist the graduate student in achieving their academic goals, and teaching them the skills necessary to be successful in their future career.

Research Environment:
To ensure that students are working in an environment that values their contributions to research and the university, it is important to outline the rights that students possess while conducting their research within the graduate program. The training environment is designed to teach students the skills necessary to be successful in their future careers in science or otherwise.

1) Graduate students will spend a reasonable amount of time working on their research project (in the lab and at home) to ensure timely and efficient completion of their work.
2) Students are entitled to three weeks of vacation during the year, in addition to statutory holidays observed by the University of Manitoba.

3) Graduate students should be encouraged to secure, with the assistance of their supervisor, financial support through studentships and/or teaching assistant positions for the duration of their program. In the event that no external funding is acquired, a stipend may be provided in accordance with the department's guidelines. Payment guidelines and departmental minimums for students can be obtained from each department.

4) Supervisors and students shall not seek or maintain any improper personal relationship or agreement with one another that would directly or indirectly negatively impact the nature of the working relationship (ROASS 2009).

5) No preferential treatment shall be given to any particular student by their supervisor that places other students working under the same supervisor at a disadvantage.

6) If available, students will be provided a study space and computer access to carry out research and studies relating to their program. Students will use these computers in accordance with University regulations.

**Student Good-Faith Commitment:**

1) I acknowledge that I have the primary responsibility for the successful completion of my degree program. I will be committed to my graduate education and will demonstrate this by my efforts in the classroom and the research setting. I will maintain a high level of professionalism, self-motivation, engagement, scientific curiosity, and ethical standards.

2) It will be my responsibility to regularly schedule meetings with my supervisor, and provide him/her with project updates and results of my experiments. The frequency of the meetings will be discussed/decided upon at the beginning of each year in September.

   I __________________________, will commit to meet with my supervisor every ____________________, or as deemed necessary.

3) I will work with my research advisor to develop a thesis/dissertation project. This will include establishing a timeline for each phase of my work. I will strive to meet the established deadlines.
4) I will work with my research advisor to select an advisory committee. It will be my responsibility to schedule annual meetings with my advisory committee (or more frequently, according to program guidelines). I will be responsive to the advice of and constructive criticism from my advisory committee.

5) I will be knowledgeable of the graduate program policies and requirements of my department and the university as outlined within departmental guidelines and graduate program calendar. I will attend and participate in laboratory meetings, seminars and journal clubs that are part of my educational program.

6) I will comply with all institutional policies, including academic program milestones. I will comply with both the letter and spirit of all institutional safe laboratory practices and animal-use and human-research policies at my institution.

7) I will be a good lab citizen. I will agree to take part in shared laboratory responsibilities and will use laboratory resources carefully and frugally. I will maintain a safe and clean laboratory space. I will be respectful of, tolerant of, and work collegially with all laboratory personnel.

8) I will maintain a detailed record of my work throughout all stages of my research. I am aware that my original notebooks and all tangible research data are the property of the institution, however I am able to keep a copy following completion of my degree.

9) I will discuss policies on work hours, attendance at professional meetings, sick leave and vacation with my advisor upon starting my graduate degree (or as needed). I will consult with my advisor and notify fellow lab members in advance of any planned absences.

10) I will discuss policies on authorship and intellectual property/patenting rights with my advisor upon starting my graduate degree (or as needed). I will work with my advisor to submit all relevant research results that are ready for publication or patent filing in a timely manner prior to my graduation.

11) I acknowledge that it is primarily my responsibility to develop my career following the completion of my graduate degree. If required, I will seek guidance from my advisor, career counselling services, advisory committee, other mentors, and any other career planning resources.
Supervisor Good-Faith Commitment:

1) I will be committed to supervising and mentoring the graduate student until they complete their degree, or will find a suitable supervisor as a replacement in the event of my departure. This pertains as well to periods of leave (ex. Sabbatical leave) during which I may be absent for long durations.

