Big discoveries from little people!

Graduate Students Guidelines and Expectations

I have the following expectations for graduate students under my supervision. While some are requirements, others are suggestions to increase the likelihood of success for my mentees. A successful mentor-mentee relationship reciprocally benefits both parties, as well as others working in the lab. I'm also happy to share mentoring responsibilities with other faculty members for those students seeking to take full advantage of the community mentoring model at ICD. My overarching goal is to help you become a critically engaged and contributing member of our global society. Some trainees will progress into independent academic scientists and some trainees may select alternative (alternative to academia) career paths. The expectations below apply to all trainees.

Communication: Open, honest, and timely communication is instrumental for success as a graduate student and as an academic scientist (or any number of careers that one might pursue). I expect trainees to communicate with me regularly regarding workload, deadlines, expectations, and any other topic that is immediately relevant to performance. Sometimes "life" interacts with performance, and while I don't need to know personal details, I don't want to be surprised by changes in performance that stem from off-campus slings and arrows.

Professionalism: While graduate students are training in methods and theory and acquiring domain knowledge, you are also training to become a professional (one aspect inherent to an apprenticeship model). Be on time and prepared for meetings. Be considerate of others' time – we are all busy. As a representative of my lab, I expect you to communicate with professionalism. For example, be aware of the tone and paralinguistic information you are communicating in emails. As a general rule of thumb, all of your professional correspondence should be conducted as if you are communicating with me, whether you are emailing with undergraduate RAs, ELAB staff members, or staff members in other labs or at other institutions. Of course, it is absolutely necessary that you communicate with research participants with the utmost professionalism/tact/decorum. Additionally, we video-record nearly every behavioral assessment and are moving toward a model of sharing all of these videos with the broader scientific community – that said, be aware of your conduct, but also appearance/ dress if you are involved in assessments, and keep in mind that we are often chasing toddlers around on the floor of our assessment space.

Work Ethic/Time Commitment: It is very difficult, if not impossible to achieve success in the field you've chosen by doing the minimum amount of work - and success in this context can be quite broadly construed (i.e., getting a job, any job after graduation). Therefore, if you are struggling to commit the minimum of 20 hours a week to research activities in the lab (the minimum required by ICD for a research assistantship, whether funded by me or an internal/external award/fellowship) or in collaboration with other labs then we should determine whether being a graduate student in the ELAB is the best fit. I don't expect graduate students to contribute 70 hours a week, but I expect my graduate students to put in more than the minimum effort/time. I conscientiously track engagement, which influences decisions regarding opportunities in the lab (e.g., authorship).

Presence: I am present and I expect my graduate students to be present. Often times, presence facilitates effective communication (if I can run by your office with a question, or if you can swing by mine). I also expect graduate students working with me to be active members of the broader intellectual community. I expect to see ALL graduate students working with me at ICD's weekly colloquium series, and at other colloquia on campus (e.g., Center for Neurobehavioral Development, Center for Cognitive Science, etc.).

Honesty/Integrity/Reliability: Our science depends on honesty and integrity. I have a zero-tolerance policy if it is determined that data have been tampered/manipulated in any way. Beyond dealing with data, our team is interconnected via nodes of communication and trust. If there is ever any doubt about one's reliability (e.g., to meet a family for an assessment, or missing meetings without prior warning), then again, we should have a conversation regarding whether being a graduate student in the ELAB is the best fit/option for you.

Social Contract: The ELAB functions as well as we do because all of the members have each other's back. We're all contributing to ELAB efforts. You will be asked to contribute to ELAB papers/products/studies. Your contribution may or may not warrant authorship but will be recognized. In part, this expectation is about being a good lab citizen.

Productivity/Authorship: Producing is imperative for you and your career, but also benefits the lab, so there should be investment from everyone involved to generate products. I expect graduate students to leave their graduate training with a minimum of 3 first authored peer-reviewed publications. First authorship is something that is earned, is based on capacity/capability and engagement, and is determined by the PI (and generally includes a formal discussion about taking the lead on a project). Maintaining the leadership position on a project is determined by sufficient progress or engagement with the project, as determined by the PI. Do not expect, as a default, to be the first author on work conceptualized within the ELAB. To be an author, it is necessary, *but not sufficient*, to contribute to at least one of the following activities: initial research design, data collection, data analysis, figure/table creation, manuscript drafting/reviewing/revising.