

## Graduate Student & Faculty Agreement Form

### Why use this template?

In the collaboration between graduate students and their advisors (a.k.a. committee chair), much is sometimes left unsaid. The student and the advisor sometimes enter into a working relationship without having a conversation about expectations, obligations, and the practical aspects of working together. How often do we meet? What do we hope to achieve in these meetings? How do we spend our time most effectively? What are the responsibilities of the student and the advisor for creating the right work environment?

Viewing this agreement as a contract to which all parties are bound likely does not set the right tone for a fruitful collaboration. Instead, this template for an agreement can be used as a tool and guide for a conversation between graduate student and advisor. Signing the agreement might help to increase the commitment to what is discussed, but that is up to the student and the advisor.

## ADVISING AGREEMENT BETWEEN GRADUATE STUDENT AND ADVISOR

### Commitments of Graduate Student

- **I acknowledge that I have the primary responsibility for the successful completion of my degree.** I will be committed to my graduate education and will demonstrate this by my efforts in the classroom and the research team. I will maintain a high level of professionalism, self-motivation, engagement, scientific curiosity, and ethical standards.
- **I will meet regularly with my research advisor and provide them with updates on the progress and results of my activities and experiments.** In preparation for each meeting, I will create an agenda and will provide figures and other material in a way that helps the meeting be efficient and productive.
- **I will work with my research advisor to develop a thesis/project for my culminating activity.** This will include establishing a timeline for each phase of my work. It will include extra reading/research/critical thinking above and beyond structured coursework, which I recognize as an opportunity.
- **I will strive to meet established deadlines.** In situations where I cannot meet a deadline, I will inform my advisor as soon as possible and propose a new deadline, possibly with changes in the work plan.
- **I will work with my research advisor to select a thesis advisory committee.** I will commit to meeting with this committee at least each semester (or more frequently, according to program guidelines). I will be responsive to the questions, advice, and criticism from my committee.
- **I will be knowledgeable of the policies and requirements of my graduate program, graduate school, and institution.** I will commit to meeting these requirements which can be found on the [Graduate Studies website](#). Navigating these policies and requirements is my responsibility.
- **I will review and comply with institutional policies, including academic program milestones.** I will comply with both the letter and spirit of all institutional safe laboratory practices and animal-use and human-research policies and follow ethics training and seek approval of the IRB/IACUC as required.
- **I will be a good citizen in the research group.** I will agree to take part in shared responsibilities. I will be respectful of, tolerant of, and work collegially with all personnel.
- **I will discuss policies on authorship and attendance at professional meetings with my research advisor.** I will work with my advisor to submit all relevant research results that are ready for publication in a timely manner prior to my graduation.
- **I will take advantage of institutional resources that can assist in my research and career development.** Examples of such resources are the Writing Center or the Career Center.

## Commitments of Graduate Advisor

- **I will be committed to the mentoring of the graduate student.** I will be committed to the education and training of the graduate student as a future member of the scientific community.
- **I will be committed to the research project of the graduate student.** I will help to plan and direct the graduate student's project, contribute to the setting of reasonable and attainable goals, and establish a timeline for completion of the project. I recognize the possibility of conflicts between the interests of externally funded research programs and those of the graduate student and will not let these interfere with the student's pursuit of their thesis/project research.
- **I will be committed to meeting one-on-one with the student on a regular basis.**
- **I will clearly and explicitly communicate expectations and performance standards.** This includes communicating what the student needs to improve as well as what I see as their strengths and potential.
- **I will be knowledgeable of, and guide the graduate student through, the requirements and deadlines of their graduate program as well as those of Chico State.**
- **I will help the graduate student select a thesis advisory committee.**
- **I will lead by example and facilitate and encourage the training of the graduate student in professional skills needed to be a successful scientist.** These skills may include oral and written communication skills, grant writing, lab management and lab safety, animal and human research policies, the ethical conduct of research, and scientific professionalism.
- **I will not require the graduate student to perform tasks that are unrelated to their training program and professional development.**
- **I will discuss authorship policies regarding papers with the graduate student.** In publications and external presentations, I will value and acknowledge the graduate student's scientific contributions to the work in my research group where appropriate, and I will work with the graduate student to publish their work in a timely manner prior to the student's graduation.
- **I will discuss intellectual policy issues with the student regarding disclosure, patent rights, and publishing research discoveries.**
- **I will provide for every graduate student under my supervision an environment that is intellectually stimulating, emotionally supportive, safe, and free of harassment.**
- **Throughout the graduate student's time in my research group, I will be supportive, equitable, accessible, encouraging, and respectful.** I will foster the graduate student's

professional confidence and encourage critical thinking, skepticism, and creativity.

## Commitments of both

- **We will meet** <insert: once a week, once every two weeks, other ...>.
- **In our meetings we will remember the four P's: Progress, Problems, Planning, and Play.** While working together we keep track of what must be achieved, but we leave room for light-hearted conversation and the joy of research.
- **We will discuss policies on work hours, sick leave, and vacation.** We will notify each other and fellow team members, as needed, in advance of any extended planned absences.
- **We will express concerns to each other in a timely and constructive way.**

**Student's name:**

**Signature:**

**Advisor's name:**

**Signature:**

**Program or Department:**

**Date:**