

# DISPUTE RESOLUTION MECHANISMS (WITH FLOWCHART)

Regardless of the best intentions of all involved, conflict can arise in the course of graduate studies. Depending on the type of conflict and the issues involved, different resolution mechanisms will be appropriate. Four types of conflict can arise in the course of graduate studies. These are:

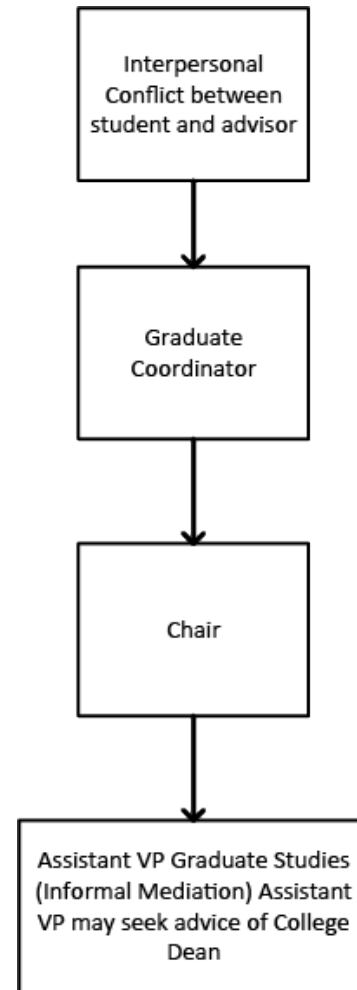
1. Interpersonal conflict between the student and the advisor.
2. Dispute about evaluation of progress, qualifying or oral examination; includes procedural irregularity.
3. Disruptive, abusive, or destructive behaviour on the part of the advisor.
4. Disruptive, abusive, or destructive behaviour on the part of the student.

Following is a brief summary of the various conflict resolution processes currently in place at the University and based upon current policies. Complainants, responding administrators or committees who believe they have or are dealing with a human rights complaint may, at any time, consult the University's Human Rights Policy and the Human Rights and Equity Office. The attached flow chart provides a visual representation of the various processes.

## Interpersonal Conflict Between the Student and the Advisor

As in any other domain of human endeavour, conflict can arise between the student and Advisor simply because of differences in personality, communication style, or unspoken expectations. In many cases, such conflict can be resolved through improved communication, but occasionally the situation deteriorates to the point where external mediation is required. The proposed dispute resolution mechanism is consistent with other University policies, emphasizing action first at the local level. The initial complaint should be brought to the attention of the Graduate Program Coordinator, but if that individual is unable to resolve the dispute the Chair should become involved. If the Chair cannot resolve the matter, the Chair should inform the Assistant Vice-President (Graduate Studies) who, in consultation with the College Dean, will provide informal mediation.

**[Flowchart indicating the following: Interpersonal Conflict between the student and the advisor should be brought to the Graduate Coordinator and then to the Chair if the dispute cannot be resolved. If the Chair cannot resolve the dispute it should be taken to the Assistant VP Graduate Studies who will in consultation with the College Dean provide informal mediation.]**

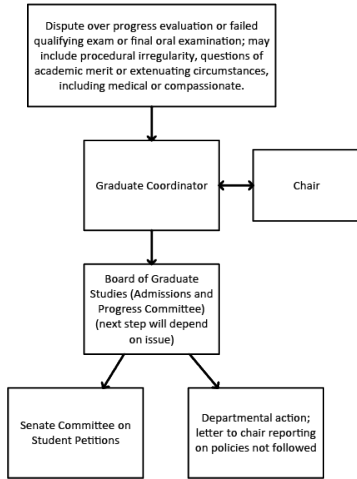


## Dispute About Evaluation of Progress, Qualifying or Oral Examination (Includes Procedural Irregularity)

Disputes may arise regarding the quality of a student's work or the procedures used to assess this work. For example, there may be disagreement about the outcome of a failed qualifying examination or final oral examination. There may also be disagreement over the methods of assessing academic work or evaluating progress, including the means used to accommodate a student's disability or special circumstances. These disputes should first be brought to the attention of the Graduate Program Coordinator who may also consult the Chair. If the matter cannot be resolved at the departmental level, and/or the Department is unsure about options for resolution, the case should be referred to the Admissions & Progress Committee of the Board of Graduate Studies. The Committee will issue a ruling on the case to the Department, and may require specified action. Such action may include a requirement to seek independent evaluation by one or more internal or external assessors of the student's work. If the Admission and Progress Committee upholds the Departmental decision, and the student wishes to make the case that the methods and criteria used by the Department did not conform to procedures established by Senate, the student may appeal the decision to the Senate Committee on Student Petitions within 10 working days.

**[Flow chart indicating the following: Disputes over progress evaluation, failed qualifying exams or final oral examination; may include procedural**

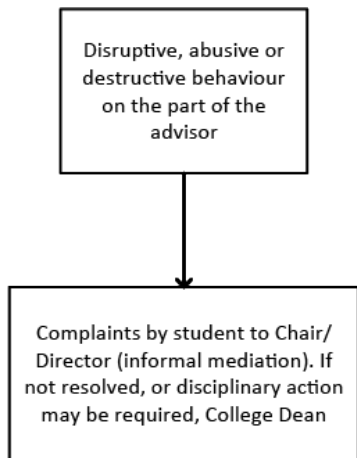
irregularity, questions of academic merit or extenuating circumstances, including medical or compassionate should be brought to the Graduate Coordinator who may consult the Chair. If the matter cannot be resolved, the case should be referred to the Admission and Progress Committee of the Board of Graduate Studies. The committee will issue a ruling which may require action by the department. If the Admission and Progress Committee upholds the departmental decision and the student wishes to appeal the decision, they must submit an appeal to the Senate Committee on Student Petitions within 10 working days.]



### Disruptive, Abusive or Destructive Behaviour on the Part of the Advisor

Disruptive, abusive, and destructive behaviour on the part of the Advisor is unacceptable in a scholarly environment. Investigation and remediation of such cases will be as per the Collective Agreement (<http://www.uoguelph.ca/facultyjobs/collectiveagreementapr262010.pdf>) between the University and University of Guelph Faculty Association.

[Flowchart indicating the following: Complaints of disruptive, abusive or destructive behavior on the part of the advisor should be made by the student to the Chair/Director and if not resolved by require mediation by the College Dean.]



### Disruptive, Abusive, or Destructive Behaviour on the Part of the Student

Disruptive, abusive, and destructive behaviour on the part of the student is also unacceptable in a scholarly environment. The University's Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy, which is stated in the Graduate Calendar, lists a number of offences against individuals and property. Advisors, fellow students, or other faculty may register an informal complaint about a student's behaviour with the Graduate Program Coordinator or Chair, who will attempt to resolve the matter. The Graduate Program Coordinator/Chair may also choose to involve the Assistant Vice-President (Graduate Studies) in attempting to reach a resolution. If the Graduate Program Coordinator, in consultation with the Chair and/or Dean, is unable to resolve the matter, a formal complaint should be made, normally to Security Services, who take carriage of the complaint through the University's Judicial Process.

[Flowchart indicating the following: Complaints of disruptive, abusive or destructive behavior on the part of the student should be made to the Graduate Coordinator or Chair, who may choose to involve the Assistant VP Graduate Studies. If the matter remains unresolved a complaint should be made to Security Services, who will take carriage of the complaint through the University's Judicial Process.]

