



## RSI SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE POLICY

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### **The Meeting**

The Supervisory Committee meetings are documented meetings of the student, supervisor and other members of the supervisory committee. The purpose of the meeting is to review the student's research proposal and graduate program progress. Usually, students pre-circulate a short report and begin the meeting with an overview of her/his research (e.g., 15 to 20 minute oral presentation, augmented by overheads as appropriate) followed by discussion. The student's research proposal must be approved by the Supervisory Committee within the first 6 months of the program for MSc students and within the first 12 months for PhD students.

### **Frequency of Meetings**

To remain in good standing, a documented meeting must be held every 6 months. Failure to meet this requirement could jeopardize a student's standing in the program. PhD students who have not had at least 4 meetings within the first 3 years of their program may not achieve candidacy.

Ideally, the meeting should be attended by the student, supervisor and all members of the Supervisory Committee. However, if there are scheduling difficulties of a single member, the meeting should proceed without that member. In the case of repeated instances of scheduling difficulties, the student and supervisor should consider replacing that member (please meet with a Graduate Coordinator to discuss).

A student who has failed to meet with the supervisory committee within a given year will be considered to have received an unsatisfactory progress report from the committee.

The first meeting must take place within the first six months for MSc students and during the first year for PhD student. At the first meeting, the student should present an outline of their proposal including the course work to be undertaken. At the second meeting, the student should present a review of the pertinent literature, an update on course completion, and an overview of the hypothesis and experimental approach to be undertaken. Subsequent meetings should monitor progress.

Students are also encouraged to meet informally with committee members as often as necessary.

### **Members of the Supervisory Committee**

All RSI students are required to submit the proposed membership of their Supervisory Committee to the RSI using the [Supervisory Committee Approval Form](#) by the end of their first term in the program (December 31 for students starting in September, and April 30 for students starting in January). This form must also be submitted if Supervisory Committee membership changes during the student's program. Students will be notified by email of

approval.

The Supervisory Committee members' function is to provide expertise in the areas relevant to the thesis topic and should complement the supervisor's own research interests. The committee members assess, encourage, and motivate the student, as well as provide guidance and mentoring. If this is the supervisor's first graduate student supervision, an experienced RSI graduate faculty member must be included on the Supervisory Committee.

### **MSc**

The Supervisory Committee must include one member, in addition to the supervisor, from the RSI. The others need not be members of the RSI.

### **PhD**

The Ph.D. candidate is expected, with the assistance of the supervisor to select a Supervisory Committee. The committee must consist of at least two other individuals (in addition to the supervisor and co-supervisor) with graduate appointments in the School of Graduate Studies, during year 1 of PhD.

Not all U of T faculty members have a graduate appointment with SGS. Please review the [RSI graduate appointment policy](#) for details. If you are uncertain whether a prospective committee member meets the requirements, please contact us. Only approved Supervisory Committee members are eligible to participate in Supervisory Committee meetings.

Disagreements among Supervisory Committee members should be brought to the attention of the Graduate Coordinators. If necessary, a RSI Graduate Coordinator can attend a student's Supervisory Committee meeting.

### **Supervisory Committee Report**

The Supervisory Committee report form should be obtained by the student ahead of the meeting. Supervisory Committee Report forms and any related minutes must be forwarded by the student to the RSI office within 2 weeks of each meeting. All Supervisory Committee reports are reviewed by RSI office staff and the RSI Graduate Coordinators. Documentation of the meeting is an essential part of the student record, and it is the student's responsibility to ensure that the documentation is provided to the RSI office in a timely fashion. Students and supervisors should retain a copy of the form.

If a student receives two consecutive unsatisfactory reports, the RSI may recommend termination of the registration and eligibility of that student.