Building a Culture of Shared Supervision

January 13, 2025

Presenters

- **Josephine Nalbantoglu**, Associate Provost (Graduate Education) and Dean of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies
- **Lorraine Chalifour**, Associate Dean, Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies
- **Tabitha Sparks**, Associate Dean, Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies
- **Russell Steele**, Associate Dean, Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

Goals

1. Raise awareness of the value of a culture of shared supervision at McGill

2. Discuss the need for more integrated student support at the departmental level

3. Develop strategies to encourage a culture of shared supervision and understand obstacles

4. Provide resources to better support faculty and graduate students

Agenda

This will be an interactive session and we will use Slido to get your input!

1. Warm-up questions
2. Recent data on graduate program climate at McGill
3. Defining "culture of shared supervision" and its benefits
4. Strategies for building a culture of shared supervision and addressing obstacles
5. Resources

Scan the QR code or join at slido.com with this code:

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How well do you think your unit supports ALL PhD students?

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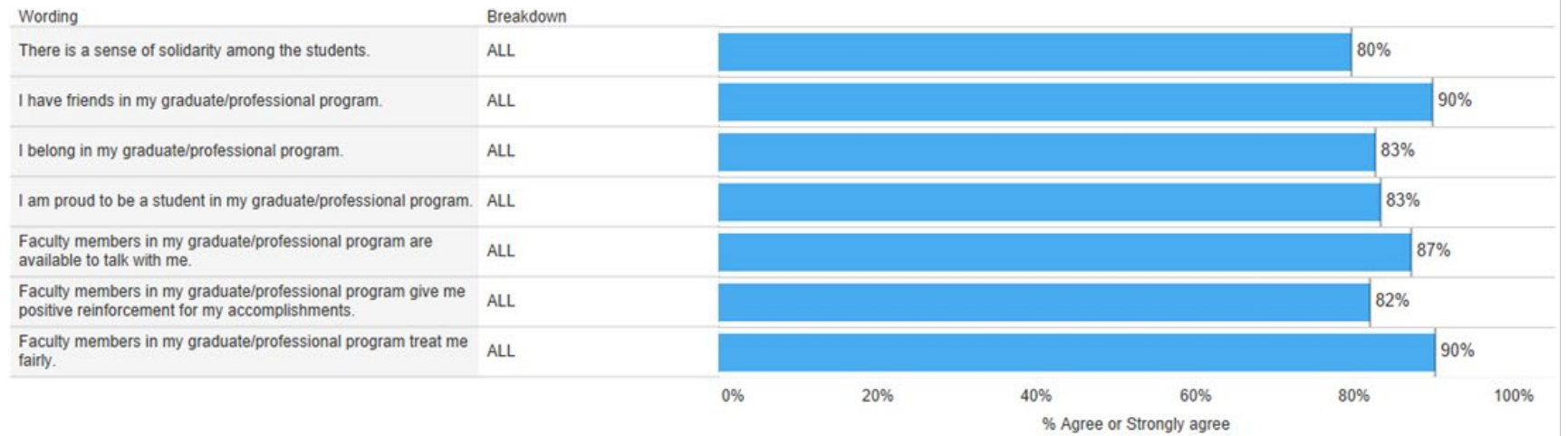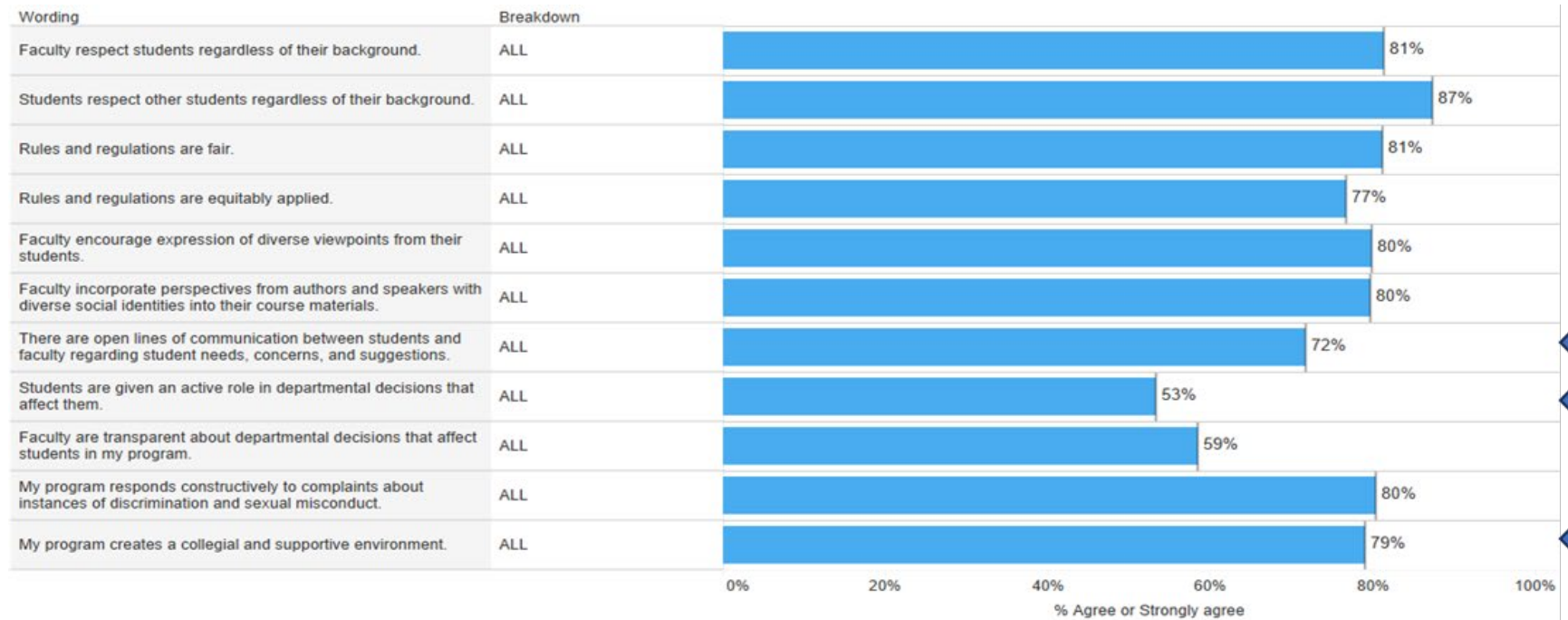**What opportunities do professors have to interact with all PhD students in your department?**

