OPTIMIZE YOUR ADVISING RELATIONSHIP

DATE:	STUDENT:	☐ ADVISOR:	☐ CO-ADVISOR:	☐ 2ND READER:

STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES

☐ **Question for the student: What are your strengths as a researcher and writer?**

Example answers:
- I'm a strong writer.
- I'm a skilled problem solver.
- I have valuable research experience under my belt.
- I work steadily on complex projects.
- I have excellent organization and follow-through skills.

Your answers:

☐ **Question for the student: What challenges do you expect to face as a researcher and writer?**

Example answers:
- I lack skills or knowledge that I know I'll need.
- I feel uncertain about methods, theories, and doing research in my field.
- I think it will be challenging to execute this kind of project in so little time.
- I struggle with aspects of writing.
- Academia has different expectations than those I have faced in professional roles.

Your answers:

☐ **Question for the student: At what stages do you think you'll need the most support? The least?**

Example answers:
- I need help to get started, frame the project, and make a plan.
- I have the vision, and the plan! But I'll need support to communicate effectively.
- I know thesis research can sometimes encounter roadblocks—I'll want guidance if that happens.

Your answers:

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STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES

☐ **Question for the advisor: What are your strengths as an advisor?**

Example answers:
- I give detailed, regular input and feedback.
- I help students get and stay organized.
- I direct students to resources they need.
- I set students up for success by emphasizing good planning at the proposal stage.
- I proofread and copyedit.

Your answers:

☐ **Question for the advisor: What challenges do you see most often with your thesis students?**

Example answers:
- Students don't ask for help early enough.
- Students misinterpret my feedback.
- Funding and resources may be late in coming.
- Students underestimate the time needed for drafting, revising, and polishing.
- Some students can't invest the time needed.

Your answers:

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STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES

☐ For student and advisor:

STUDENT:
Assess the following challenging aspects of thesis research and writing. Rank each, using 1 where you expect to **need the least support** and 5 where you expect to **need the most support**.

Finding or constructing sound research questions
Least 1 2 3 4 5 Most

Designing research methodology
1 2 3 4 5

Dealing with unexpected challenges (e.g., data is unavailable, interview subject cancels)
1 2 3 4 5

Finding academic and/or technical sources
1 2 3 4 5

Writing a well-organized literature review
1 2 3 4 5

Structuring the thesis (e.g., number of chapters, organization of information within chapters)
1 2 3 4 5

Interpreting and explaining my results and/or findings
1 2 3 4 5

Managing the writing process (e.g., when to write different parts of the thesis, outlining, revising)
1 2 3 4 5

Polishing the final product (e.g., proofreading and copyediting, formatting in the thesis template, correcting citations)
1 2 3 4 5

ADVISOR:
Assess the following areas of support needed by thesis students. Rank each, using 1 where you generally **provide the least support** and 5 where you tend to **provide the most support**.

Helping students find or construct research questions
Least 1 2 3 4 5 Most

Helping students design research methodology
1 2 3 4 5

Helping students face unexpected challenges (e.g., data is unavailable, interview subject cancels).
1 2 3 4 5

Recommending academic and/or technical source material.
1 2 3 4 5

Providing guidance on writing a well-organized literature review
1 2 3 4 5

Offering input on structuring the thesis (e.g., number of chapters, organization of information within chapters)
1 2 3 4 5

Helping students interpret results and/or findings
1 2 3 4 5

Guiding the writing process (e.g., when to write different parts of the thesis, outlining, revising)
1 2 3 4 5

Polishing the final product (e.g., proofreading and copyediting, formatting in the thesis template, correcting citations)
1 2 3 4 5