



Cardiff
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School of Technologies

CST7001: Research and Professional Practice

Lecture 7: Research Schedule and Supervisor-Student Relationship

Dr Chow Siing Sia

Acknowledgement to Dr Esyin Chew



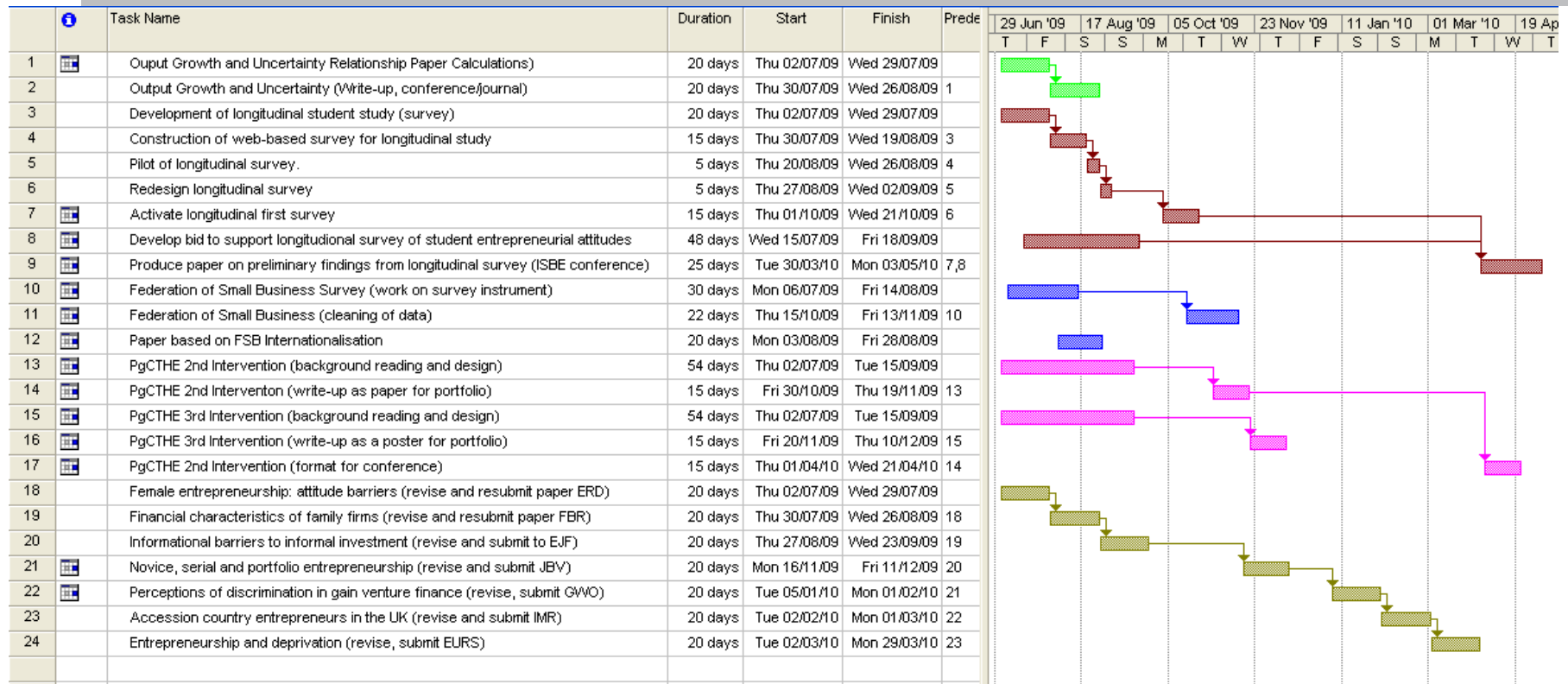
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1. Research Schedule

Outlining Your Plan of Work



A Gantt chart can show how time has been allocated to different activities, it is particularly useful where there may be overlap between different activities, but others have to be completed before another is undertake.

Planning Your Dissertation

- Every term students request extensions, **but it has to be based on mitigating circumstances.**
- There is a limit to how large an extension can be given:
 - Remember it is your last term of your last year.
 - If your work can't be marked and second marked in time for your exam board, **you don't graduate with everyone else.**
 - You can't go to your graduation ceremony with your friends!