ⓘ Start presenting to display the poll results on this slide.

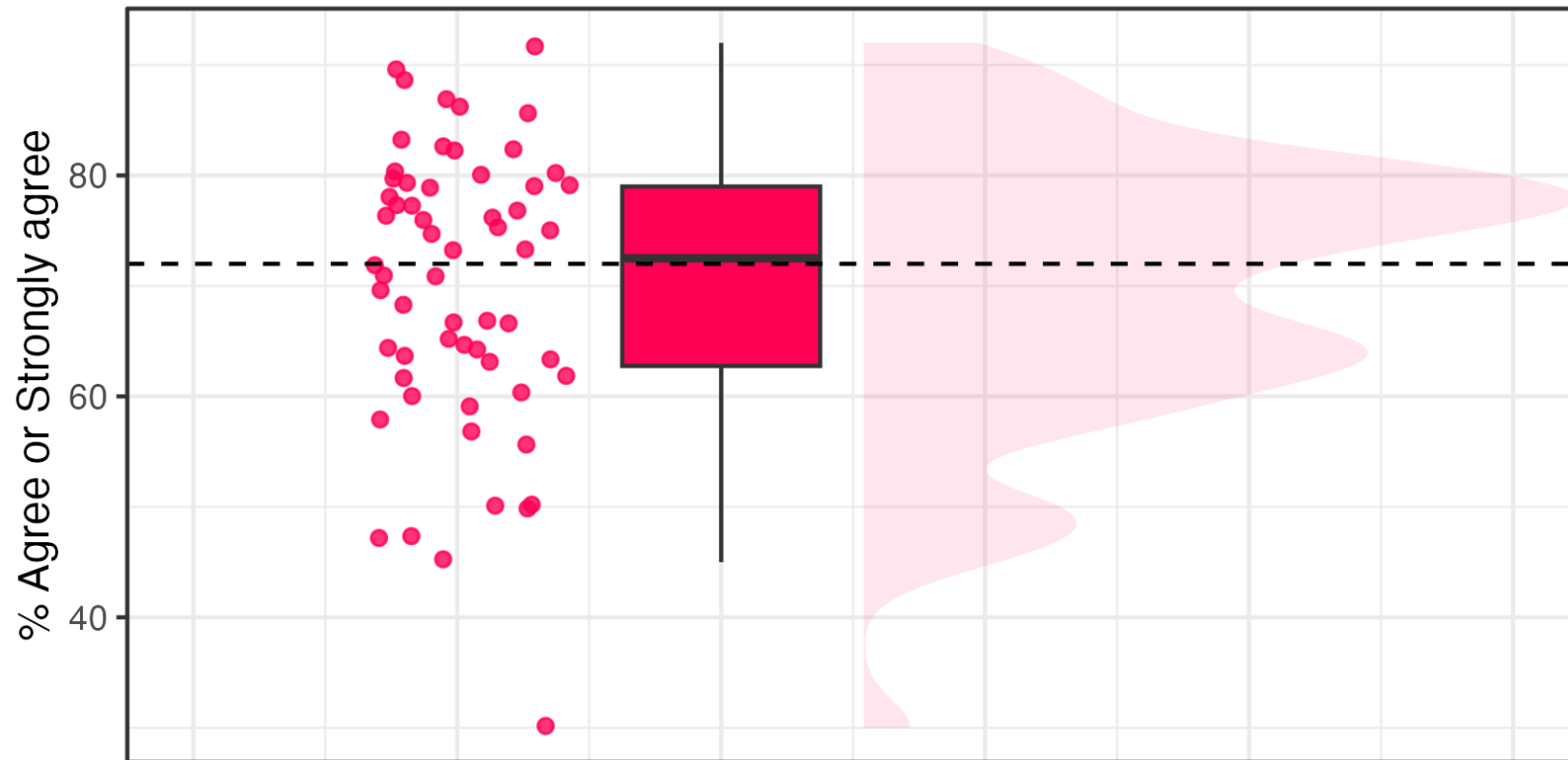# gradSERU results on graduate program climate

