



## Supervision at the ISGP: Guiding Principles

Supervising graduate students at the Interdisciplinary Studies Graduate Program (ISGP) presents a unique opportunity to work with another faculty member (co-supervisor) in a discipline that might be very different from your own, including a different vocabulary, epistemology, methodology, etc. While such an endeavor is exciting, it requires an open-mindedness, sensitivity to similarities and differences as well as the curiosity to want to learn about different ways and styles of thinking, writing and doing research. Thus, collaboration is at the heart of supervising an ISGP student. With the following document, we aim to provide some general guidelines, as well as topics, that ought to be discussed by the ISGP students with their respective co-supervisors early on in the program.

Unique features of ISGP student supervision:

- ISGP requires at least two co-supervisors from different departments to represent the student's interdisciplinary research project.
- One co-supervisor may become a "main/primary" supervisor (as an informal arrangement) as a delegate to assume more of an active role of representing the student and his/her committee, and as the signing authority on all official UBC and external documentations.
- The "main/primary" supervisor does not have to be in the same department as the student's Home Department.
- Both co-supervisors should contribute equally to the intellectual development and mentorship of the ISGP student.
- ISGP students are expected to take the lead to organize regular communications and meetings with their supervisory committee members; we advise students to take notes and circulate the meeting summary with everyone after each committee meeting.
- Faculty members require the approval of their Department Heads and/or Faculty Deans to supervise ISGP students, in order to acknowledge the extra workload outside of their disciplinary units.
- Ideally one co-supervisor is experienced in supervising students outside of his or her own discipline, while the second co-supervisor can be new to such an endeavor. If both supervisors have never had an ISGP student, please set up a meeting (or phone call) with the ISGP Program Chair.

Both ISGP students and their supervisors are encouraged to visit the helpful guidelines set out by the [Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies](#). It is crucial, at the beginning of the students' programs, to meet and discuss, and to agree on the expectations of both parties. We recommend that you use this [document](#) as a template to draft an official agreement on the expectations of roles and responsibilities.

We also highly recommend that both ISGP students and supervisors visit the [Handbook of Graduate Supervision](#), to ensure the working relationship is on the right path.

### **Dispute Resolution**

If, at any point of the supervisory arrangement, a dispute should arise between both student and supervisor(s), or between the two co-supervisors, we encourage the team to have an open conversation to resolve the dispute amicably. If the resolution attempt is unsuccessful, and intervention is needed, the ISGP Program Chair would be available to act as a neutral participant to facilitate the resolution.