



INTERPERSONAL ISSUES

New Supervisor Perspective

I'm supervising a group with only one male student. I think there might have been some gender issues. I got a feeling they weren't overly comfortable being in a group with females or having a supervisor who's also a female. So there seemed to be a bit of manipulation happening, it was kind of tricky to manage that. People don't realise that one aspect is the mechanics of supervision but you have got to deal with all of things that life gives you and then their life story comes in to it also.





INTERPERSONAL ISSUES

Coordinator Perspective

I think supervisors need a whole lot more support and recognition. The workload of a good supervisor is a whole lot more than – and I’m sure you hear this from everybody - is a whole lot more than is realised. It’s both a teaching role and a counselling role. And that’s not recognised by people who don’t do supervision. If you do it well then you’re both learning what that person’s doing their research about and well, it is, it’s a teaching role. Teaching a person who’s moving into their research role, but it does move over at some stage to them teaching you about what they’re doing, if they’re a good student - but there is a fair bit of counselling in that role if you’re doing well.

I’ve frequently dealt with student issues where there’s been a problem with the supervisor, a mismatch of personalities, I think, and the student isn’t getting what he or she needs from the supervisor, and that might be something as simple as just sort of moral support. The students don’t feel like they’re sort of doing it together. They don’t feel supported in the process. It’s sort of almost instrumental supervision rather than process supervision, so the student’s not allowed to say, “Look, I’m really struggling”, because the supervisor doesn’t want to hear that. They just want to help them with an analysis or give them readings or whatever. It’s not interpersonal, and so students don’t feel supported in that scenario, and so they very often come to me, I guess, for that.

