

BOTANY Policy 85 Letter
LETTER OF UNDERSTANDING AND AGREEMENT BETWEEN
GRADUATE STUDENTS AND SUPERVISORS

Dear Student,

Welcome to the Graduate Program in the Botany Department. This form is intended to ensure that graduate students and their supervisors are in agreement about issues such as supervision, funding, research data & publications, and working conditions at the outset of the program of study. The terms outlined in this letter are in addition to the requirements covered in the Botany Department Graduate Regulations. This document should be read and discussed by students and their supervisors at the onset of the students' programs. *After signing, this letter will be kept in your file in the Botany Department Office.*

The following are terms of the graduate student and supervisor relationship in the Botany Department:

- 1) Supervisory Meetings.** The student and supervisor will meet with sufficient frequency so that the supervisor remains well informed of the student's current research progress and the student receives necessary and timely feedback. Formal meetings should be scheduled at least once per month (usually with a pre-set fixed time), but either the student or supervisor can request additional meetings as needed. It is expected that informal discussions will occur frequently between the student and supervisor. Students will be expected to present the results of their research to the laboratory group at least once per year. (Note: these meetings are in addition to the annual progress meetings held with the full supervisory committee).
- 2) Student Funding.** It is the policy of this department to guarantee funding for up to 2 years for MSc students, and up to 4 years for PhD students. Students and supervisors are required to complete and sign the "Department of Botany Grad Student Financial Support Form" each year which specifies the funding sources (RAships, scholarships, TAs, etc.) that comprise the base funding levels for MSc and PhD students. In order to maintain their eligibility for this funding, eligible students are required to apply for NSERC scholarships and UBC Affiliated Fellowships. The student and supervisor must be in agreement before the student accepts any positions for pay.
- 3) Research and Publication.** Original data records and materials collected during the thesis research belong to UBC, the supervisor, and the student and must remain with the lab; however, students can keep copies of the data upon completion of their program. Students are encouraged to publish the results of their research according to the standards in their field. Students must consult with their supervisor before public release of any data originating in the lab. The student must comply with all University standards and policies of scholarly integrity (<http://universitycounsel.ubc.ca/files/2013/04/policy85.pdf> UBC Policy 85). Failure to do so may result in being required to withdraw from the graduate program and other punitive actions by the University. If a patent or commercial development arises from the student's work, the intellectual property right will belong to the University (UBC Policy 88); however, income generated from the patent or commercialization will be shared between the University and the inventor, where the inventor includes all those, including graduate students, who contributed to the research results being protected and/or commercialized. If, after one year of leaving the lab, manuscripts on the research results have not been produced by students, such manuscripts may be produced by the supervisor who will assign authorship at his/her discretion. Authorship will be based on the level of intellectual contribution to the research, as determined collectively by the research team. Supervisors will contribute intellectually to all manuscripts in which they are coauthors and will typically be listed as the last (senior) author. Normally, the research team will agree on authorship issues before manuscripts are drafted. If there are disputes about authorship and timing of manuscript preparation within the research team, consultation with the department Head is strongly encouraged.

4) Research Progress and Timely Graduation.

Students and their supervisors should work towards achieving timely graduation. To this end, students will dedicate themselves full time to their research, studies, and teaching assistantships (if held). A sufficient quantity of work will be carried out to complete projects, meet deadlines, and successfully complete courses agreed to with the supervisory committee. Supervisors should ensure that students have adequate access to necessary facilities, equipment (computing or otherwise) and training. Work hours are at the discretion of the student and supervisor and students may often have to work outside of normal business hours (i.e. during evenings and weekends). Supervisor and student should minimize the number of hours spent engaging in activities/work that may interfere with the student's thesis completion, such as performing administrative tasks and excessive undergraduate training. Student and supervisor should discuss and agree on the student's commitment to non-thesis activities like side projects, mentorship, volunteering, and participation in discussion groups. These should benefit a student's professional development but not slow down progress significantly. Non-University holidays should be discussed between the supervisor and student.

5) Work conditions. The student and supervisor agree to observe UBC's Respectful Environment policy <http://www.hr.ubc.ca/respectful-environment/> excerpted below.

The University of British Columbia envisions a climate in which students, faculty and staff are provided with the best possible conditions for learning, researching and working, including an environment that is dedicated to excellence, equity and mutual respect. The University of British Columbia strives to realize this vision by establishing employment and educational practices that respect the dignity of individuals and make it possible for everyone to live, work, and study in a positive and supportive environment, free from harmful behaviours such as bullying and harassment.

... Bullying or harassment is objectionable and unwanted behaviour that is verbally or physically abusive, vexatious or hostile, that is without reasonable justification, and that creates a hostile or intimidating environment for working, learning or living. Harassment may be intentional or unintentional.

... Bullying or harassment does not include the exercise of appropriate managerial or supervisory direction, including performance management and the imposition of discipline; constructive criticism; respectful expression of differences of opinions; reasonable changes to assignments or duties; correction of inappropriate student behaviour; instructional techniques such as irony, conjecture, and refutation, or assigning readings or other instructional materials that advocate controversial positions; and single incidents of thoughtless, petty or foolish words or acts that cause fleeting harm.

Any changes to this agreement must be approved by the Head of Department and be consistent with UBC policy. Approved changes must be appended to the official document and initialled by all parties.

I have read and agree to the above terms.

Student's signature _____

Date _____

Print name _____

Supervisor's signature _____

Date _____

Print name _____