Acknowledgements

Judith Stoddart, Associate Provost for Collection & Arts and MSU’s Grad School; Ann Ryan, Professor in the Psychology Dept. who provided the model for this checklist and; Esther Thorson, ComArtSci Associate Dean of Grad Studies who supported and contributed to this Checklist; Bree Holtz, Associate Professor in Advertising who asked her students for feedback; Grad students: Ireland A. Ingram, Huiyi Lui, Amanda Allard – CAC GA Rep., COM Ph.D. Student

Anastasia Kononova – Associate Professor, Advertising + Public Relations

Linda White – J-School Grad Rep., I&M Ph.D. Student

Ahmed Yousef – CSD Ph.D. Student

Geri Alumnit Zeldes, Ph.D. – Professor, School of Journalism
Overview
The purpose of this Advisee and Adviser Checklist is to align expectations and to discuss goals and parameters at the beginning of a Grad Student’s program. This template can be altered to meet individual needs — for example, philosophies, personalities, the department’s policies and the home discipline’s norms. The Checklist should be re-visited at least annually to ensure continued alignment as well as to accommodate major changes, for example, a change in circumstances, expectations or adviser.

The Advisee is the graduate student, and the Adviser is the faculty member formally assigned by the program or unit to assist the Advisee in selecting coursework and navigating the expectations of the graduate program.

Mission
The intent of this agreement is to foster understanding between Advisers and Advisees, thereby creating an environment for graduate students in which they feel supported and prepared to become a professional and/or scholar. Graduate school and academia should be a place to learn ethical standards in the pursuit of creating new knowledge. Herein, is an opportunity to grow and learn.

Building a Mentorship Network
To build a supportive environment, an Advisee may also select other faculty and students in and outside ComArts to be mentors who will help the Advisee gain knowledge in select areas; these mentors, however, are not bound by this Checklist. If an adviser doesn’t have the answer to a question, Advisees, you are encouraged to reach out for answers from other faculty or graduate students in your program. Having peer mentors can help new students ease the transition to graduate school.

Changing Advisers/Advisees
Advisees and Advisers, we understand goals, interests and other factors change. At any stage, know that you may ask the Grad Director of your unit or program to change an advisee or adviser.

   • IMPORTANT: if you are a graduate student who is thinking of switching advisers please be sure to notify all parties (former adviser, current adviser, and graduate director) of changes. If you need assistance in communicating the changes, contact the graduate director.
In case conflicts need to be resolved ...

If conflicts or issues arise between Advisers and Advisees, please contact the Grad Director of your program, your unit Chair/Director or any other ComArtSci administrators — the Graduate Studies Dean, DEI Director or Human Resources Director — who can address the situation.

MSU’s Mandatory Reporting, BTAT and Confidentiality Policies

Before reviewing the checklist, the adviser and advisee should also review below MSU’s policies created to ensure the safety of the community and to also assist those in crises:

- Unless designated as a confidential source, employees are obligated to report sexual harassment, sexual violence, sexual misconduct, stalking, and relationship violence that are observed in university-sponsored events or learned as an employee at MSU (https://civilrights.msu.edu/policies/index.html)

- In an emergency where student behaviors present an imminent risk to the health and safety of the individual or others, employees must call 911. Even in a non-emergency, in which students display emotional distress or behavioral issues, employees can call MSU Police Department’s non-emergency line at 517-355-2221 and/or report concerns to the MSU Behavioral Threat Assessment Team via the online reporting form at http://btat.msu.edu/referral-form/

- Information that could affect a student’s academic standing or progress is not confidential and may be shared with other faculty or administrators on a need-to-know basis.
Checklist

