



FACULTYMATTERS

Meaningful Supervision at a Distance

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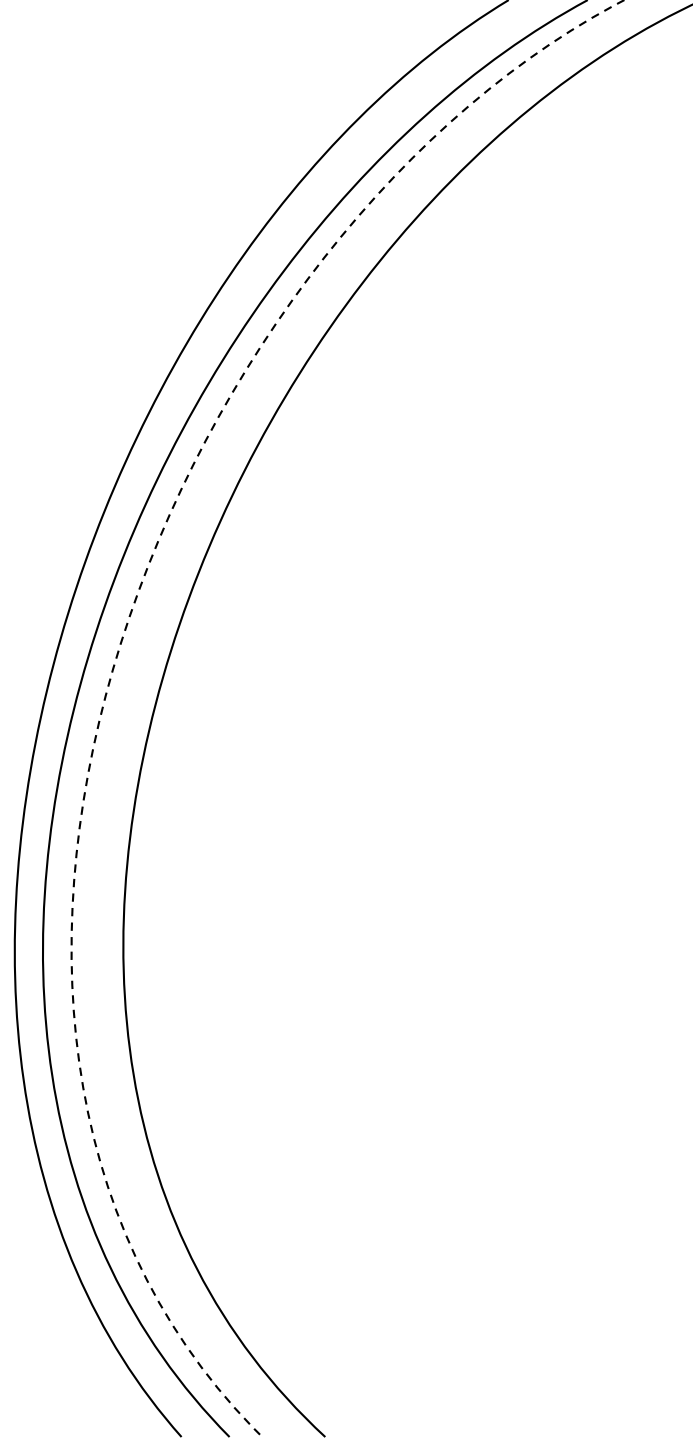
Students are cut off from the resources they need to make progress in their studies

Lab access, field work, archival materials, performance space, library resources, research materials on campus.

When students *can* make progress, they do so with new risks to their health, their family's health, their privacy, etc.

What challenges are grad students facing?

Students are often experiencing _____ at a time when they are





Letters of Understanding

What is an LOU?

A **Letter of Understanding** opens a **conversation**. Students and Supervisors put in writing a set of mutual expectations.

Recommended topics to touch on:

Supervisory meetings (ie. how often, topics discussed)

Communication between meetings (ie. email, teams, frequency, response times on weekends, etc.)

Feedback expectations (i.e. timelines, format of feedback)

Expectations for written work (what will be submitted when)

Student funding

Professional development

Everyone benefits from **clear communication** right now –
but supervisees benefit especially from **your clarity** regarding
expectations and what support you can offer



Letters of
Understanding in



Breakout Sessions

1. J.B. is an early-stage PhD student who is making

Q. How often should supervisors reach out to their students?

What forms of “checking in” work in a remote setting?

3. R.K. is a PhD student who was on track to finish writing their dissertation by September, but shared in a recent meeting that they find themselves unable to make progress while caring full -time for school -age children.
4. B.L. is mid-stage PhD student whose research can be done remotely. B.L. responds to emails with promises to make ambitious progress since (in their words) “there will be no distractions” during the shutdown.

At the next check- in, when B.L. does not meet their goal, B.L. apologizes profusely and promises to do even more work than before, in less time.

Q. What forms of
“checking in” work
in a remote setting?

Further Food for Thought

[Eight recommendations](#) for creating and maintaining affirming student advising for PhDs in uncertain times by Rachele L. Pope

GPS's [Supervision resources](#)