

The Graduate Student Experience

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What *is* graduate studies?

- Any form of post-baccalaureate credit study
- The process of transforming undergraduate students into independent researchers and academic colleagues
- Emphasis in graduate studies very strongly on:
 - Independent ideas, analysis
 - Self-directed study and research
 - New ideas; working at the leading edge (not just reporting what others have done)

How do I find the next step on the path?

- What path? There is no path! *You* get to decide how to spend your time.
- Graduate studies is about finding your own path, making mistakes, advancing knowledge
- Ways you can make the path easier:
 - Make a plan - time lines; tasks; who to be involved
 - Organize your resources (many available: Learning Commons, GSLI, World of Work, support services, etc.)
 - Seek advice early if you have questions or concerns
 - Remember to balance family, leisure, and work

Work? How much work?

- ***Coursework + project master's***: 60-80 pgs; often just review of existing work , usually no primary research
- ***Thesis master's***: 100-125 pgs; new tool or theory, not necessarily fully tested
- ***Doctoral***: 175-250 pgs; major contribution to the discipline; new tool or theory fully tested and explained

Who will guide me?

- ***Your advisor!***
- Your advisory committee
- Your graduate coordinator
- Your graduate secretary
- If those options fail, try
 - Department chair
 - Other students, Graduate Students' Association
 - Assistant Vice President, Graduate Studies

Advisory Committees

- **Graduate Diploma**
 - No committee necessary (although one may be assigned)
- **Master' s**
 - Minimum of two members; often three
 - Coursework master' s: graduate coordinator/other
- **Doctoral**
 - Minimum of three members; often four – five
- **Defense committees** for MA/MSc and PhD/DVSc must be mainly at arm' s length
 - Doctoral exams include an external examiner from another university

Required Forms

- Advisory Committee Appointment Form
- Graduate Degree Program Form

***Due at the Office of Graduate Studies (OGS)
by middle of the second semester***

Times to Completion

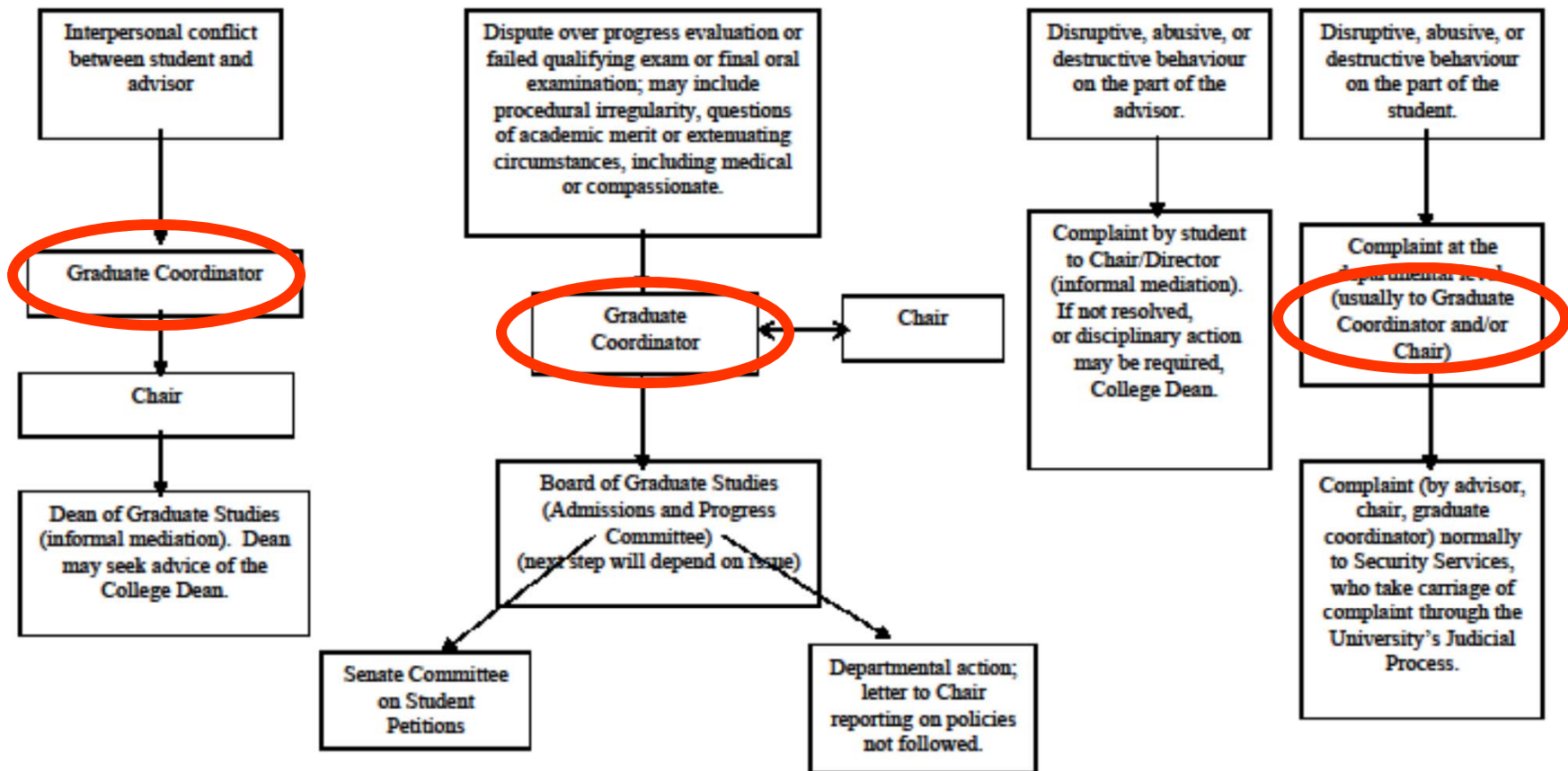
- **Graduate Diploma**
 - 2 to 4 semesters
- **Master' s**
 - 6 semesters
- **Doctoral**
 - 12 semesters
(16 with direct entry or transfer from master' s)
- **DVSc**
 - 9 semesters

What if I get into trouble?

- Trust me: it's hard to surprise us!
- Start with your advisor (if you feel comfortable doing so), then grad coordinator
 - Aim to resolve the issue at the department level if possible – try the chair if necessary
- Some issues need other resources: health, finances, counselling
- When in doubt, send me an email - ask for advice (*but Pauline handles the money!*)

What if I get into trouble?

ISSUE OR PROBLEM TO BE ADDRESSED



CONFLICT RESOLUTION GUIDE

NOTE: This flowchart represents current policies and procedures at the University of Guelph. University community members who believe they have a human rights complaint may, at any time, consult the University's Human Rights Policy and the Human Rights and Equity Office.

What if I need assistance?

OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES
University Centre, 3rd Floor





Department of Molecular & Cellular Biology

Office of Graduate Studies – 3rd Floor of University Centre