

# Tips for Graduate Research Supervisors

Dr. Dario Toncich



## Tip Number 7 – Disputes With Students – Consider the Stages

<b>Stage</b>	<b>Phase</b>	<b>Issues</b>
1	Initial Dispute	An initial dispute may be a minor flare-up over a small matter – for example, office space, IT resources, etc.
2	Escalation	Parties to the dispute take an entrenched position in the conflict and it becomes more serious
3	Injection of Personal Issues	The initial dispute often gets lost in personal antipathies that are exposed as the dispute escalates
4	Loss of Productivity	Parties to the dispute end up wasting time and resources on correspondence to each other (often achieving little more than restating an entrenched viewpoint) and in endeavoring to garner support for their cause at a higher level – the cost of productivity loss (including wasted salaries) can be significantly larger than the issues originally at stake in the dispute
5	Mediation	As the dispute escalates, it is often necessary for a more senior officer of the university to act to mitigate the dispute or to simply rule on a resolution
6	Compromise, Win or Lose	The dispute is settled – either through both sides compromising or one side winning and the other losing
7	Restoration of Relationships	Relationships between the disputing parties need to be restored to stop departmental dysfunction