

TOOL



CO-SUPERVISION ISSUES AND GOOD PRACTICES

Putting good practices into place early can prevent many of the problematic situations that reduce the effectiveness of co-supervision for coursework degree dissertation students.

Issues	Practices that contribute to making supervisory teams work effectively
<p>Workload:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workload not fairly shared/someone not pulling weight • Co-supervisors not reading drafts or investing enough time/effort to address student needs • Other workload issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior to commencing co-supervision reach agreement on roles and contributions of each supervisor (see Co-supervision expectations tool) • Where issues arise revisit roles and contributions
<p>Differing Perspectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Differing perspectives and inability to compromise, status/ego and power plays between supervisors (e.g. shared supervision as a competition) • Differences in supervisory philosophy, lack of understanding or respect for each other's expertise • Methodological conflicts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select co-supervisors with complementary skills to your own • Identify differing strengths and areas of expertise in relation to the research topic and methodology ; • Build trust and respect in the co-supervisory relationship (e.g. the ability to have joint conversations regarding student progress can allow co-supervisors to suggest and debate a series of alternative approaches to issues as they arise)
<p>Limited Meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulties organizing meetings because either too busy (time) or cross-campus (place) • Supervisory teams who do not meet to review their performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold regular joint meetings with the student(s) • Book out a regular meeting time and place for the duration of the research project • Arrange pre-meetings (supervisors only) to assess what might be needed
<p>Unclear Roles and Expectations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of role definition or token inclusion of a co-supervisor • Expectations not clearly spelt out to student and other supervisors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior to commencing co-supervision reach agreement on roles and contributions of each supervisor (see Co-supervision expectations tool) • Discuss expectations with student at first meeting and revisit as necessary



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Group Communication:

- Student is receiving conflicting individual rather than group feedback
- Manipulative student playing supervisors off one against the other

- Provide feedback in group meeting
- Serial commenting on drafts
- Clear agreements negotiated with student as to a course of action agreed between all parties

Original Source: <http://researchsupervisiontoolkit.com/page/rst-ebook> (B3.2 Considering supervisory team issues and good practices)

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Modified Version Source: <http://www.dissertationsupervision.org/>