The following checklist is long and not all of the goals may apply. However, many do. This is a tool to start and continue conversations between Advisers and Advisees. See the Appendix for an example of an email to send your Adviser to request a meeting to complete the Checklist.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ Student's short-term goals over the next year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Advising needed to achieve these goals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Student's long-term goals (i.e., goals for their career post-graduate school)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Advising needed to achieve long-term goals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Adviser's short- and long-term goals for student</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ Specific skills student is expected to learn from research work with the adviser (e.g. oral/written skills, grant writing, lab management, Institutional Review Boards, ethics codes, disclosures, copyrights, study design, literature review, hypothesis testing, data collection, data analysis and interpretation, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Expected participation in research work, outside of RA-ship duties, including who will be monitoring, evaluating and communicating with the student (e.g., lab responsibilities, hours, vacations/time off, lab policies, checking in on hours worked)?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Expected interaction with other team members such as faculty and other students.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ If student is engaged in multiple projects, the adviser and advisee should discuss which project should be prioritized.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- Authorship expectations (e.g., criteria for authorship, authorship order and duties, discipline norms)

- Adviser and student responsibility for the quality of manuscripts and presentations, including expectations around reviewing drafts

- Expectations around when and where student research is presented/published. Specifically, advisers and advisees should discuss the quality of journals versus spam, open-access publishing requests that require authors to pay a publishing fee.

- Articulate clearly who owns the research data and creative work, as a function of who collects the data, analyzes it, employment status of the student, etc.

### Milestones and Coursework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- Timing of major milestones and other program activities (e.g., practicum, externships, internships, comprehensive exams, proposals, thesis, dissertation, defense, graduation). It will be useful to create a table of critical dates. See the Appendix for an example of a table.

- It will also be useful to use the Graduate Handbook to discuss the requirements and preparation for each milestone, especially the practicum and comp exam.

- Responsibility for the quality of theses and dissertations. On major milestone projects, agree on a plan for the adviser to provide feedback and the advisee to make the suggested revisions.

- Adviser input into membership on student committees (e.g., thesis committee, comprehensive exam/guidance committee) and non-lab activities (e.g., coursework, practicum, consultation/working with other research/industry groups)
### Adviser/Advisee Styles

- Adviser’s/Advisee’s conceptualization of roles (e.g., a guide, a teacher/trainer, an advocate, giver of emotional support, colleague, friend, boss/employee, etc.) See Resource page for types of Mentor/Trainee relationships.
- As a prompt to discuss communication styles, the Adviser/Advisee are encouraged to take and review results of this personality test: [https://www.16personalities.com](https://www.16personalities.com)
- Adviser’s areas of expertise and identification of additional guidance needed from other advisers/faculty members/professionals (be sure to discuss whose responsibility it is to seek out additional guidance, if needed)
- Expected duration of the adviser/advisee relationship
- Procedures for conflict resolution for adviser/advisee
  Note: Students should be able to report dissatisfaction with aspects of the relationship without negative impact from the adviser.

### Funding

- Expectations for student funding this year (e.g., RA/TA, student fellowship/training grant)
- General expectations for funding for the student’s time in the program (i.e., RA/TA, fellowships/grants/scholarships)
- Expectations for funding of student research and independent projects
- Expectations for funding conference/workshop travel, registration, software, etc.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional Development</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ Opportunities for professional development beyond the standard program offerings and training</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Ethical, legal, and professional standards the student should learn</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Getting a job, prepping for the job talk and process, letters of rec., building networks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Communication style and timing (<em>email response time, texting/calling, office drop-ins</em>)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Meetings (<em>frequency, duration, location, agenda required?</em>)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Responsibility for initiating check-ins and updating progress for data analyses, manuscripts, conference posters/presentations, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Additional areas to discuss:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix

Foundational Values

for Graduate Student and Faculty Mentoring Relationships at MSU

Effective mentoring relationships are formed and sustained through principles of reciprocity and mutual responsibility. Mentors and mentees should respect one another both as researchers/scholars/creative practitioners and as individuals. That respect is formed through a shared commitment to scientific, creative and professional excellence, and a recognition of these common values:

• Commitment to respect and care
  - Establishing a relationship based on trust and open communication
  - Engaging in ways that are respectful and culturally responsive
  - Actively promoting an environment of civility
  - Using inclusive and non-discriminatory language

• Commitment to professionalism, ethics, and integrity
  - Communicating regularly about expectations in the graduate degree program in the disciplinary field.
  - Promoting the highest standards of integrity in research, scholarship, and creative activities
  - Engaging in continuing professional development in mentoring skills

• Commitment to the professional and personal growth and independence of the student
  - Talking with students about their interests in a range of career paths
  - Encouraging and supporting career exploration and professional development
  - Supporting mental and physical health

Example of an email graduate Students could use to request a meeting w/ their adviser to complete the Checklist

Dear Professor,

May I meet w/ you virtually or in person to complete the “Adviser/Advisee Checklist” that I received from our Graduate Studies Director?