- gradSERU – Graduate Student Experience in the Research University

- Survey period: March 18 – May 10, 2024

- 1945 doctoral students from all faculties participated – 47.3% response rate

gradSERU results: program climate and sense of belonging

Wording	Breakdown	% Agree or Strongly agree
Faculty respect students regardless of their background.	ALL	81%
Students respect other students regardless of their background.	ALL	87%
Rules and regulations are fair.	ALL	81%
Rules and regulations are equitably applied.	ALL	77%
Faculty encourage expression of diverse viewpoints from their students.	ALL	80%
Faculty incorporate perspectives from authors and speakers with diverse social identities into their course materials.	ALL	80%
There are open lines of communication between students and faculty regarding student needs, concerns, and suggestions.	ALL	72%
Students are given an active role in departmental decisions that affect them.	ALL	53%
Faculty are transparent about departmental decisions that affect students in my program.	ALL	59%
My program responds constructively to complaints about instances of discrimination and sexual misconduct.	ALL	80%
My program creates a collegial and supportive environment.	ALL	79%

| Wording	Breakdown	% Agree or Strongly agree
There is a sense of solidarity among the students.	ALL	80%
I have friends in my graduate/professional program.	ALL	90%
I belong in my graduate/professional program.	ALL	83%
I am proud to be a student in my graduate/professional program.	ALL	83%
Faculty members in my graduate/professional program are available to talk with me.	ALL	87%
Faculty members in my graduate/professional program give me positive reinforcement for my accomplishments.	ALL	82%
Faculty members in my graduate/professional program treat me fairly.	ALL	90%

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gradSERU results on graduate program climate

