

ADVISING PHILOSOPHY: EXPECTATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Yoji Shimizu, PhD

Open and honest communication is central to a successful graduate training experience. Biomedical research is extremely rewarding and fun, but the process of discovery can also come with challenges. I am committed to the professional and personal success of my advisees. This document outlines my advising philosophy, and expectations and responsibilities for my advisees and for myself.

Research:

- I expect my advisees to make a positive impact on the scientific research community by generating new knowledge through research of the highest quality and integrity. My advisees are expected to develop their own research topics and the research should lead to peer-reviewed publications in the scientific literature.
- I strongly encourage my advisees to complete the online iBiology course "[Planning Your Scientific Journey](#)" at the beginning of their PhD training.
- Research is a team activity. I encourage my advisees to seek out appropriate internal and external collaborators.

Graduate Stipends and Funding:

- Together with the graduate program, I am committed to providing a stipend during the time that my advisee is training in my lab. The source of the stipend will vary (research grant, training grant, fellowship, etc.).
- I expect my advisees to write and submit fellowship proposals, such as an NIH F-award application or a Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship. Although this is the primary responsibility of my advisee, I do consider this to be a joint responsibility. I will work with my advisees to write and submit the strongest applications possible.
- I have primary responsibility for funding the research of my advisees. However, I expect my advisees to participate in the development of research proposals, as this is an important component of scientific professional development.

Reading:

- It is critical to have a strong understanding of the current state of knowledge in scientific areas of interest. I expect my advisees to regularly read peer-reviewed articles and review articles in scientific journals, and to attend a journal club.

Writing:

- Writing is an essential part of the research process and often the most challenging. I view writing as a skill that requires consistent application and practice. Therefore, I expect my advisees to develop and stick to a writing routine. I will work with my advisees to help them to improve scientific writing skills.
- I strongly encourage my advisees to participate in grant proposal writing workshops and other mechanisms to improve their writing skills.

Publications

- I expect my advisees to take the initiative in preparing manuscripts for publication. Advisees should generate a first draft of a manuscript that can be used for further editing and re-writing in collaboration with me. An excellent resource is Ian Baldwin's video "[Making scientific writing painless](#)" and companion [paper](#).
- Discussions about authorship on manuscripts should occur early in a research activity that is likely to lead to a publication.

Meetings

- Advisees should expect to meet with me in person on a regular basis. The frequency of these one-on-one meetings will likely vary over time, but is typically at least one meeting each week. I am always available by E-mail or telephone, and I promise to respond promptly to any and all communications from my advisees.
- Advisees are expected to attend any regularly scheduled lab meetings.
- I expect my advisees to regularly attend the Immunology supergroup meeting and to present their research findings at this meeting at least once a year.

Seminars

- I expect my advisees to attend either the MICaB Invited Seminar Series or the Masonic Cancer Center Seminar Series and to seek out opportunities to meet with invited external speakers. This is an outstanding networking opportunity.
- As a member of our scientific community, I expect my advisees to attend student seminars as required by their graduate program.

Independence

- In order to be successful in my lab, advisees must be able to work without daily input or guidance from me. I am always available for consultation and advice. It is the responsibility of the advisee to proactively meet with me if guidance is needed.

Teaching and Mentoring

- I expect my advisees to participate in teaching assignments as required by the graduate program. For advisees who have a strong interest in a teaching career, I will support participation in teaching activities, such as Preparing Future Faculty.
- If interested, I encourage advisees to seek out opportunities to mentor undergraduates interested in obtaining research experience by working in the lab. Advisees interested in mentoring undergraduates will be expected to complete the CTSI online training course "[Optimizing the Practice of Mentoring: An Online Curriculum for the Professional Development of Research Mentors](#)".

Assessments

- My advisees should expect to meet with me at least annually to discuss overall progress and goals. I also expect my advisees to meet with their thesis committee at least every 6-9 months.

