



# School of Physical and Occupational Therapy

EXCELLENCE THROUGH GROWTH

## Graduate Supervisory Committee Members and Conflict of Interest

The Supervisory Committee is instrumental in guiding the successful efforts of Graduate Students engaged in research. **Supervisory Committees for all Graduate Students are to be identified and agreed upon by all parties concerned in the first half of the first semester of study.**

Supervisors have a responsibility to avoid including on the supervisory team anyone with whom they have a personal relationship. It is the supervisor's role to ensure that there is no real or perceived conflict of interest among all members of the supervisory team proposed.

Specific definitions have been developed regarding these regulations. Many faculty have close personal relationships with members of the broader academic community. For example, some members of the faculty are married to persons with faculty appointments at McGill or other universities. Spouses and other family members including any consensual amorous relationships are specifically identified as persons with a conflict of interest, and thus cannot serve on the supervisory team. Scientific members of the spouse's research lab also should not be included on the student's supervisory team to avoid the appearance of a potential conflict of interest.

Supervisors are also responsible for declaring any business relationships, and must not supervise a student employed in a company where the supervisor or a person with whom the supervisor has a close personal relationship or has an interest.

There may be existing Supervisory Committees where a spouse or scientific member of the spouse's lab is currently serving on the Supervisory Committee. In such cases, these individuals must resign from the committee immediately and the supervisor must notify the Graduate Program Director in writing. The School is responsible for assisting the student in finding another supervisor.

### **McGill University Policy on Conflicts of Interest in Academic Supervision and Evaluation**

Received by Senate - March 28, 1990 - Minute 108

Approved by the Board of Governors - May 28, 1990 - April 16, 2007 - Minute 7719

1. Where a member of the academic staff or a teaching assistant and a student are in a close personal relationship such that there is, or may be perceived to be, a conflict of interest or possible favouritism, then the staff member or teaching assistant shall decline or terminate a supervisory or evaluative role with respect to that student, and, where necessary, make appropriate alternative arrangements for the supervision and evaluation of the student's work.
2. For the purposes of this chapter, a close personal relationship shall include spouses, parent and child, siblings, and consensual amorous relationships.
3. The alternative arrangements for supervision and evaluation shall be made in confidence and shall not prejudice the status of the student, staff member or teaching assistant.
4. Nothing in this chapter shall be construed as condoning consensual amorous relationships between academic staff or teaching assistants and students.

### **A Handbook on Student Rights and Responsibilities**

<http://www.mcgill.ca/files/secretariat/Handbook-on-Student-Rights-and-Responsibilities.pdf>