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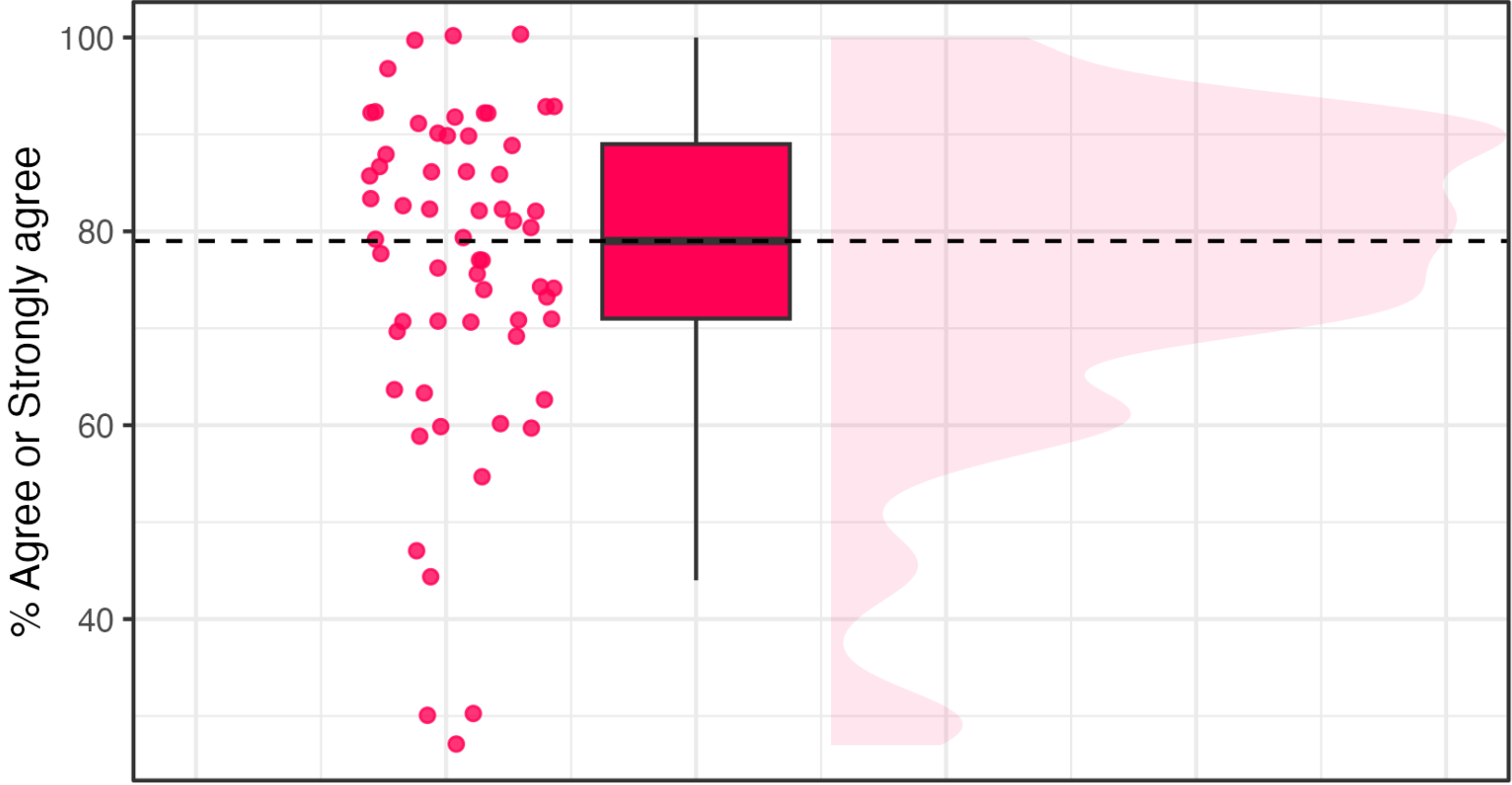
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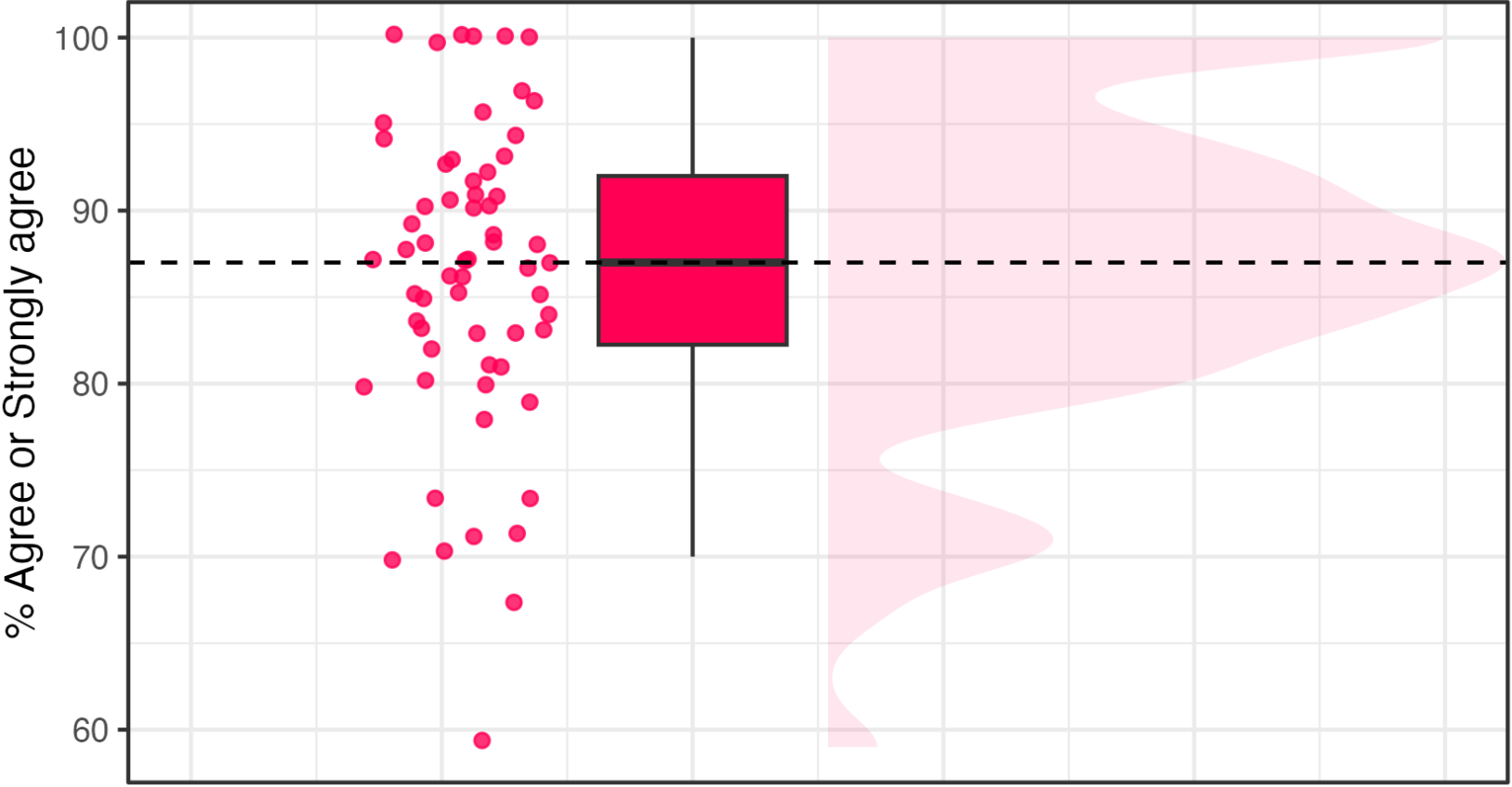Students