

Faculty of Law Graduate Student Supervisory Policy (June 2009)

1. INTRODUCTION

In 2009 the Faculty of Graduate Studies Council approved a new policy entitled [Granting of Supervisory Privileges](#). That policy devolves to the graduate programs (e.g. the Faculty of Law) the authority to approve individual supervisory assignments and supervisory committees and to change the supervisory status of a faculty member (with reporting of these matters to Graduate Studies). The Faculty of Graduate Studies retains the authority to make initial appointments of supervisors, although the new Graduate Studies policy does not affect the supervisory status of current faculty members. The Graduate Studies policy also stipulates that "whatever their supervisory status, supervisors are responsible for knowing the current regulations by which their students are governed." This document is made in light of and to be read together with the new Faculty of Graduate Studies policy.

2. INITIAL APPOINTMENTS

A graduate supervisor in the Faculty of Law should normally have a full-time Board appointment in the professorial ranks or hold the position of Executive Director or Research Associate with the Canadian Institute of Resources Law (CIRL). In requesting approval for supervisory status for a faculty member, the Dean of the Faculty of Law shall send the Dean of Graduate Studies a completed *Recommendation for Supervisory Status for Faculty Members with Continuing Appointments in the Professorial Ranks* form and the applicant's *curriculum vitae*. If the Dean of Graduate Studies approves the appointment, he/she will send an "appointment to supervisory status" letter to the faculty member.

Other University appointees, such as those with adjunct or emeritus status, are not precluded from becoming supervisors. Appointees at the rank of instructor are not normally eligible for supervisory status. Proposals for supervision by persons who do not have a continuing appointment in the professorial ranks must be submitted on a *Graduate Supervision by Individuals Without a Continuing Board Appointment* form, and are reviewed by an Associate Dean of Graduate Studies on a student-by-student basis, who makes a recommendation to the Dean of Graduate Studies for his/her decision.

Once supervisory status has been granted by the Faculty of Graduate Studies, a supervisor may supervise students in any graduate program at the University of Calgary subject to approval of that program's Graduate Program Director. Requests for supervision by outside faculty members of graduate students in the Faculty of Law will be considered on a case by case basis by the Graduate Program Director. As required by the Faculty of Graduate Studies policy, if an outside supervisor is approved to supervise or co-supervise a graduate student in Law, the Graduate Program Director for the Faculty of Law shall notify the supervisor's home program.

3. CHANGES IN SUPERVISORY STATUS

Once the Dean of Graduate Studies approves a faculty member as a supervisor, the Dean of the Faculty of Law will approve changes in supervisory status in accordance with this policy. The change must be reported to the Faculty of Graduate Studies on the form *Change of Supervisory Category for Faculty Members with Continuing Appointments in the Professorial Ranks*, for entry into the student information system. The Dean of the Faculty

of Law and the Graduate Program Director must ensure that each supervisor understands the responsibilities attendant upon supervision and must notify a faculty member of any change in his or her supervisory status.

4. INDIVIDUAL SUPERVISORY ASSIGNMENTS

Each student who is admitted to the LLM program is automatically assigned the Graduate Program Director as their interim supervisor, with responsibility for guiding the student with his/her course work. Students admitted to a Special Case PhD program must have a supervisor and supervisory committee in place at the time of admission.

Choosing a thesis or major paper supervisor is the student's responsibility, and is an extremely important decision. There are two important considerations that need to be balanced in selecting a supervisor: subject area expertise and academic and personal compatibility. It is important that the individual selected as a supervisor has enough background in the area to provide useful guidance. It is also important for students and supervisors to feel comfortable with each other so that students receive the kind of support and attention needed to complete their thesis or major paper. Usually, it is possible to find both academic expertise and compatibility in one person. All graduate students are encouraged to discuss their research interests, research projects and support during their first two terms in the program with members of the Faculty of Law and CIRL. Profiles of faculty members and CIRL research associates and lists of their publications are maintained on the [Faculty of Law](#) and [CIRL](#) web sites. Based on these discussions and reviews of publications, students should be in a position to approach an individual and obtain their consent to their assignment as the student's thesis or major paper supervisor. The supervisor assumes the responsibility to oversee the student's research work, including the preparation of the thesis or major paper, defense of the thesis and completion of the student's program.

The Graduate Program Director does not, as a policy, assign any student to a particular supervisor. However, the Graduate Program Director must approve all assignments of individual students to supervisors and will provide suggestions to students regarding potential supervisors based upon the workload of various faculty members and the maintenance of an equitable distribution of supervisory responsibilities. The Graduate Program Director will also make available to all LLM students relevant non-confidential information on potential supervisors, including number of current graduate students, research funding, and time to completion of previous students. The Graduate Program Director shall ensure that a completed *Appointment of Supervisor* form is sent to the Faculty of Graduate Studies. LLM thesis based students should aim to have a supervisor in place within six months of initial registration and must have a supervisor in place within 12 months. LLM course-based students should aim to have a major paper supervisor in place before they have completed all other course-work requirements for the program.