

A Student Supervisor Dialog Check-list

MAT2000 Spring 2023

MAT2000 is an undergraduate course for project work in mathematics. Over the course of one semester, students will read, write, and do mathematics with the guidance of a supervisor.

Students should expect to feel challenged and supported in their independent learning and this will take different forms for different student/supervisor dynamics. Open communication and good planning are key to help facilitate a smooth collaboration and successful project.

Below are some critical points that we ask you to discuss early on in your student/supervisor meetings¹.

The aims of the project

- Discuss the principle learning and working goals of the project, including the project description and preliminary sources.
- Discuss the structure of the obligatory assignment and final exam, including their deadlines. Both consist of a written report **and** oral presentation.
- Discuss the student's background, study program, and future goals/plans.

Supervision

- Agree upon the frequency and lengths of meetings (planned/spontaneous?, zoom/in person?, are email exchanges ok?).
- Agree upon channels of communication, email, exchanging cell phone numbers (for emergencies), in person?
- Agree upon preliminary deadlines for feedback on writing and approximate turn around times.
- Disclose any scheduling constraints. This includes dates of other obligatory assignments, job commitments and the supervisor's teaching and travel schedule.
- Share how much supervision (supervisor) and independent learning (student) experience you have each had. Is there anything that has worked and not worked?
- Share anything you know about your learning and supervising style. Be open to trying new things within your boundaries.

Some suggestions

- After each meeting, clearly state together a few learning, reading, or writing goals to focus on until the next contact with the supervisor. This is not solely up to the supervisor, the student must also decide what is needed and what is possible before the next meeting.
- A wise practice for students is to keep a learning journal, notes with what one has struggled with and also (very importantly!) accomplished. Celebrate how far you have come, what you have learned and be aware of what you struggle with.
- A wise practice for supervisors is to keep a short log of all meetings. What goals were set and what should be followed up on next time?

¹This checklist is adapted from the newly implemented "induction conversation" and "dialog with supervisor" for new PhDs <https://www.mn.uio.no/english/research/phd/induction-conversation/math/dialog-with-supervisor.pdf>