2) a. At the earliest possible time, I will ensure that the student has:
   I. An advisory committee
   II. A sound research proposal
   III. A research proposal and program of study, including courses, approved by the advisory committee and that all FGS program requirements are met.

   b. I will help the graduate student select a suitable advisory committee, and will ensure that the committee meets at least annually to review the student’s progress.

   c. I will be knowledgeable of, and guide the graduate student through the requirements of his/her graduate program; these will include course and degree requirements, departmental requirements, teaching requirements (if any), and human resource guidelines.

3) a. I will be committed to support thesis-related research of the graduate student. I will provide direction, financial support, set reasonable and attainable goals, and establish a timeline for completion of the project.

   b. I will be committed to providing financial assistance and research resources for the graduate student as required or according to the institution’s guidelines, in order for him/her to conduct their thesis/dissertation research.

4) I will be committed to meeting individually with the student on a regular basis. It will be the student’s responsibility to schedule meetings; however I will ensure that regular meetings are maintained. The frequency of the meetings will be discussed/decided upon at the beginning of each year in September.

I __________________________, will commit to meet with my student every ____________________, or as deemed necessary.
5) I will lead by example and facilitate the training of the graduate student in the complementary skills needed to be a successful scientist; these skills include: critical thinking and formulation of testable hypotheses, experimental design and carrying out experiments, oral and written communications skills, grant writing, lab management, animal and human research policies, the ethical conduct of research, and scientific professionalism. I will encourage the student to seek opportunities in teaching, if not already required by the student’s program.

6) I will expect the graduate student to share common laboratory responsibilities and utilize resources carefully and frugally.

7) I will not require the graduate student to perform tasks that are unrelated to his/her training program and professional development.

8) I will encourage the graduate student to attend scientific and/or professional meetings, and will assist in securing funding for such activities.

9) I will provide career advice and honest letters of reference for his/her next phase of professional development. I will also be accessible to give advice and feedback on career goals.

10) I will discuss authorship policies regarding papers with the graduate student. I will acknowledge the graduate student’s scientific contributions to the work in my laboratory, and I will work with the graduate student to publish his/her work in a timely manner, preferably prior to the student’s graduation.

11) I will discuss intellectual policy issues with the student with regard to disclosure, patent rights and publishing research discoveries.

12) I will read and provide prompt, constructive feedback to the graduate student on any written or electronic materials submitted (Thesis, reports, practicum, etc). Thesis: four to five weeks is sufficient to provide legible written feedback depending on document length. Reports/manuscripts: two to three weeks is sufficient.
Advisory Committee Good-Faith Commitment:
Assembly of the student’s advisory committee shall be carried out as a joint effort by advisor(s) and student, and is recommended to be established by the first 6 months of the student beginning the graduate program. Each member of the advisory committee shall fulfill the following responsibilities;

1) Members should be familiar with the student’s research project.

2) The committee shall be available to hold annual progress committee meetings, or more frequently as deemed necessary.

3) Members should be reasonably available to meet with the student in addition to the annual progress meeting.

4) The committee shall function to provide unbiased guidance and support to assist graduate students in developing their research proposal and protocols to ensure high-quality research.

5) The committee shall be available to assist the student with resolving research and program related issues that arise during the course of the program.

6) The committee shall represent the best interests of the student in an unbiased fashion independent of the supervisor’s own opinions. In the event of student/supervisor conflict, the committee shall act objectively to assist with conflict resolution and ensure that neither the student nor their research is compromised.

7) For any written material submitted by the student (thesis, reports, practicum, etc.), members of the committee should read and provide legible written comments back to the student in a timely manner. To provide feedback, two to three weeks is sufficient for most documents; however for a thesis, four to five weeks is sufficient.

Authorship (FGS- Rights and Responsibilities, 1991):
• Faculty members should ensure that all/only persons who have substantially contributed academically to the study being reported in a publication either in the conception or design, execution of the experimental work, interpretation of data or drafting the article are included as an author or given other appropriate acknowledgement.

• Anyone accepting authorship accepts responsibility for the validity of the whole manuscript.
Addition comments/ commitments

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**Note:** Additional information on University of Manitoba policies can be found within the ROASS document:

[http://www.umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/governing_documents/students/278.htm](http://www.umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/governing_documents/students/278.htm)

*A copy of this document shall be provided to the department, the supervisor, committee members and student for future reference.*