

**THESIS RESEARCH ADVISOR AGREEMENT**

The advisor agrees to provide financial, academic, and professional support to the student in accordance with the *IBiS Preceptor Expectations* document. Upon approval of this agreement, the advisor’s home department will be responsible for all administrative support (e.g. entering funding information, certifying effort, etc.) required by the student. In addition, the student should be included in departmental activities, workshops, seminars, retreats, and other functions in the advisor’s home department. If, at any time during the course of the student’s tenure in the program, the advisor is unable to financially support the student, the advisor’s home department will guarantee financial support for the student, for as long as the student is advised by that individual. If the student chooses to leave the lab or is dismissed in accordance with the IBiS student handbook, the department will no longer be responsible for funding the student.

*We agree to work together as thesis advisor and student. Details of the commitments of students and advisors appear on the following page.*

*We acknowledge reading these guidelines and discussing the standards that they describe.*

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Advisor Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

This agreement is formalized after approval by all signatories, and after the student is granted admission to the second year of the IBiS Program.

**Return to Bethany Sorman in Hogan 2-100 by March 20, 2026**

**For Office Use Only:**

Chair of Advisor’s Dept. \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Chair of Graduate Advisory Committee \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Guidance for Positive Graduate Student and Faculty Advisor Relationships

This document presents guiding principles intended to support positive mentoring relationships between graduate students and their faculty advisors. A positive mentoring relationship between the student and advisor is a vital component of the student's academic and professional progression.

### Graduate Student Commitment

- 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 my research.
- I will maintain a high level of professionalism, self-motivation, engagement, and ethics.
- I will act responsibly toward the faculty, other students, and other members of the university community.
- I will adhere to an agreed-upon schedule for meetings with my faculty advisor and provide updates on the progress and results of my research.
- I will work with my faculty advisor to develop a thesis project and will establish and maintain a timeline for each phase of my work.
- I will meet with my thesis committee as required by the IBiS program and be responsive to their advice and constructive criticism.
- I will comply with all policies and requirements of IBiS, The Graduate School, and Northwestern.
- I will discuss expectations on work hours, sick leave, and vacation with my faculty advisor, as well as policies on outside work such as extra teaching opportunities or internships (if I wish to pursue such opportunities) and I will follow agreed-upon expectations.\*
- I will consult with my faculty advisor in advance of any extended absences and apprise my advisor as soon as possible of any issues that would affect my academic progress.

### Faculty Advisor Commitment

- I acknowledge my responsibilities in advising and mentoring each advisee.
- I will model a high level of professionalism for the graduate student and will act responsibly toward all students, faculty colleagues, and other members of the university community.
- I will discuss the requirements and deadlines of the graduate program and the University with the student.
- I will offer the student help to develop professional skills, plan research projects, set reasonable and attainable goals, meet program milestones, and establish timelines for degree completion.
- I will respond to the student's work in a timely manner.
- I will meet with the student on a regular basis and provide guidance and resources in order for the graduate student to conduct thesis research.
- I will discuss any individual expectations I have on the advising relationship with the student.\* These might include work hours, sick leave, vacation, and policies regarding outside work such as extra teaching opportunities or internships (if I have such policies).
- I will support the student in investigating a variety of career paths and create an environment in which the student feels supported no matter their ultimate career choice.

\* **Note** – advisor expectations should not supersede University and TGS policies related to leaves of absence, including medical, family, and/or general leaves, as well as parental accommodation.

*These guidelines are based on examples from several sources, including: "Advising Agreement between Graduate Students and Faculty" published by Brown University; the "Mentoring Compact" published by the Graduate Research, Education and Training (GREAT) group of the American Association of Medical Colleges (AAMC); the IDP (Individual Development Plan) developed by the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB); material developed by the National Postdoctoral Association; the "Guide to Mentoring Graduate Students" published by the Rackham Graduate School at the University of Michigan; and the Northwestern University Graduate Expectations Document developed by The Graduate School's Graduate Leadership and Advocacy Council.*