Today’s Seminar Aims To ...

1. Discuss what is a research project looks like?

2. Explore and understand roles and responsibilities in the student-supervisor relationship.

3. Consider issues that may arise and think about how to overcome them.

4. Discuss techniques for working with your supervisor and managing your relationship.
What is Research?

• The systematic investigation into and study of materials and sources in order to establish facts and reach new conclusions.

• Reality of research - All research is a process that involves considerable uncertainty, doubt and often the lack of quick or black-and-white answers. That's how discoveries are made. Get used to it. All of these are signs that the research is going well.
MY RESEARCH - Reality

PhD or Masters

Project Proposal
Research is a messy business
Takes time for structure and order to emerge
Need strong guidance to get you through the chaos
A good relationship with your supervisor will help to make it work
Exercise 1 – What makes a good research student?
What Makes A Good Research Student?

- Understand the reality of research.
- Can balance between study, play & family
- Keep your references up to date.
- Focus the research - picks something narrow to investigate, studies the topic in depth, and draws meaningful conclusions about it.
- Have a schedule – have a series of milestones to accomplish by a specific date
- Have a research question in mind - keep focus by working towards an answer to your research question
- Prioritize - Don't get hung up trying to understand everything at the outset - **don't try to tackle your subject all at once**
- Deliver - demonstrate progress.
- Use a system – RSS feed, reference management tool i.e. Mendeley, End note, Refworks, organise your notes and data, know technique of reading, collecting data, writing etc
- Know your resources.- Library, academic databases, lab, conferences etc
- Communicate - don’t be shy to **ask for help**
- Record things - Keep a small notebook and a pen with you everywhere to
- Attend conference
- Realize that your supervisor is busy
- Act like a researcher. Your research should always culminate in some definite result or conclusion about what you've investigated.
- Leave time for writing. Be sure to leave enough to time to write—and revise and edit—your paper. **Rule of thumb. Half the time researching, half the time writing.**
- Stay motivated
WHO IS MY SUPERVISOR?

- Member of academic staff as the main supervisor who:
  - has knowledge of a student's subject area and theoretical approach;
  - is a permanent member of the academic staff of the Faculty;
  - is usually assigned for the duration of a student's programme;
  - has no more than 15 PhD and MSc candidates (Prof), 10 (Prof. Madya) and 5 (Senior Lecturer)

- Every student will normally have additional supervision:
  - Both in your faculty or
  - One outside if inter-disciplinary or
  - One from other university if deem necessary

- Many responsibilities
WHAT DO SUPERVISOR DO?

- Teaching - undergraduate & postgraduates courses
- Administrative responsibility - Within the University, Faculty, Centre, Department etc
- Supervision – Diploma, Undergraduate, PhD and MSc Student
- Research – Researcher and Co Researcher
- Publications / Writing - papers, books, article etc
- Consultancy
- Attend conferences
- Other Professional roles – Academic Advisor, Editor, Referee for journals, Conference, External Examining (PhD, Masters degrees)
- Of course social life!!
Regulations for Research Degrees

Supervisor also involved in:

• Approving requests to change registration status
• Progress review
• Upgrade to PhD
• Ethics process
• Examination entry/nomination of examiners
• Attendance at viva examination
• Supporting period of corrections following examination result
HOW DO SUPERVISOR’S DO IT?

• All individual with their own style…
  – Organised?
  – Approachable?
  – Available?
  – Changeable?
  – Easy going?
Why Should You Manage Your Relationship with Your Supervisor(s)?

- He or she probably busier than you think they are
- He or she may not be aware of regulations to extent you are
- Your enthusiasm and organisation may impress them
- You want to complete on time with as few problems as possible
- He or she will be your key reference for future jobs etc.
HOW TO MAKE SV HAPPY?

Aim to make them happy to help you…

- Work as a colleague, however with respect - Do not always wait for instruction!!! Be proactive..