Planning: What Time is Not Available?

- Planning for a large piece of research is actually counter-intuitive.
- The first thing to think about are other commitments.
 - Realistically will you do any work over Christmas?
 - Are there any other important family events?
 - Weddings
 - Holidays
 - Birth of children
 - What other work or university commitments do you have?
 - Sport team finals
 - Assignments
 - Rush periods at work
 - Accept this time will not be available.

Planning: And Now the ~~Beginning~~ End

- Now work through the things you need to do for your dissertation:
 1. **Introduction** (Background, Motivation, Problem Definition, Chapters Planning)
 2. **Literature Review**
 3. **Research Methodology**
 4. Results / Implementation / Discussion / Research Constraint
 5. Conclusion and Recommendation

References

Appendixes (sample of code, questionnaires results, coding, ethics form and other documents, etc.)

Ethics application with approved number (the dissertation)
- The Deadline
 - Do not work to the university deadline give yourself **at least 2-3 weeks spare time**.
 - There will be slippage and unforeseen events both from personal and dissertation issues.

Important Elements to Include in Your Plan

- Getting the dissertation bound
- Final scan through and reprint if necessary
- Printing the dissertation

- Final Proof Reading
 - Ideally by yourself and someone else.

- Final Write-up of Dissertation

- Analysis of Data & Implementation of IT artefact

- Data Collection
- Selection of Specific Methodology
- Literature Review
- Development of Research Question

You do need to proof read throughout. It is very distracting to read work with lots of typos.

Do not leave your write up until the end. Do this as you go, but often you will need to check it all flows together towards the end.

The whole process, but particularly these early components are not linear sequential, but iterative.

Final Check and Proof Read

- We require 1 copy to be submitted (electronic version through Moodle/Turnitin) – further details are provided on the assessment brief.
- Remember that you are producing something to wave at potential employers.
 - **What's the point if it looks rubbish?**
- Check
 - Is the page numbering and ToC correct?
 - Check that tables do not go over two pages.
 - Are any running headers correct?
 - Special symbols etc. they have a bad tendency to become \diamond .
 - Has anything weird happened to graphs?
 - References check!!!
 - Check that you don't have any missing or superfluous references. **This means checking through your text and making sure each citation is in the reference list.**
 - Check through your reference list and ensure that no old references are present in the list and not present in the text.



2. Supervisor-Student Relationship

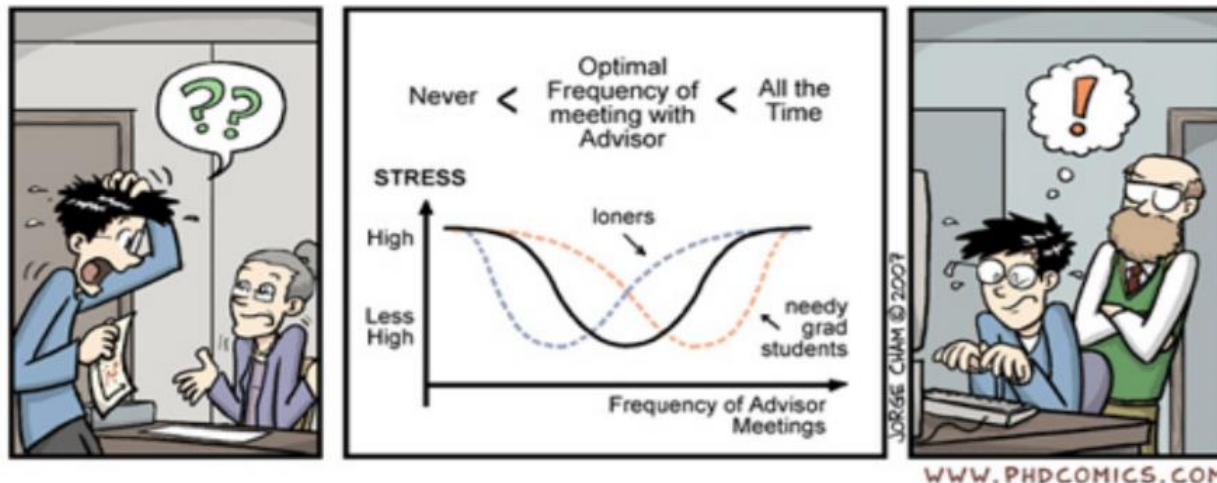
Take Home Message:

Your supervisor is human too.

