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ATTENTION Senate **DATE** October 16, 2025
FROM Mary O'Brien,
Chair of Senate Graduate Studies
Committee (SGSC)
RE: Graduate General Regulation 1.6 Supervision

**For Approval:**

At its meeting on October 7, 2025, SGSC reviewed and approved the revision of Graduate General Regulation 1.6 Supervision. This gives rise to the following motion, effective Summer 2026.

Summary and Rationale:

The proposed changes to GGR 1.6 Supervision are minimal and are needed in order to align with GGR revisions previously approved by Senate.

Motion:

That Senate approve the revisions to Graduate General Regulation 1.6 Supervision, effective Summer 2026.

SFU

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MEMORANDUM _____

ATTENTION Mary O'Brien, Chair of Senate
Graduate Studies Committee (SGSC) **DATE** September 24, 2025

FROM Pamela Stern, Associate Dean, Policy
and Curriculum



RE: Graduate General Regulation Change:
GGR 1.6 Supervision

Motion:

That the Senate Graduate Studies Committee approve and forward to Senate revisions to GGR 1.6 “Supervision” effective Summer 2026.

GGR 1.6 Supervision

1.6.1 General

When a graduate student has been admitted, the graduate program committee will exercise general supervision and provide academic advice for the student through the chair of the graduate program committee or a faculty member designated by the chair, until a supervisor has been appointed, normally no later than the student's second term if appropriate.

1.6.2 ~~Supervision of a Qualifying Student~~

~~A qualifying student comes under the general supervision of the graduate program committee, exercised through the chair of that committee or a faculty member designated by the chair.~~

1.6.3 ~~1.6.2~~ Supervisor

For degrees that culminate in a thesis or a project examined as a thesis, the supervisor must be a continuing Simon Fraser University faculty member at the rank of assistant professor or above including professor emeriti. Associate members may serve as the supervisor in their affiliated academic units at the discretion of the academic unit's graduate program committee. Where a co-supervision arrangement is created, the co-supervisors jointly act as a supervisor as per [1.6.5](#).

1.6.4.

For degrees that culminate in a ~~project examined by two readers, extended essay, field or comprehensive examination~~ **capstone**, the supervisor must be a Simon Fraser University faculty member deemed to be qualified by the academic unit's graduate studies committee and approved by the dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

The appointment of a supervisor should occur as soon as possible after the student's admission to the graduate program, but normally no later than the student's second term.

An interim supervisor may be permitted as needed. A supervisor who will be unable to perform their regular duties for more than three months is required to arrange for proper supervision of the student by another supervisor, co-supervisor or committee member during this absence. **In cases where the supervisor is unable to arrange interim supervision, it is the responsibility of the graduate program chair to ensure that appropriate supervision is organized.** The graduate program committee and the dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies shall be informed in writing of the arrangement.

A supervisor is not required for students in a graduate diploma or certificate program. The director of a diploma or certificate program is responsible for roles normally assigned to the supervisor.

1.6.4 1.6.3 Supervisory Committee

The supervisory committee mentors and helps the student develop a program of study leading to a degree. The committee reports to the graduate program committee at least once a year on the student's progress. The supervisory committee shall be available to the student for consultation on a regular basis.

A supervisory committee is not required for students in a graduate certificate, diploma or in master's degree programs with program requirements as per [1.7.2d](#) [1.7.2c](#).

For master's degree programs with program requirements as per [1.7.2e](#) [1.7.2b](#) the supervisor alone may comprise the supervisory committee.

In master's degree programs with program requirements as per [1.7.2a](#) and [1.7.2b](#) and any doctoral program, a supervisory committee must be established. The minimum composition for the supervisory committee consists of the supervisor (or co-supervisors) and at least one committee member chosen in consultation with the student. The committee member must be a faculty member, adjunct professor or research associate at Simon Fraser University. A suitably qualified individual may be eligible to serve as an additional committee member.

1.6.5 1.6.4 Co-supervision

A co-supervision arrangement may be created when two individuals exercise the degree of supervision and support of a supervisor. When a co-supervision arrangement is created, all documentation must be approved by both co-supervisors.

Appointment as co-supervisor recognizes a significant contribution of time, expertise or financial resources. The supervision of the student remains a joint responsibility of the co-supervisors.

Adjunct faculty member, practitioner faculty, lecturers, visiting faculty, limited-term research faculty, and an off-campus professional who is academically qualified to advise graduate students all may serve in the capacity of a co-supervisor.

One of the co-supervisors must be a continuing Simon Fraser University faculty member, at the rank of assistant professor or above, or professor emeriti. Departments and faculties are responsible for setting criteria and standards appropriate to their disciplines.

Co-supervisory status may be terminated by the dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies if one or both of the co-supervisors are unable to fulfill their responsibilities in compliance with Simon Fraser University policies and procedures relevant to graduate supervision.

1.6.6 1.6.5 Change in the Supervisory Committee

Continuity of supervision is important in all graduate work. As a consequence, a change in supervisory committee, especially a change in supervisor, may be made only on the basis of strong reasons.

A request for a change in the supervisory committee may come from the student or any member of the supervisory committee. It shall be sent to the graduate program committee accompanied by the reasons, in writing, for the proposed change. If the graduate program committee concurs in the request, it shall be sent to the dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies for final approval.

1.6.7 1.6.6 Safe and Ethical Conduct of Research

Graduate students who conduct any research involving human participants, animals, or hazardous materials and/or equipment must receive the training needed to conduct the research safely and ethically. The graduate supervisor is responsible for ensuring that students have completed the necessary training and that the proposed research has received the appropriate permissions or approved protocols prior to commencing research.

As per policy ([R20.01](#)), all research projects involving human participants (including those using secondary data) must receive ethics approval or an exemption, or determination that the proposed research is outside the scope of research ethics review and oversight. Copies of the policy, procedures and forms for this review may be obtained from the Research Ethics Board (www.sfu.ca/research/researcher-resources.html) or from the university website (www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/research.html).

As per policy ([R20.03](#)), all research plans involving animals must receive ethics approval from the [University Animal Care Committee](#).

As per policy ([R20.02](#)), all research involving biohazardous materials requires a biosafety permit.

As per policy ([R20.04](#)), all research involving radiation requires a permit from the Radiation Safety Office.

In most cases of student research involving human participants, animals, or hazardous materials or equipment, the applicant for the appropriate permit or exemption is the student's graduate supervisor.