- Show your hard work and motivation – supervisor will be driven & happy to help you.
Working Together with Supervisor

- Maintain a good working relationship at all times
- Importance of supervisory meetings
  - Provide written reports - measure your progress
  - Keep records of your meetings
  - Ask for feedback - should be positive
  - Listen to your supervisor
  - Make sure you understand the feedback, Ask?
  - Review with your supervisor your progress
Am I A Good Research Student?

Exercise 2 – Am I a good research student?
What makes a good supervisor?

- Friendly
- Experienced
- Sympathetic
- Reliable
- Tough
- Available
- Patient
- Ability to mentor
- Good time management
Why do you think they do it?

- Research advancement
- Publication record
- Research profile
- Career progression
- Job satisfaction
Roles and Responsibilities

• **Step 1** - Take 5 minutes to rank your views on the statements shown in the ‘Expectations in Supervision’ questionnaire.

• **Step 2** - In pairs, discuss your rankings and agree a position representing each of your views for each category.
RELATIONSHIPS

Understanding:
1. Your PhD / MSc
2. Your responsibilities and those of your supervisor
3. Each other – how you like to work
4. Yourself
1. PhD / Masters Degree

- Why do I want one?
- Do I understand what is involve?
- What makes a good one?
- How is it examined?
2. Responsibilities

- Responsibilities of students, supervisors and examiners can be refer to the academic regulation handbook.

Page 37, 38 & 39 explains about supervision of research mode.
Supervision

• A candidate will be guided by a Supervisor/Panel of Supervisors appointed by the University.
• Candidate may propose his/her preferred Principal Supervisor for research work initiated by him/her subject to faculty approval.
• The Principal Supervisor functions as an academic advisor to the student.
• If deemed necessary, the University may appoint a panel of supervisors from academics on secondment, transferred or retired from the University, or qualified individuals from any other institutions.
• In certain cases where the Principal Supervisor is unable to complete his/her supervision due to unforeseen circumstances, the faculty shall submit application for Change of Supervisors to PPS immediately so that the process of student’s supervision will be unaffected.
• Supervisor(s) should not be in any way related to the student either by marriage or kinship.

Section 7.2 - Postgraduate Academic Regulations
Responsibilities of Supervisor / Supervisory Panel

1. To assume responsibility for the student by directing and guiding his/her research programme.

2. To assist the student to prepare his/her study plan based on the background, present progress and performance.

3. To identify any weakness and to evaluate the student’s progress and performance in major or minor/supporting areas in consultation with the assessment panel (if necessary).

4. To advise the student to audit or attend subjects relevant to the field of research and conduct relevant background reading and literature survey/review.

5. To advise the student on scholarly activities such as seminars, workshops, paper writing and presentations, conferences, and preparation of academic discussions.

Section 7.2.8 - Postgraduate Academic Regulations
6. To supervise and guide the student in the process of proposing and preparing their research work, indicating areas in the research that need amendments, corrections and revision, and to suggest the necessary changes needed to improve the quality of the research work.

7. To ensure that the student has access to the required resources and tools to proceed with the research work.

8. To ensure the regular contact of the student, oversee the successful completion of the study plans within a time frame, and submit the progress report to PPS.

9. To prepare a progress report on student’s research/academic performance at the end of each semester to the University.

10. To certify and ensure that the research work is of acceptable standard in content quality and presentation style and that it is ready for submission.

Section 7.2.8 - Postgraduate Academic Regulations
The supervisor must ensure that the student has a plan for the research to be conducted and give necessary advice needed whether on academic or personal matters.
**RESPONSIBILITIES OF A SUPERVISOR – DURING RESEARCH**

- Provide guidance on the expected design and quality of research.
- Assist in conducting the fieldwork/survey.
- Ensure that the student keeps abreast with the development in the research field.
- Give advice on the deadlines for each stage of research.
- Review research papers and returns them with constructive comments within an appropriate period of time.
- Encourage the student to produce more publication.
- Make assessment and submit the research progress report every semester.
- Ensure that the student adheres to safety procedures while in the lab and during fieldwork.
- Conduct regular scheduled meeting sessions.
- Propose names of internal and external examiners.
- Ensure that the student is informed of all university regulations and matters related to registration.
- Review and ensure that the thesis has reached the level worthy of an award prior to submission to the School of Graduate Studies for examination purpose.

