Graduate Student Supervisory Committee Meetings

Agenda Template

Supervisory Committee meetings are an essential component of staged progress for graduate students though their program and must be taken seriously by the student and their committee members. The agenda should be proposed by the graduate student and approved by the Supervisor (or co-supervisors) and distributed to the entire Supervisory Committee ahead of the meeting, preferably several days prior. The agenda provides the framework for the student to efficiently demonstrate their progress and to obtain crucial feedback to ensure they have a successful graduate degree.

The Agenda should be flexible enough to meet the stage and scope of the project but should contain at least the following headings:

1. Date, time, place of meeting
2. **Approval of minutes** from previous meeting
3. **Action points** in previous meeting
4. **Update on course and workshops** – proposed and completed
5. **Update on research**
   a. Summary of methods used for completed bench/field work
   b. Results of completed and in-progress research
   c. Immediate (over next 3-6 mon) and longer term research plans with a timeline (students are encouraged to complete a Gantt chart with significant milestones)
   d. Statistical analyses updates
6. **Comprehensive exam planning** – if applicable
   a. Timing, topic, study plans
7. **Update on thesis preparation**
   a. Chapter titles and outlines – present the planned chapters for the thesis even if they change later. This provides the committee with an overview and they can guide the student on appropriateness of the thesis scope for the degree
   b. Plans for completing each chapter, including timing for components within the chapters
8. **Update on student issues** – this should be included in *every* committee meeting and if there are no issues to discuss, record in the minutes that the topic was raised and there were no issues. If there are issues and they are not raised at this time, they are not recorded and if they are raised in the future, it will appear that they did not exist at this time. For example, if there are delays expected to occur in the program for some reason, it is useful to identify them early. Similarly, any concerns about personal or research support funding should be discussed and recorded at each meeting. This section should comment on the planned defense date and the committee should give their frank and realistic input on the likelihood of meeting the intended deadlines.
9. **Other business**, including approximate date of next meeting

<h1 style="text-align: center">Graduate Student Supervisory Committee Meetings</h1>

<h2 style="text-align: center">Minutes Template</h2>

- Minutes should be generated for every meeting as soon after the meeting as possible.
- They should be carefully read and revised by the Supervisor(s) to ensure that everyone is interpreting the meeting in the same way.
- Once reviewed by the Supervisor(s), these minutes should be distributed to the Supervisory Committee.
- They should be sufficiently detailed (including who is present but it is not necessary to attribute comments made to an individual) as to be easily followed by the Supervisory Committee years later and for the GSR Office to understand the stage of the student's program.
  - It is important that these minutes point out progress and any difficulties that may be arising.
  - This is the key record to indicate that the student is progressing to a successful defense of the degree on an appropriate and agreed upon schedule.
- The agenda should be used as the guide for the minutes, using similar headings to provide a standard structure.
- Minutes are approved as the record for the committee meeting at the subsequent committee meeting.