

October, 2021

GRADUATE STUDENT AND POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW

ADVISING STATEMENT

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As a first-generation college student with two parents who did not attend college, one of the things I am very passionate about is helping my advisees navigate the hidden curriculum of graduate school, conducting research in developmental science, eliminating barriers in academia, and supporting them on their own unique trajectory.

I strive to create a family-lab environment where everyone feels welcome, heard and understood, and where people come together to learn and to support each other in pursuing their research passions. Our group is interdisciplinary, multi-cultural, multi-method and dedicated to doing impactful work that moves the field forward.

THESIS

- **TOPIC ORIGIN:** I expect my advisees to develop their own research topic within the field of developmental science or fields related to knowledge acquisition. In general, I expect my advisees to do research on human development in some way but that is not essential.

- **ORIENTATION:** I expect my advisees to develop research projects that are designed as tests of competing hypotheses.

- **FIRST-YEAR PROJECT, THESIS and PUBLICATIONS:** The FYP and doctoral thesis should be written with the expectation that they be submitted for publication, or a series of publications.

PUBLICATIONS: Publishing is essential for certain career paths in this field. In addition to preparing their FYP and doctoral thesis for publication, I expect my advisees to be working on manuscripts that may be tangential to these projects. By the time they graduate I expect my advisees to have multiple publications in the pipeline (published, in press, under review, revising, in preparation).

AUTHORSHIP: Resolving authorship arrangements is essential to maintaining positive relationships with our colleagues. I have no unique expectations as an advisor regarding authorship. If I have had significant involvement in a project (developing the original idea, analyzing data, and/or writing or re-writing a significant portion of the manuscript) then I expected to be listed as author. If someone does most or all of these things (original idea, analyses, and write the ms), they can expect to be first-author of the manuscript. In more mixed cases, discussion will be needed. If possible, we should try to decide roles and

authorship as early as possible. The decision can always be altered by discussion and mutual agreement at later dates if roles have changed.

CAREER PATHS: My job as an advisor is to help my advisees to be successful in their chosen career path, whatever that may be. I love to be involved in these discussions if it helps, but it is not necessary. It helps very much to know what career paths are desired, and if that changes, to inform me of such changes. I would like my advisees to let me know the range of career paths in which they are interested at the earliest possible date, and to update me of changes as they occur. I will always do my best to help advisees obtain the experiences and skills that they need to succeed.

FUNDING: In collaboration with the graduate program, I guarantee 5 years of financial support, assuming satisfactory progress on your part and the availability of funds. The actual numbers vary from year to year in an upward direction, but we offer graduate assistantships that carry a stipend for the nine-month academic year and your first summer, plus full tuition (up to 14 credits per semester) and health benefits. The nature of the funding (TA or RA support) is unpredictable but there will be funding. For years two through five, we guarantee support during the fall and spring (the nine-month academic year). Summer support is also generally available, though not guaranteed. Graduate assistantships require 20 hours of work per week on a faculty member's research project or as a Teaching Assistant. Whenever possible, assignments are made to be compatible with the student's interests. The Institute provides students with assistantships an additional professional development fund of \$500, and provides all students the exclusive use of a laptop computer during their graduate career.

FELLOWSHIP AND GRANT PROPOSALS: I expect my advisees to write and submit fellowship proposals where possible. Writing such proposals is excellent experience, and receiving such fellowships increases a student's competitiveness. I expect all of my advisees to be active in writing proposals for both university and extramural opportunities (fellowships, awards, travel grants). By the time my advisees graduate, I hope that I have supported them to submit proposals for a set of awards or grants on their CV. Funding the research of my advisees is a joint responsibility, and I work with my advisees to find necessary funding.

MEETINGS:

- **LAB MEETINGS:** I expect my advisees to attend lab meetings unless they are traveling or have some other unavoidable conflict.

- **INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS:** There is room for flexibility in how often meetings occur with advisees individually, depending on the state of our projects and their progress in the program. However, I would like to discuss an optimal meeting frequency with each student, and meet regularly.

