

University of Minnesota
Medical Scientist Training Program (MD/PhD)

I believe my role as a MD/PhD advisor is to advance my trainees' career through direct engagement that facilitates guidance, and sharing experience and expertise. It is my goal in this advising statement to set clear expectations and responsibilities and help support their professional and career goals. In general, I will help foster a sense of professional responsibility and continuous professional development, assist in building a mentorship team, and ensure continual movement towards successful completion of the MD/PhD degree.

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 publications.
- 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. I will strive to return all materials at least within a week of submission to me.
- I expect my trainees to present their research plans/findings internally at UMN MRF Tues noon conferences (or equivalent) annually.
- I expect my trainees to present their research findings at meetings at least once a year, starting in year 1. I will help facilitate the presentation of your research at meetings, and I will work with you so that your presentations effectively communicate your 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 expect my trainees to participate in the writing of grant proposals, including writing their own fellowship proposals

Meetings

- I will meet regularly with my trainees at a mutually agreed upon interval, and expect that trainees will also be available to meet with me (in person or via Skype, etc). I recognize that this interval will vary with my trainee's needs overall and at specific times during the course of training. This includes both regular meetings and informal conversations.
- I expect my trainees to participate in our team's weekly Skype team conference call, 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 and to participate in the required MSTP annual progress meetings.



Professionalism

- I expect my trainees to be a good laboratory citizen: help train new students, help maintain equipment, and ensure supplies that are jointly used are maintained.
- I expect my trainees to maintain an accurate and detailed laboratory notebook. 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 could be replicated by another individual and get the same result.
- I expect my trainees to meet 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.
- 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.
- Stay up to date with various university safety trainings for: infectious substances, GCP + human subject protection.
- As a mentor, I will first make criticisms to the trainee, not to others. As a trainee, I expect my trainees to make criticisms to me first.

Ethical Behavior

- I will maintain ethical standards in my research and scholarly work, including compliance with institutional and federal regulations for research
- I expect my trainees to complete all required training and maintain ethical standards for their research and scholarly work.

Independence

- I will work with my trainees to help them become increasingly independent and increasingly 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.
- I will be an advocate for my trainees now and during their future career.

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 the annually required MSTP IDP Progress Report and use this as a tool to guide their professional development.

Personal Life and Wellness:

- There is more to life than work. I expect my trainees to take time for themselves, in order to ensure physical, psychological, and social well-being.
- Trainees should be aware of the [mental health and wellness resources](#) at UMN.

Timeline

- I expect my MD/PhD trainees to complete their PhD training in 4 years or less.
- I expect my trainees to have at least one first-authored, peer-reviewed research publication prior to completion of the PhD degree.

We have discussed this advising statement and understand the expectations and responsibilities that come with entering into this advising relationship for PhD training.

_____ Date: _____
Student

_____ Date: _____
Advisor

After all signatures are obtained, copies of the document will be distributed to the student, advisor, the student's graduate program and the MSTP.