Interaction with your supervisor

- Supervisor-Student “contract”
 - Regular meetings – Ask for feedback
 - Set up an agenda or summary of the meeting
 - Take minutes
 - Shared 1Drive/google docs/ dropbox

Meeting Frequency

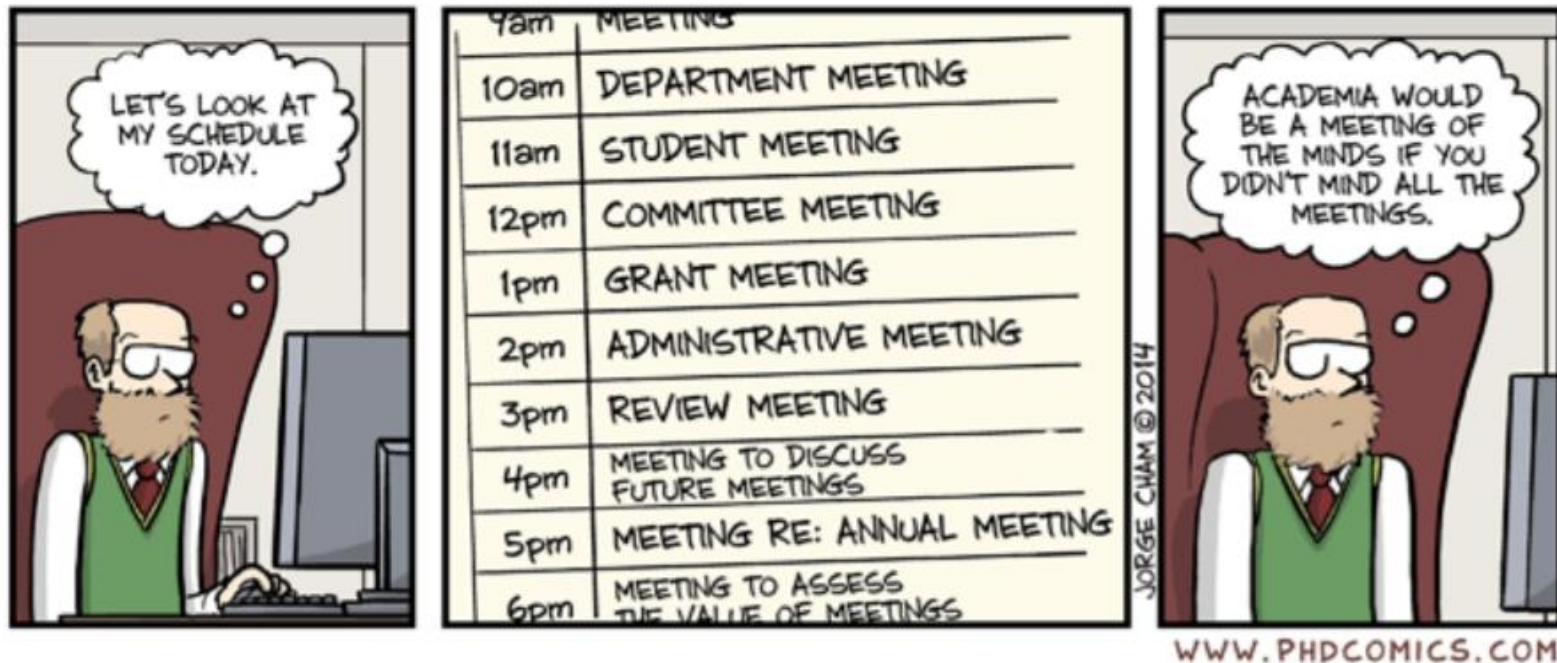


Number of Meetings with Your Supervisor

- The number and frequency of meetings will change throughout the term.
- Generally, you might have more as you refine your research question and methods.
- Once you are up and running you might be given some more space to get on with things.
- Towards the end you might have more meetings to make sure everything is ready for submission.
- Further details about the structure of dissertation module will be shared during the 1st Induction on Week 1 of the dissertation.