NATIONAL MEETINGS:

- **ATTENDANCE:** Developing a professional network is important, regardless of career path. I expect my advisees to attend national meetings and to report on their research at those meetings. I will do my best to help students network with colleagues at other institutions. Please let me know if there are any specific scholars that you would like to contact or meet. I will also do my best to help find money to support these efforts but obtaining support for meeting attendance should be a joint effort.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

- I will communicate my expectations regarding independence, work/life balance, and how students are to function in the fairly unstructured graduate school context. This document represents a step in the direction of openly communicating about these things.

- I will comment on student's work within 14 days (or 30 days at the latest), but usually earlier than that. Although it depends upon the manuscript, my written feedback can be extensive. This is because we think deeply about a range of issues as we write, and we often gain new insights into our projects as we write about them. My feedback is not about improving one's grammar or vocabulary choices. It is about how to best structure an argument, motivate main questions and hypotheses, and discuss the empirical findings.

- I value and protect the rights of graduate students, and am serious about providing a safe work environment, one free from prejudice, intimidation, harassment, and competition. I understand the cultural differences that might affect communication, and am available to help whenever a student is dealing with difficult situations. Students should never feel concerned about disappointing me, or fear any kind of negative response from me in return. I believe that open channels of communication are the joint responsibility of each student and me, as advisor.

- **INDEPENDENCE:** I do expect my advisees to move their work forward without daily input or guidance from me. I am always available for consultation and have different solutions to offer depending on issues that can slow progress, but I do expect my advisees to be moving their work forward, by way of their own good judgment. If an advisee needs help from me in order to move forward, I expect them to seek me out by email or to schedule a meeting. One source of concern for me as an advisor occurs when I do not have a sense of a student's current progress. I am happy to provide more regular guidance of any form to anyone who needs it. By the time they leave the program, I expect each advisee to be able to function as independent scientists, marked by first-author publication progress, funding efforts, and hitting program milestones.

- **PERSONAL LIFE:** I expect my advisees to have one, and wish for them to have a rich and engaged one! People who spend all of their time on work (especially academic work) generally tend to find work less enjoyable, find themselves to be less productive over the long term, and less creative in their work. People with or without partners, especially those with children, become severely stressed when they do not put sufficient time and effort into their

relationships and their personal lives. I'm always happy to help if this is an area that needs attention.

- **TIME MANAGEMENT:** A life with good work/life balance requires developing time management skills, the development of which is a life-long, trial-and-error project. This document makes clear that I expect a lot of my advisees. The less time-efficient a person is, the more hours per week it will take to meet goals and expectations. I expect my advisees to learn, to take seriously and to practice good time management. I'm no expert, but I'm always willing to discuss new strategies.

- **RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER ADVISEES:** My advisees learn much from other students, postdocs and visiting scholars. Therefore, I expect my advisees to develop good professional relationships with other people in my lab and in the graduate program generally. These relationships should always be supportive, not competitive. Early career students would be wise to seek out the advice of late career students and postdocs. In turn, late career students and postdocs should be generous in providing support and advice.

- **LAB MANAGEMENT:** My extramural support often allows our lab to run with the support of a lab manager. And when I don't have a lab manager, I turn to dedicated upper-division undergraduates with a good deal of experience in our lab. Lab managers are responsible for training UG RAs on lab protocol, scheduling appointments, and keeping the lab in order. As usual, graduate students and post-docs monitor and supervise their own specific projects and teams. However, when a lab manager is missing, there are additional practical needs that graduate students and post-docs can support as a group.

- **DEPT/UNIV SERVICE:** I think that organizations run more efficiently and make better and more conscientious, mission-driven decisions when everyone contributes their time to shared service and governance activities. Thus, I think it is important for my advisees – who are interested - to gain experience in such activities. I do not expect these activities to take more than 1 or 2% of their effort.

ETHICS: My advisees should familiarize themselves with, and abide by, the University of Minnesota's "Code of Conduct".

http://regents.umn.edu/sites/regents.umn.edu/files/policies/Code_of_Conduct.pdf