



NON-MEMBERS OF THE G+PS AS SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Guideline for Faculty of Medicine graduate programs to add Postdoctoral Fellows for service on doctoral supervisory committee

For a postdoctoral fellow to join a student's supervisory committee, special approval is required. For service on doctoral committees, the disciplinary Faculty and the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (G+PS) must approve; for service on master's committees, the approval of the graduate program advisor or department head suffices.

In all cases where G+PS must approve a supervisory role for a non-member, the request should be made when the non-member is chosen as a potential committee member. Because the requirement is that at least 50% of the supervisory committee must be G+PS members, it is recommended that non- G+PS member applications are made after the remainder of the committee has been formed.

Postdoctoral fellows (PDF) are often actively involved in mentoring graduate students in an unofficial capacity. *In an effort to formally recognize their important contribution to graduate supervision*, the FoM Graduate and Postdoctoral Education (GPE) office, in consultation with G+PS, has created this guiding document to encourage membership of postdoctoral fellows on doctoral supervisory committees.

To recommend a PDF as a member of a doctoral supervisory committee, the student's home graduate program must confirm the following points when selecting and recommending postdoctoral members for a supervisory committee at the time of application. The requirements depend on whether a conflict of interest exists between the PDF and the supervisor of the PhD student on whose committee the PDF wishes to serve. A conflict of interest in this context exists if the PDF and PhD student share a supervisor or co-supervisor, or more generally, if any of the PhD student's committee members is also involved in the supervision or co-supervision of the PDF, or has been a supervisor or co-supervisor in the past five years.

A) NO CONFLICT OF INTEREST BETWEEN PDF AND PHD SUPERVISOR

- Membership requirement: As per Senate policy, each committee must have at least three members (including the supervisor), of whom at least 50% (2) are G+PS members, or partner professors, who have been approved via the FoM approval process. The PDF can be counted as one of the non-G+PS members on the committee and the approval process and expectations are the same as for all other non-G+PS committee members.
- Role within the committee: The PDF will be considered a full and equal committee member during all meetings of the supervisory committee, participate in voting, the comprehensive and final doctoral exam, as appropriate.

August 2, 2023



- Continuity of committee service: A PDF does not usually hold their appointment at UBC for the entirety of the graduate student's doctoral studies. The graduate program must state their contingency plan in the recommendation letter to ensure the viability and desirability of the arrangement so that the graduate student supervision is not impacted, and importantly, so that the PDF is not burdened by a commitment they might not be able to fulfill after leaving UBC.
- Membership rationale: As for all other non-G+PS members on supervisory committees, the graduate program must include a strong rationale for PDFs to join the supervisory committee in their recommendation letter. In particular, the letter must outline clearly the unique skill set and contribution that the PDF can offer that is not otherwise available.

B) CONFLICT OF INTEREST BETWEEN PDF AND PHD SUPERVISOR

- Membership requirement: A PDF can only be considered for membership after the minimum requirement of three (3) members, at least 50% of them G+PS members, has been met; the PDF will be a fourth (additional) committee member.
- Role within the committee: PDFs can participate in all regular committee meetings, but will not have voting privileges. This means that they will not be part of the comprehensive exam committee, not participate as a committee member in the oral doctoral defense, or participate in other milestone-decisions (e.g., proceed to candidacy, permission to write). They can participate in comprehensive and final oral practice exams.
- Continuity of committee service: A PDF does not usually hold their appointment at UBC for the entirety of the graduate student's doctoral studies. The graduate program must state their contingency plan in the recommendation letter to ensure the viability and desirability of the arrangement so that the graduate student supervision is not impacted, and importantly, so that the PDF is not burdened by a commitment they might not be able to fulfill after leaving UBC.
- Membership rationale: As for all other non-G+PS members on supervisory committees, the graduate program must include a strong rationale for PDFs to join the supervisory committee in their recommendation letter. In particular, the letter must outline clearly the unique skill set and contribution that the PDF can offer that is not otherwise available.

The GPE office will review supervision approval requests submitted by graduate programs, and upon satisfactory review, will forward the package to G+PS. Please note that final approval can only be granted by G+PS.



Checklist

To submit a supervision approval request, please submit this checklist along with the recommendation letter. At the time of submitting a nomination package, the graduate programs must:

- Membership.** Confirm the names of at least two (2) other committee members (including supervisor), of whom at least 50% (2) must be G+PS members. Depending on how many members the committee has, the program will need to ensure that 50% of the final committee will be G+PS members. In case a COI exists, three (3) committee members need to be confirmed before the PDF can be approved.
- Role.** In case a COI exists, outline the COI and confirm that the committee and the PDF understand and agree to the PDF's non-voting role within the committee.
- Continuity.** Ensure that the student understands and agrees to a potential limited-term membership of the PDF and in case the PDF leaves the committee before the student graduates.
- Rationale.** Verify that the PDF has unique skills that are not otherwise available within the committee, program, department, or at UBC.