Centre for Graduate Study
RESPONSIBILITIES OF RESEARCH STUDENT

- Register Research Courses Every Semester
- Make sure that there is no outstanding fee every semester
- Submit progress report to supervisor every semester
- Schedule a meeting with a Supervisor
- Comply all the Post Graduate Rules & Regulation for Graduation
- Make a plan for the research progress
- Have a professional relationship with Supervisor
- Produce Publication
- Practice a good research ethics
The Student - Your Responsibilities

- Behave ethically
- Attend meetings with supervisor to discuss progress and any concerns
- Attend/participate in classes, seminars, lectures, other events
- Keep faculty informed of essential absences
- Manage learning responsibly
- Understand good scholarly practice
- Submit work by deadlines
- Seek and respond to feedback on written work
3. Understanding each other

• Each side of this relationships is taken by an individual with their own learning style and own style of management and working practice
4. What about me?

- What am I like to work with?
- What are my strength and weaknesses?
- How do they present opportunity & threats to the working relationship?

Exercise 3 – SWOT analysis..
Me

• You are your most valuable resources
• Understand how you work best
• Understand your learning style
• Understand how you interact with others
• What sort of supervision would you prefer?
• Do you need any specific help?
Working Together

- Communication
- Understanding expectations
- Understand individual styles of working and make allowances
- Keep positive
Improving the relationships: Summary

- Need to understand ourselves to understand how we impact the student/supervisor relationships
- Be proactive and positive when difficulties arise
Imagine yourself at the end of your PhD…

- How will you have changed?
  - professionally
  - personally

- What are your aspirations?

- What will your relationship with your supervisor be like?
How does the relationship change?

Beginning of PhD  Student / Teacher Relationship  Completion of PhD

Junior / Senior Relationship
What will you have learnt from your supervisor?

Research skill

- Increasing domain knowledge/experience
- Collecting and analysing data
- Generating research output
- Project management
- Exploitation of knowledge
- Understanding of the research environment and setting your own agenda
- Building a reputation / external contacts
- Writing research income.
What else?

Personal and professional skills

- Communication and presentation – verbal and written
- IT skills
- Numerical/ statistics skills
- Problem solving
- Reflecting on practice
- Time management
- Working with others
Remember

• Professionally there is probably no one better to advise on your strengths and weaknesses and help with career choices
• Key referee!!!
Hints & Tips

• Observe
• Get involved
• If you don’t ask you don’t get
• Ask nicely and you might get
• Know what you want
• Recognise that this changes over time
• Go for it and enjoy the experiences!!
Regulations On Supervision

- What do the Postgraduate Academic Regulations say?

Page 37, 38 & 39 explains about supervision of research mode
• The faculty shall recommend the appointment of a Supervisor/Supervisory panel for MSc and PhD students together with the submission of the candidate’s application for admission through JKTSPS to the Senate.
• If deemed necessary, the faculty may recommend or the student may apply for the appointment of a co-supervisor whose knowledge is essential to the research work.
• If deemed necessary, the faculty may recommend or the student may apply for the appointment of a field supervisor or associate supervisor whose knowledge is essential to the research work. Such an appointment shall be made only for a student who is conducting research work outside UTeM. The field supervisor shall be a staff member of the organisation where the student is carrying out his/her research.
• The JKPSF shall have the prerogative to determine the criteria as well as decide on the appointment of all supervisor/supervisory panels.

