

Advising Statement

I place a high priority on mentoring and aim to develop a productive, supportive, and respectful relationship with all my trainees. My goal as a mentor is to foster an environment that allows the development of scientific (bench, communication, critical-thinking, and ethical) skills in a manner that enables future success in their research (in the short- medium-term) and their desired career (in the long term). The purpose of this advising statement is to set clear expectations and responsibilities and help support the professional and career goals of trainees in my lab. This document (required by the BMBB graduate program and likely soon by others) contains the overview. Trainees who choose to work or rotate in my lab will also be given access to our complete Lab Handbook, which contains additional details of expectations and training opportunities. (This document is also available upon request.)

Research Goals

- I expect my trainees to develop concrete short term and long term research goals as well as a timeframe for reaching these goals.
- I expect my trainees to submit and publish peer-reviewed first author and contribute where appropriate to coauthored publications.
- I am unable to guarantee first authorship on manuscripts that are not submitted prior to leaving the lab.
- I expect my trainees to keep up with the literature. Generally, trainees should set aside time for reading the primary literature every day.
- I will read and respond to all work submitted to me in a timely manner, within the constraints of my other responsibilities. All work to be presented outside the lab or otherwise requiring my review should be sent a minimum of a week before feedback is needed.
- I expect my trainees to present their research findings at meetings. I will help facilitate the presentation of your research at meetings, both internal and external.
- I expect trainees to share results and solicit feedback openly from their lab colleagues and to do their best to promote a culture of interest and enthusiasm for research.

Graduate Stipend and Funding

- I have the primary responsibility to provide for adequate funding of both the research and stipend for my trainees.
- I consider proposal preparation to be an important training vehicle. I expect my trainees to participate in the writing of grant proposals, including (for those eligible) writing their own fellowship proposals.

Meetings

- I will meet regularly with my trainees at a mutually agreed upon interval (generally once per week unless a different interval is requested), and I expect that trainees will arrange their schedules so they are available to meet with me. I recognize that this interval will vary with my trainee's needs overall and at specific times during the course of training. I will also try to prioritize making myself available for additional meetings as needed, including at decision points during experiments and as new data becomes available.
- I expect my trainees to participate in all laboratory group meetings, as well as the seminars and programs related specifically to my trainee's research focus and graduate program.
- I expect my trainees to meet with their thesis committees at least annually, or as often as required by the chosen graduate program, and to participate in the required progress meetings and other activities to maintain good standing in their graduate and T32 training programs.

Professionalism

- I expect my trainees to be good laboratory citizens: help train new students, help maintain equipment, ensure supplies that are jointly used are maintained, and order new supplies mindfully to ensure minimal waste.
- I expect my trainees to maintain an accurate and detailed laboratory notebook, including a Table of Contents highlighting protocols and publication-quality experiments. This is the legal record of research, and belongs to the laboratory and university, not to the trainee or me. It is critical it be accurate and sufficiently detailed that every experiment (from procedure to analysis to outcome) could be replicated by another individual.
- I expect my trainees to meet laboratory and program-related deadlines.

- I will set specific guidelines on work hours, sick leave, and vacation time, and these should be discussed and approved by me. I will help trainees recognize that the amount of time put into research will be directly reflected in the overall time to completion of the PhD.
- I expect my trainees to behave professionally and treat all others with respect. Anything else will not be tolerated.
- Trainees should speak to me if there are concerns about interactions with other lab members. If there are concerns about interactions with me, please reach out to the graduate program DGS or other program leaders. The [Student Conflict Resolution Center](#) is a helpful resource.

Ethical Behavior

- I will maintain ethical standards in my research and scholarly work, including compliance with institutional and federal regulations for research, as well as issues of copyright.
- I expect my trainees to complete all required training and maintain ethical standards for their research and scholarly work.
- I expect trainees to report their work honestly, admit mistakes, and attribute intellectual and procedural credit with generosity.

Independence

- I will work with my trainees to help them become increasingly independent and responsible as they progress in their thesis research.
- I will be supportive, equitable, accessible, encouraging, and respectful. I expect my trainees to recognize that constructive criticism and feedback is intended to improve their work and to provide constructive feedback to their labmates.
- I will expect trainees to feel ownership of their project and take responsibility for decisions and outcomes relating to their progress. I will endeavor to support all trainees in this role.
- I will also expect trainees to listen to my feedback and discuss major project changes with me in advance, especially if this requires purchase of additional reagents or a significant distraction from their previous avenue of inquiry. I consider it a beneficial training exercise for students to present convincing arguments for a change in direction (or persistence with a current avenue of inquiry).
- I will be an advocate for my trainees during their tenure in my laboratory and as they continue their specific career pathway.

Professional and Career Development

- I will support the professional development goals of my trainees, and work with them to help define what those will be and how to best achieve them.
- I recognize that we all need mentor teams. I will help my trainees identify and seek out external resources that will help them reach those goals if they are not part of the laboratory expertise or that of graduate program training.
- I expect my trainees to complete any required career-development activities (e.g. IDP Progress Report) as required by their graduate or training programs. I will support further career-development activities beyond these requirements as appropriate.
- I recognize that career-building is a continuous process during training but expect that significant outlays of effort may detract from progress of thesis research and delay graduation. Therefore, I expect that trainees will consult with me on how to time larger-scale career-development activities (teaching beyond the program requirements, participation in departmental committees or other service activities, off-site internships, clinical shadowing, preparing future faculty coursework) in the context of their progress toward graduation before committing. Provided the trajectory toward graduation is good, I will do my best to work with trainees to facilitate these opportunities. (Participation in graduate recruitment activities or hosting/meeting with seminar speakers is appreciated anytime a trainee's tenure in the lab.)

Personal Life and Wellness

- I expect my trainees to take time for themselves to ensure physical/psychological/social well-being.
- Trainees should be aware of the [mental health and wellness resources](#) at UMN.

- Research is not a stable 9-5 job. Trainees should be prepared to work as much as they need to make progress, including more hours, weekends, and off-hours when appropriate. Trainees should plan to work fewer hours, exercise more, and/or take vacations judiciously to maintain an overall balance in between the more intense periods.
- Trainees should also make an effort to maintain self-awareness, guiding their commitment to lab/work time by their productivity/progress rather than strictly tallying hours physically spent in the lab. If a trainee realizes that their work time could be used more productively, they are welcome to discuss ways to strategize with me or their labmates.
- I recognize that part of a healthy balance can include forming personal and scientific connections with labmates. I will organize and support lab social activities and hope that labmates will share new ideas and support and respect each other personally. I expect trainees to help maintain a positive balance of friendly engagement without detriment to focus and productivity.

Timeline

- I expect my PhD trainees to complete their PhD training <5 years after joining the lab.
- I expect my trainees to have at least one first-authored, peer-reviewed research publication and show signs of increased research independence prior to completion of the PhD degree.

Diversity

- I am committed to providing good mentorship for a diverse array of trainees, including trainees of traditionally underrepresented cultural/ethnic heritage and gender.
- I am committed to providing space for trainees to feel safe and accepted and to promote an anti-racist, anti-misogynist, anti-homophobic (etc.) lab environment