are given an active role in departmental decisions that affect them.
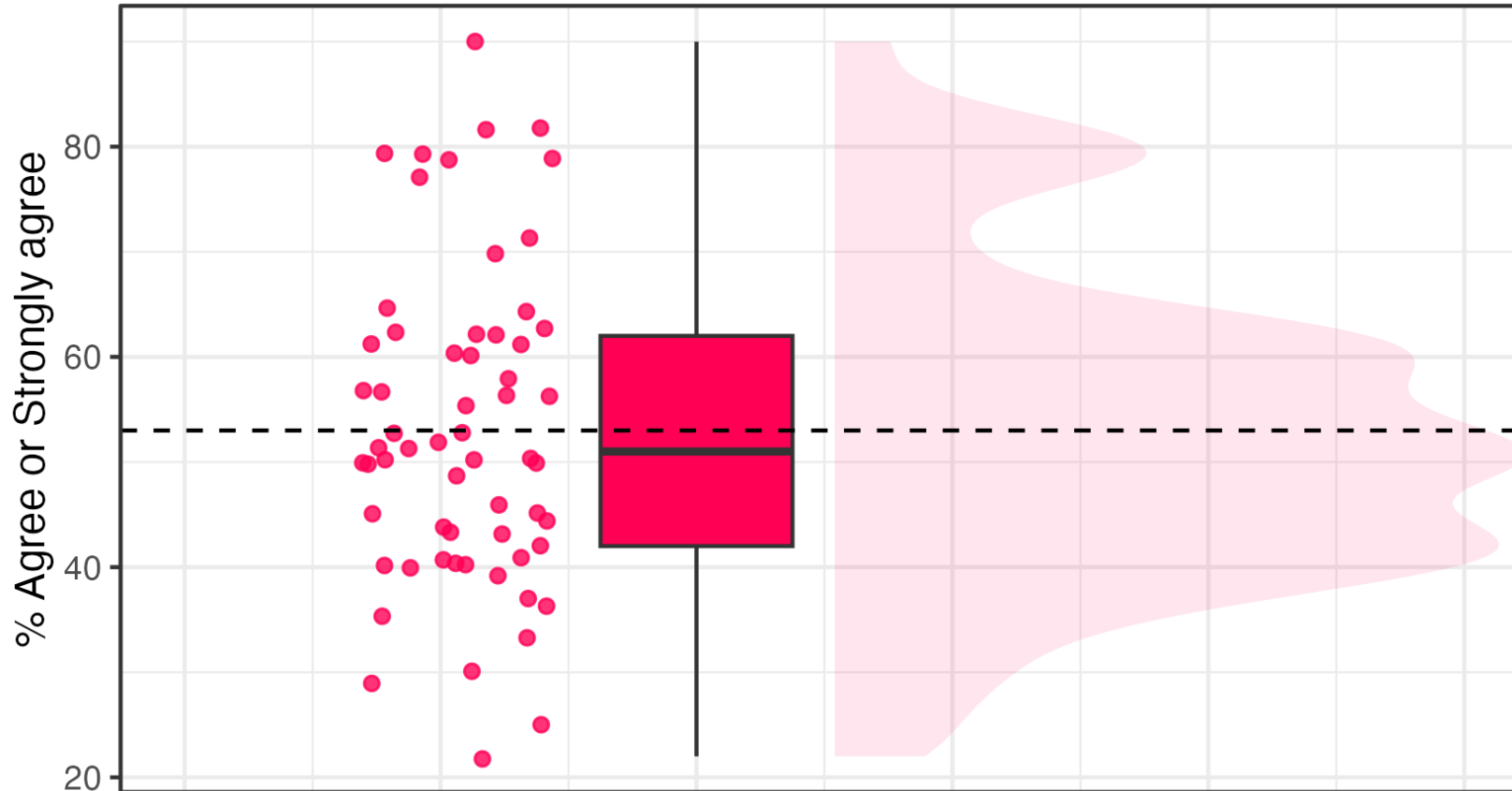
gradSERU results on graduate program climate