Interaction with your supervisor

- Supervisor-Student “contract”
 - Regular meetings – ask for feedback – Set up an agenda – Take notes / minutes – shared 1Drive/google docs/ dropbox
- Push vs Pull
- Lone vs teams



Getting Value from Meetings

- Meetings are pointless unless you have something to discuss.
 - Work needs to be sent in advance of meetings so the supervisor can read through and make notes on your work.
- **Make sure your work is proof read and formatted when you send it to your supervisor.** ~~Otherwise all you will get back is your typos corrected.~~
 - ~~The brain seems unable to concentrate on the bulky important issues if typos etc. are in the way.~~ **Supervisors are not there to correct your typos**
 - It can also put people in a bad **mood if it looks like people can't be bothered putting the effort in.**
 - Poor formatting has the same effect on examiners and referees of journals. E.g. 2024 dissertation; **I would first mark the references!**



Formative Feedback

- Don't be surprised if you have one set of corrections to do.
- Do you know what are tracked changes in Microsoft Word?

Taking Something Away From Meetings

- It can be a good idea if when you leave the meeting you write a quick report on:
 - What was discussed? What work was gone through?
 - What work will be completed in the next period.
 - Time scales for the next meeting.
- This should be sent to your supervisor.
 - Provides a record that the meeting took place.
 - In addition, it allows your supervisor to check that you both agree on the outcome of the meeting.

Key themes and sub-themes in the literature

1. The student/supervisor relationship

- Different supervisor / student “types” and their approaches;
 - Differences in student/supervisor expectations & perceptions;
 - Differences in supervisors’ approaches to supervision and how they view their role;
- Issues in communication: misunderstandings; cultural and language issues.

Roles of the supervisor

Director	determining topic and method, providing ideas
Facilitator	providing access to resources or expertise, arranging field-work
Advisor	helping to resolve technical problems, suggesting alternatives
Teacher	of research techniques
Guide	suggesting timetable for writing up, giving feedback on progress, identifying critical path for data collection
Critic	of design of enquiry, of draft chapters, of interpretations or data
Freedom giver	authorises student to make decisions, supports student's decisions
Supporter	gives encouragement, shows interest, discusses student's ideas
Friend	extends interest and concern to non-academic aspects of student's life
Manager	checks progress regularly, monitors study, gives systematic feedback, plans work
Examiner	internal examiner, mock vivas, interim progress reports, supervisory board member

Your Supervisor

- We will try to allocate a supervisor that has the strongest knowledge in your area of study.
 - Another reason for making sure you write a good clear research proposal.
 - If it looks like you may have to change your topic you might get last choice of the supervisors.
 - You can request that you work with a supervisor, but they might not have the room/time available.
- The supervisor is there to give you advice and guidance through the dissertation process.
 - Any specialist knowledge in your research area is a bonus.
 - It is perfectly fine if it is not, more independent work then!

Specialist Skills

- Your supervisor may not have the skills that are required for all parts of your dissertation.
 - Qualitative analysis of interview transcripts.
 - Econometric analysis of data.
 - Design of questionnaires.
 - Specific knowledge of the research topic, for example, data harvesting, robotics, cyber security, networking or etc.
- If you feel this is the case you should ask your supervisor if there is someone who could advise you on this.
 - There is no point in the blind leading the blind.
- Go through your supervisor if possible otherwise they may become offended if they find you are asking others.
- Be aware that you are asking a favour of this additional member of staff as they may already have their own dissertation students and teaching.

When things go wrong:

- Lack of progress
 - Personal issues – family, financial
 - Difficulties with data collection
 - Student unable to grasp “research” skills and conduct
 - Time management
- Student-supervisor issues
 - Personality clash
 - Disagreement over direction, publications
- Academic Writing
 - Plagiarism, language skills

Summary

- Supervisor and student are both human

- Good communication
- Be professional
- Show enthusiasm
- Both reflect and learn
- Keep perspective



Marriage



Ph.D.

References

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