

Ph.D. Advising Philosophy and Expectations

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As an adviser, my goal is to provide a context for you to develop as a successful independent scholar while meeting the requirements of graduate training. I recognize that students arrive with diverse experiences and goals and that it can be challenging to create your unique path as you move through graduate training. I view it as essential for each student to take the lead on forging their own unique pathway. My job is to provide support and guidance as you learn where you want to go and try to facilitate your progress to reach your goals as you establish them for the shorter and longer term.

I encourage independent thinking as well as collaborative research by graduate students. Most research these days requires collaboration and it is crucial for scientists to acquire skills in working with a team of collaborators. I encourage teams of graduate students to develop projects together that advance their independent objectives at the same time. All students in my research group are expected to spend some of their time collaborating and supervising more junior scholars. Students benefit from the experience and knowledge of their more advanced peers and they are expected to contribute to training more junior colleagues and undergraduates.

I collaborate with other faculty both here and elsewhere on various projects. These collaborations offer students opportunities to work with me as well as other scholars on projects and also to develop independent collaborations through these collaborative networks. These collaborations also offer interesting data sets for students who want to develop projects using extant data.

I am willing to co-advise students (sequentially or simultaneously) in collaboration with other faculty. I encourage this pattern for students who want to acquire a range of research skills, particularly when multiple levels of analysis are involved (e.g., biological, psychological, social). I am particularly enthusiastic when a student creates research that brings together the knowledge and skills of different mentors into a single well-integrated project.

I think it is important for ALL students to gain experience collecting data as well as planning research, analyzing data, presenting findings to other scholars and the general public, and publishing empirical data. Moreover, since much of my research is community based, I also expect students to become comfortable and familiar with community settings and “give back” through talks or volunteering in the community.

What I expect of graduate student advisees

- Passion and commitment to achieve your goals
- Integrity and honesty, including ethical conduct of research
- Initiative and productivity
- Independence and willingness to consult when you need advice
- Passing forward the peer mentorship provided to you by student collaborators
- Openness to feedback

- Hard work with attention to work-life balance
- Perseverance and follow-through on your commitments
- Pursuit of your own funding for research, training, and travel
- Sensitivity to the values, cultures, and contributions of research participants
- Community engagement and “giving back” to research partners

What advisees can expect from me

- Mentoring that is focused on your career development and evolving goals
- Individual interactions to enhance and hone your skills as a scholar
- Weekly or biweekly meetings (unless I am out of the country!)
- More frequent meetings as needed for pressing scholarship
- Opportunities to design research in collaboration with community partners
- Opportunities to connect with other scholars and leaders in the field
- Support in securing financial support for research, travel, and training
- Guidance on navigating the hurdles of graduate school
- Feedback on progress & help with trouble-shooting issues that arise
- Writing and speaking opportunities
- Joy in your accomplishments