My program creates a collegial and supportive environment.

gradSERU results on sense of belonging

Faculty members in my graduate/professional program are available to talk with me.

Building a Culture of Shared Supervision

Thinking of your role as a faculty member…

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How often do students come to you to discuss problems with supervision?

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Building a Culture of Shared Supervision

- A culture of shared supervision implies faculty looking out for and providing *informal* support to students they do not supervise themselves

- Benefits:
  - Greater graduate student integration and sense of belonging
  - Problems identified sooner and solved more quickly
  - Supervisors don't bear sole responsibility for graduate student wellbeing
  - Happier students do better research and finish their degrees more quickly

Shared Supervision in Practice – some ideas

- Attend departmental events and interact with graduate students to build trust and rapport

- Participate actively in supervisory committees, including meeting frequently with graduate students

- Create opportunities for students to share their research with others in the unit

- Create opportunities for students to serve on a variety of departmental committees

Shared Supervision and Multiple Mentorship

- Unreasonable to expect supervisors to provide ALL mentorship that supervisees may require (see resources from [Council of Graduate Schools](#), [Rackham Graduate School](#), [University of Massachusetts](#))

- At GPS we encourage graduate students to seek out "multiple mentors" during their time at McGill

- Important to provide avenues for graduate students to find and contact potential mentors within and outside their units

Case Study

You attend a talk organized by your department and are happy to see several PhD students also attending. After the talk, you overhear one of the students complaining to another about their supervisor (who is on sabbatical doing research outside of the country). The student has not been able to contact their supervisor to discuss a problem they are facing and worry about falling behind schedule.

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If no, why not?

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Case Study - Discussion

Resources

Where can you direct students who need specific support, but you don't have capacity to help?

Improving relationship with supervisor:
- Supervision website
- Skillsets supervision series

General goal setting and motivation:
- myPath

Resources - continued

Career/professional development support:
- [CaPS](#)
- [Skillsets](#)
- [College of Graduate Mentorship](#)
- [Doctoral Internship Program](#)
- [Beyond the Professoriate](#)

Writing help and motivation:
- [Graphos](#)

Resources - continued

Supervisory relationships gone wrong:

- GPS Associate Deans
- Ombudsperson
- Dean of Students

Harassment:

- Office for Mediation and Reporting

Mental Health Concerns:

- McGill Student Wellness Hub and Local Wellness Advisors
- Dean of Students Case Managers

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Resources - continued

- **Getting involved and making friends**:
  - Campus Life and Engagement
  - Peer mentorship programs
  - McGill recreation programs
  - Office of Religious and Spiritual Life
  - Student Clubs and Services
  - PGSS
  - program-level graduate student associations.

Thank you!

Questions?

associatedeans.gps@mcgill.ca