Section 7.2.7 - Postgraduate Academic Regulations
Change of Supervisor

• A student may apply with genuine reasons to change an existing supervisor, co-supervisor or field supervisor subject to JKTSPS approval. Such an application shall be made not later than Six (6) months for MSc and Twelve (12) months for PhD, after the appointment of the first supervisor.
• The application shall be submitted to PPS and must be accompanied by a written consent from the current supervisor, co-supervisor or field supervisor.
• The University reserves the right to appoint and/or to replace the Supervisor/Panel of Supervisors.

Section 7.2.9 - Postgraduate Academic Regulations
Living up to the idea ... ?

Meeting of the minds...

He's totally on to me. He knows I've done nothing this week!

I can see it in his disapproving eyes. He thinks I'm worthless!

Um, so... um...

Sigma w[v/kn]/phi

Hmmm. I see. Interesting.

Hmm. Squash game with Prof. Jones today. That old bugger.

Which reminds me, gotta pick up the dry cleaning.

And what's this guy's name again?

www.phdcomics.com
When Submitting Work To Your Supervisor

Cover sheet on every piece of work submitted with:

• Your name and year of PhD
• Your up-to-date thesis title
• An up-to-date chapter structure with full headings
• Highlight where today’s chapter or bit of work fits within this

Ensure each chapter first page has:

• Chapter number
• Full current title
• Details of word length, plus any missing element(s)
• Supervisors cannot comment usefully on your progress, or provide sound advice, unless they can see your thought process in writing
• Writing clarifies your thinking
• Conversation sometimes makes differences in view or misunderstandings
• Your supervisor gains information about your progress and thinking from your written work

Writing Is The Driver Of Good Supervision
Predictable difficulties

• Be aware of issues that can arise and have a strategy to minimise their effect on you and your work
Exercise 4:

Part 1 - Discuss any issues and difficulties you have with supervision or that you imagine happen in future with your classmates.

Part 2 – Choose one scenario in Part 1 and discuss how you might approach the situation and what action you could take to minimise its effects on your research.
Potential issues for STUDENTS …

- Lack of guidance
- Lack of availability
- Insufficiently critical
- Too critical
- Lack of knowledge in subject area
Potential issues for SUPERVISORS ...

- Overly dependent
- Lack of honesty
- Unresponsive/elusive
- Lack enthusiasm
- Don’t follow advice
- Oversensitive to criticism
- Lack commitment
BASIS of issues ...

- Lack of communication
- Mismatched expectations
- Personality clash
- Competing pressures
• Keep expectations realistic
• Be organised
• Be professional
• Be open, flexible and honest
• Discuss expectations at the beginning
• Give sufficient notice for requests
• Draw up an agenda for your meetings
• Record the outcome of meetings and email to supervisor(s)/use PhD Logbook
• Arrange next meeting ahead of time
• Alert supervisor(s) to problems as they arise
Overcoming issues | 3

If problems persist: Approach
1. Your supervisor (if possible)
2. Your Faculty’s Deputy Dean of Research and Postgraduate Study.

If issue is not resolved, you should approach Dean and (or) Deputy Dean of Graduate Studies
Associate Prof. Dr. Zulkifilie Bin Ibrahim,
Dean of Graduate Studies
• Appointment via Pn. Norerni.
• Office no: 06-3316881

Dr. Shajahan Bin Maidin,
Deputy Dean of Graduate Studies
• shajahan@utem.edu.my
• Office no: 06-3316818
Summary

- Research is a messy and frustrating business
- Your supervisor is a very busy person
- The majority of the students/supervisor relationships works very well
- Time management – meeting punctuality & meet due date for task
- Make them want to help you - show your hard work, motivation & discipline
- Make sure you are effective and organised
- Plan ahead to alleviate difficulties
- Be positive and pro active
- Enjoy your work

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Be honest and open with your supervisor(s) about your progress

Ensure that you provide your supervisor(s) ample time to comment on your work given their other commitments.

Respond to comments (feedback) as constructively as possible

Seek advice or support as soon as you think something is beginning to affect your progress

Be aware of the regulations
Finally

- Thank-you for listening
- Questions… ?