The meeting would take at least 30 minutes. Before we review the Checklist, I’d like to learn more about your professional background, specifically:

• Why did you choose the schools you attended?
• How did you become interested in your research area?
• Would you share what you learned from your advisers and mentors while you were a grad student?

Thank you in advance for your time

Regards,

Grad Student Name
### Example of an MA milestone table from JRN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Courses</th>
<th>MA Project/Thesis</th>
<th>Internship/Job Search</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2021</td>
<td>JRN 801, JRN 492 &amp; JRN 821</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2021</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2021</td>
<td>JRN 802, JRN 804 &amp; JRN 810</td>
<td>Select MA Committee. Submit and defend MA proposal. Enroll in JRN 896</td>
<td>In December, start applying for internships for Summer 2022.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2022</td>
<td>JRN 413, JRN 805 &amp; JRN 806</td>
<td>Work on MA project</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2022</td>
<td></td>
<td>Complete MA project. Defend. Present at MAven Hour.</td>
<td></td>
<td>At the beginning of the semester apply for graduation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2022</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Suggested Timetable for the I&M Ph.D. Program

1st Year
First Semester
• Engage adviser and other potential mentors with the adviser/Advisee Checklist.
• Consider setting up weekly or biweekly with your adviser. This time can be used to check-in, consider future classes to take, discuss department or program research teams, learn how to manage the program, etc.
• When working on papers for classes, be sure to think about what you want to study and work your ideas into a paper proposal. This is a great topic to brainstorm with your adviser.

Second Semester
• These are great topics to discuss with your adviser.
  o Have you joined a research team?
  o Are you able to transpose first semester papers into conference presentations?
  o What about collecting data for any first semester papers?
• You’ve now met a number of professors. Consider which ones you might like on your comps/dissertation committee. Be sure to reach out to them via email or in person. Inform your adviser of who you’d like to have on your committee to make sure personalities don’t clash.
• Consider updating your CV with service information and any TA/RA appointments.
• Start an ORCID and Google Scholar profile.

2nd Year
First Semester
• This is the time you might consider changing advisers, if you find the relationship isn’t working. Remember you can change advisers at ANY time!
• When working on papers for classes, continue to think about what you want to study and work your ideas into class papers.
• If you haven’t prepared a paper(s) to be peer-reviewed or presented at conferences, consider talking to your adviser about how to accomplish this milestone.

Second Semester
• You may be close to finishing your required class list.
• If you haven’t finalized your comps/dissertation committee, now’s the time!
• Consider updating your CV with service information and any TA/RA appointments.
3rd Year

First Semester
• You may be taking your last required course.
• This is the year for comps. You should finalize your reading list with your adviser and have a committee meeting to go over it with your professors as well as meeting with them one-on-one about their expectations. Discuss with your adviser/committee how many questions you want and what shape your comps will take (over several weeks or several days etc.).

Second Semester
• This is the time to take your comps and possibly work on your dissertation proposal. This is something you should be discussing with your adviser.
• Consider updating your CV with service information and any TA/RA appointments.

4th Year

First Semester
• This semester, I&M students are typically on the job market while also working on the dissertation.

Second Semester
• Hopefully, this is your last semester. A timetable to complete and defend your dissertation should be discussed with your adviser.

Please note: Everyone moves at their own pace. Some students may have 5-year fellowships. So, this plan may be expanded. Some students may be able to transfer their master’s credits. This plan may be too long for them. It’s important to sit down and discuss these details with your adviser or someone you trust in academia.
Resources


The Graduate School. (2021) Mentoring. Optimizing Research Mentoring Relationships — To Promote Inclusive Excellence in Graduate Education at MSU. Research:
