

Ecology & Evolutionary Biology

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

REPORT OF SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Supervisory committees meetings provide an opportunity for the committee to assist the student with progress tracking and research project development through an open discussion and exchange of ideas about the proposed projects, courses, future directions, etc., all with the common goal of the student's successful completion of the degree.

Check Relevant Box: MSc ☐ PhD ☐

Student name (printed): _____ Date: _____

Student Number: _____

Supervisor/Co-Supervisor (printed): _____

Committee Members₂ (printed) (please indicate any changes in committee membership since the last meeting):

Thesis Title/Topic: _____

The student will be asked to leave the room at the start and at the end of the meeting. At the start of the meeting, the committee will review the last meeting's report form (the student must email a pdf of this to the committee along with the proposal/report for this meeting) and will discuss this and any other issues that have arisen since the last meeting.

It can be helpful if the supervisor makes notes for the student on the important questions/suggestions that come up during the meeting.

Graduate Courses (see₃ for course requirements) Please note which courses have been taken (T) and which are recommended (R) for the future

1. _____ 2. _____

3. _____ 4. _____

Comments on Course Work: _____

Additional courses not required for degree: _____

For internal use: Submitted copy of proposal/report: e-copy ____ or hard-copy ____ . Approved by Assoc. Grad. Chair:

The following table, where applicable, can serve as a guideline for posing questions and evaluating the student's progress. These ratings are relative to the expectations for someone in your year and at your stage in the program; expectations will increase over the program. A student with an average performance compared to other students at the same stage should receive a "Meets Expectations" notation. Where relevant, circle phrases and/or write feedback in this table, in the Appendix, and/or in the comment section below. If there is variation in the opinions of the committee members, tick all of the categories that apply and/or provide comments below. ‡Fill in this table for one committee meeting a year, but not for a student's first committee meeting.

	Meets Expectations	Needs improvement	Yes / No / Not applicable
Comments on written report <i>e.g., quality of writing, scholarship, organization</i>			
Comments on oral presentation <i>e.g., clarity, organization, context included</i>			
Responses to questions from the committee			
Student's background knowledge and familiarity with relevant literature			
Are the objectives of the research clearly defined and achievable? (yes / no)			
Knowledge of experimental design, data collection and methods of analysis? Is it adequate to ensure completion of the research program?			
Ability to think critically and develop independence in research (given her/his stage in her/his graduate program)			
Evaluation of the proposed timeline (if needs improvements, provide comments below)			
Responses to concerns/recommendations from previous meeting(s)			

Are there any concerns about the project(s)?

Since the last committee meeting, has this student been making good progress? If not, provide details.

Is the student's overall trajectory to date sufficient for the production of a high-quality dissertation in the time allowed? Note: as part of every committee meeting report (except for the first committee meeting), students are required to include a timeline and a summary of the status of all components of all thesis projects/chapters (e.g., which of the following have been completed: proposal, experimental design, data collection, analyses, writing); a table with categories ticked off may be sufficient.

When appropriate (e.g., after the appraisal exam), please discuss the student's overall trajectory with respect to the student's career goals, which should be discussed at some point with the committee.

Is the time envisioned to complete the research programme realistic? If it may not be, the components of the program should be prioritized so that it is clear which components should be dropped without compromising the ability of the student to satisfactorily complete the degree. Suggestions?

Over her/his whole graduate degree, has this student been making good progress?

Specific comments on the student's progress to date and research objectives. Did any research or non-research issues arise during the discussions? Please provide specific suggestions for improvement, beyond the comments that have been highlighted on the table and in the Appendix. If the supervisor(s) wishes to provide an electronic summary, please cc the EEB Graduate Office when you send the summary to the student. We recommend that the supervisor and student meet within a week after the committee meeting to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of progress, etc. (use the space at the end of this form if more space is required)

Approximate date of next committee meeting: (note: twice yearly meetings are required in the first year of MSc and PhD programs. After that, PhD students, are required to have annual meetings and a final committee meeting 3-4 months before the defense. (see below¹ and the EEB Grad Handbook for details). If there are concerns at a committee meeting, it is good practice to schedule another committee meeting within 2-6 months: _____

Approximate date for completion of Program: _____

Only for PhD students at their 2nd and later committee meetings:

Appraisal exam. The appraisal exam must be held 14 to 20 months after registration for students with a MSc degree and 14 to 26 months for students who entered their PhD directly from an undergraduate degree. EEB strongly encourages students to have their appraisal exam as early as possible, within this timeframe. It is good practice to have a committee meeting a month or two before the appraisal exam to make sure everyone is 'on the same page'.

For PhD students who have not taken their appraisal exam, what is the recommendation of the supervisory committee (including the supervisor) for the approximate timing of the Appraisal exam:

What is your current year of study with respect to the total number of years you will be in the funded cohort (e.g. 3rd year out of 4 years): _____

All students who started their PhD (or transferred into the PhD program) in 2014-15 or later should aim to complete their degree requirements while they are in the funded cohort (note: three substantive, publishable, research (data/simulation/theory) chapters are, according to EEB's 'rule of thumb', the minimum for a PhD thesis; whether these criteria have been met will be decided by the entire supervisory committee). However, some supervisor(s) may agree to provide some students with some RA funding after the student leaves the funded cohort, if the student is making good progress and if the supervisor has such funding available. In most cases, for the first few years of the student's program, supervisors will not commit to any funding support beyond the funded cohort period because the *de facto* expectation is that students should plan to finish within this period. Even if the supervisor(s) does not provide funding after the student leaves the funded cohort, the student may continue in the program until the SGS time limit is reached.

