

**UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO
MEMORANDUM**

July 31, 2008

To: All Graduate Students
Faculty Deans
Associate Deans, Graduate and Assistants
Graduate Officers/Associate Chairs and Assistants

From: Alan George, Dean of Graduate Studies

Re: Resolution of Disputes Between TAs and Instructors and RAs and Supervisors

The relationship between a Teaching Assistant and his/her instructor and a Research Assistant and his/her supervisor is based on collegiality and mutual respect. This memo sets out the means to address disputes, misunderstandings and disagreements.

As it is in the best interests of all parties to address concerns informally and in a timely manner, a TA/RA is encouraged to communicate with his/her instructor/supervisor when a question arises about a decision or action affecting him/her. This communication can be either in person or in writing and must be done within one month of the decision/action. If the supervisor/instructor requires it, the TA/RA shall put the communication in writing. Within 10 working days of receipt of the communication the instructor/supervisor shall respond. If the TA/RA is satisfied with the response, the matter is at an end.

If a TA/RA is not satisfied with the result, he/she may seek a resolution by taking the issue to the department graduate officer/associate chair within 10 days of the instructor's/supervisor's response.

If a TA/RA is not satisfied with the result, he/she may take the matter to the Dean of Graduate Studies, who will consult with the relevant Associate Dean, Graduate Studies within the Faculty, within 10 days of the graduate officer's/associate chair's response. The decision of the Dean is final.

The TA/RA and instructor/supervisor are entitled to be accompanied by a UW colleague of his/her choosing as a support person at any meeting.

Graduate Officers/Associate Chairs and the Dean of Graduate Studies are expected to report to the Graduate Operations Committee and the Graduate Student Relations Committee the sanitized details of any issues with which they have dealt. The purpose of this is to identify recurring or systemic problems with a view to resolving them. Reports should occur regularly, ideally at the end of each term.

Note: Sexual harassment, discrimination and abuse of supervisory authority are covered by Policy 33 - Ethical Behaviour.

For further information, contact Trenny McGinnis, trenny@uwaterloo.ca.

Developed by the Graduate Student Relations Committee; replaces current guidelines; parallel path for undergraduate TAs/RAs to be considered by the Undergraduate Student Relations Committee
Approved by Senate Graduate & Research Council, June 9/08
Endorsed by Deans' Council [May 28/08] and the Graduate Students Association [June 17/08]