



COLLEGE of BIOLOGICAL SCIENCE

DEPARTMENT OF MOLECULAR
AND CELLULAR BIOLOGY

Expectations: Graduate Student-Faculty

The combined effort of graduate students and their supervisors is essential to achieving excellence in graduate education. Establishing the roles and expectations of graduate students, supervisors and supervisory committees are vital components affecting the success of graduate students in our program.

Tensions and conflicts between graduate students and supervisors can arise when expectations, roles, and responsibilities are unclear or mismatched. It is, therefore, helpful for parties to develop a shared understanding of such issues.

This document is intended to create a space for constructive conversations in establishing the relationship between student and faculty supervisors/advisors. All may not apply to you or your studies and may be revisited at any stage to accommodate changes in the student-supervisor(s) relationship and the research project.

We encourage continued communication between faculty supervisors/advisors and students.

Items to discuss	Expectations
Life in the lab: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lab culture: your/your advisor's roles in a safe, welcoming, and respectful learning/research environment • What does a professional working relationship with your supervisor mean? • How are grad students expected to function in interacting with lab members and the training and mentoring of junior trainees? • Lab meetings (frequency, participation, etc.)? • What are the expected practices for lab upkeep and maintenance? 	
Graduate student schedule: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expected working hours? • Do you intend to seek out extra TAs and/or employment outside of the lab that may overlap required lab time? • Anticipated leaves of absence (cultural events, family events, visits home outside of local area, travel, etc.)? • Vacation time (recommended 10 days in addition to statutory holidays/UoG closures; times mutually agreed upon) 	
Meetings with faculty supervisor: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How often do you expect to meet with your supervisor? • What format is preferred (informal vs formal)? • How will progress be guided and/or assessed? 	
Progress Reports and Advisory Committee Meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advisory committee make-up? • How often will you meet with the committee (min. one meeting every 12 months)? • What is a "Progress Report" and when are they completed? • What to include in the Progress Report? 	

<p>Communication between meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does your supervisor prefer to communicate by telephone or email or face-to-face/in lab? • What are the mutually agreed upon strategies for communication (timelines, exceptions, etc.)? • How will your supervisor’s planned or unplanned absences be communicated and who can be contacted while they’re away? 	
<p>Stipends and scholarships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expected applications, resources, support? • GRA–funding, timeline, what happens if your program extends beyond typical program duration? 	
<p>Expectations for written work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are you expected to document experiments? • Does your supervisor expect to receive your completed thesis all at once? Or do they expect drafts (rough or polished) of chapters as they are completed? • In what format will feedback be received? • How quickly do you expect your supervisor to provide feedback on work submitted for review and how quickly are you expected to complete requested revisions? 	
<p>Research focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is your vision for your research focus? • Coursework: what courses should you complete during your grad program? 	
<p>Research direction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which skills do you have, and which skills does your supervisor expect you to develop? • What factors outside of your program may impact productivity? 	
<p>Expected outcomes of the research:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples: conference presentations, peer-reviewed articles, patents, internship opportunities, networking etc. 	
<p>Authorship expectations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are your expectations about authorship (especially if you are using your supervisor’s lab resources or previously collected data, etc.)? • What are your supervisor’s expectations for publications (depending on field of research)? 	
<p>University community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What professional development programs might be recommended (writing, teaching training, workshops)? • Conferences you may attend without presenting at? • Grad Student Council, mentorship opportunities, committee involvement, etc.? 	
<p>Post-completion/graduation goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are your post-grad expectations? • What are your expectations about how your faculty supervisor will help you with your post-grad goals? • Networking opportunities? 	
<p>Other:</p>	