For students with one year remaining in the funded cohort, if this student continues at the current rate, will he/she have sufficient data (or equivalent) to complete their thesis while they are in the funded cohort? If not, is this a concern for student or supervisor(s)? If yes, how can this be remedied?

If this student does not complete his/her thesis before leaving the funded cohort, if he/she is making good progress* during the last year in the funded cohort year, you, the supervisor(s) will pay this student the standard monthly RA for students who are in the funded cohort: Yes ☐ No ☐

*"Good progress" constitutes keeping pace with the proposed time line unless otherwise specified here:

If yes, for how many months will you pay the standard RA after this student leaves the funded cohort?

If, on a previous committee meeting report, the supervisor(s) agreed to support the student after they leave the funded cohort, on this and subsequent meeting(s), the supervisor and student must frankly discuss the prospects for discretionary support in the following year, including any contingencies or conditions that must be met.

Note: Currently (2016), if the supervisor pays the standard funded cohort RA amount after a domestic student leaves the funded cohort and the student TA's 3 slots, the student's stipend will be approx. \$3000-4000 lower than what it was when he/she was in the funded cohort.

SIGNATURES OF THE COMMITTEE:

Supervisor:_____ Co-Supervisor:_____

Committee Members:

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE STUDENT:

Note: Students are encouraged to arrange an additional meeting(s) with individual committee members, with or without their supervisor(s) present, if issues (e.g., specific advice is required (e.g. stats, expectations for a project/chapter), regarding personal issues, etc.) make such a meeting desirable.

Students are required to make a copy of this completed form and submit it and a copy of your research report/proposal, either as electronic or hard copies, to the Graduate Administrator, Graduate Office (Earth Sciences Centre, Room 3046).

This document accurately reflects the discussion at this meeting of my Supervisory Committee:

Comments (note: if any of your comments are confidential, please write them on a separate page, with your name, the date and entitled "Confidential comments from the student about the committee meeting—to be filed and not shared" and ask Olivera/Kitty Lam to put them in your file):

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Important notes:

¹ MSc committees meet within four months of first registration and then again by the end of the eighth month. PhD committees meet twice during the first year - within four months of first registration and again by the end of the ninth month. In subsequent years the PhD committees should meet at least once a year.

² Supervisory committees for both the MSc and PhD comprise the supervisor (and co-supervisor if relevant) plus two EEB faculty members. Committee membership must be approved by the EEB graduate office. Variations from the normal structure are possible under appropriate circumstances and must be approved by the graduate office.

³ Normally, students will take at least one EEB graduate course. Non-EEB grad courses must be approved by the supervisor, the supervisory committee and the EEB graduate office. MSc students must complete a single one-semester graduate course. PhD students entering directly with a BSc must take the equivalent of four one-semester graduate courses. Students entering with an MSc degree must take the equivalent of three one-semester courses. Students transferring from an EEB MSc to an EEB PhD program should take the same credits as those entering from a BSc program, minus any grad courses completed during the MSc.

Appendix: suggested areas for improvement—please circle all that apply:

- * Circulate report for comments to advisor further in advance. Share drafts with labmates and critique each other's committee reports. Make appointments with committee members to discuss the writing in your report, not just the science. Make appointments with writing centre, join a dissertation writing group. Found an EEB writing group where peers read each other's manuscript and NSERC drafts.
- * Give practice versions of presentations to other labs, your labmates, student seminar group, partners, pets.
- * Practice presentations w/ interruptions to journal clubs, lab meetings, student seminar session. Give conference talks, even at small conferences like OE3C. Volunteer to give a departmental colloquium talk. Present your work in the KSR summer seminar series.
- * Solicit feedback from advisor and committee on missing background literature. Arrive at a list of missing key papers, read them. Make appointments with your advisor and committee members to discuss aspects of them you don't understand. Start tracking down literature that cites these key papers, and reading them. Repeat until you're chasing your own tail.
- * Work with advisor to refine your objectives to make them more crisp, ask for example committee documents from successful labmates, peers, etc. Ask your advisor to re-write your objectives as if s/he were proposing the work, and then discuss the differences between their version and yours.
- * Take statistics courses offered by our department and others on campus, workshops on R and bioinformatics, search for short-courses on specific techniques or relevant CSB modules. Apply for funding, or write a brief memo to your advisor about why s/he should send you to a workshop if it costs \$.
- * Find a labmate or peer, and practice identifying the working assumptions in each other's most recent experiments, and how violation of those assumptions might change interpretations. Do this for papers you read with your advisor, and try to practice doing it on your own work before you start.
- * Prepare a best case, worst case scenario outline of thesis chapters that can be completed in the funded cohort, including contingency plans. In the event of failed experiments, discuss with your committee the possibility of a synthetic review chapter in lieu of data/theory chapter.
- * Prepare a response to past committee meetings section in your next committee report, where you succinctly outline past criticisms and what you've done to address them. This will be good practice for grant and paper resubmissions.

Additional, specific comments on the student's progress to date and research objectives (please use the back of this page if necessary):

--Updated Dec 16, 2017