Professional and Career Development:

- Students can successfully pursue a diversity of career paths upon completion of the PhD. I encourage and support this diversity of career goals for my advisees, and will work with my advisees to help them obtain the experiences and skills needed to successfully achieve their desired career goal(s). In order to be an effective advisor, it is important that advisees discuss with me the range of career paths of interest to them. I understand that professional and career development may require additional work outside of formal research activities in the lab.
- I strongly encourage my advisees to utilize an Individual Development Plan (IDP) to guide their professional and career development. This can be an IDP developed by the advisee's program or the IDP available at the [myIDP](#) website.
- Effective communication is an important competency for success in any career path. I encourage my advisees to participate in activities that develop strong communication skills, such as the 3 Minute Thesis Competition.

Research Conferences and Meetings

- Attendance at research conferences and meetings is essential not only for keeping up with the latest advances in scientific areas of interest, but also for establishing, maintaining and enhancing professional networks. I expect my advisees to attend local, regional, and national research meetings and to present their research at these meetings. I will do my best to provide financial support to attend meetings, but also expect my advisees to make efforts to obtain support for attending meetings.

Personal Life and Wellness

- A personal life outside of the lab is important for wellness, and also improves your work productivity and creativity.
- I expect my advisees to be aware of the [mental health and wellness resources](#) available to them at the University of Minnesota and to utilize them as needed.

Professionalism and Ethics:

- Research conducted in my lab should be of the highest quality and integrity. I expect my advisees to complete required training in the Responsible Conduct of Research and to be prepared to engage in discussions with me and other lab members about research ethics, rigor and reproducibility. I will support any additional training in this area sought by my advisees.
- I expect my advisees to maintain an accurate and detailed record of their research. It is critical that these records be accurate and sufficiently detailed so that every experiment could be successfully replicated by another scientist.
- Harassment, discrimination and sexual misconduct will not be tolerated. All University of Minnesota faculty and staff are required to complete the [Preventing and Responding to Sexual Misconduct](#) training.
- We must all contribute to creating an environment that is welcoming, inclusive and respectful for all. We must continually educate ourselves, examine our biases, and work to combat systemic racism and injustice. Any incidents of discrimination, bias or racism will be called out and should be reported to the [Bias Response and Referral Network](#).
- We are very fortunate and privileged to be able to conduct biomedical research that leads to discovery and career advancement. Members of my lab should have a commitment to collective as well as personal success. They should model gracious professionalism, treat themselves and others with respect and grace, be curious and passionate about their work, and contribute to a safe, open and fun environment.

Timeline and Time Management

- I expect my PhD advisees to complete their PhD training in 5 years or less, and my MD/PhD advisees to complete their PhD training in 4 years or less. In addition to a substantive thesis, my expectation is that completion of PhD training will result in at least one first-authored peer-reviewed publication in a scientific journal. In addition to research, writing and reading that is directly related to thesis research, additional professional and career development activities need to be completed in order to establish a full range of competencies for success in a desired career path. Thus, I expect my advisees to work diligently and to develop and utilize effective time management strategies.

Conflict Resolution

- Advisees should speak with me or anyone else if there are concerns about interactions with me or with other members of my lab. If an advisee is uncomfortable speaking with me, please reach out to the graduate program DGS, the Associate Dean for Graduate Education in the Medical School, the department head or the [Student Conflict Resolution Center](#).

Recommended Reading/Viewing

- [7 Habits of Highly Effective People](#) by Stephen R. Covey
- [Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When the Stakes are High](#) by Kerry Patterson, Joseph Grenny, Ron McMillan, Al Switzler
- [The Last Lecture](#) by [Randy Pausch](#)
- [Wait, What? and Life's Other Essential Questions](#) by [James Ryan](#)
- [The Person You Mean to Be: How Good People Fight Bias](#) by Dolly Chugh

Other Resources

- [Student Conflict Resolution Center: The Dignity Project](#)

Current as of September 18, 2020