

Advisor-Doctoral Student Expectations at SIO

This document articulates the minimum expectations for both students and advisors at SIO. These expectations are intended to lay the foundation for building a successful student-advisor relationship.

Advisor Expectations

Advisors will be committed to the education, training, and funding of their graduate student. Advisors are important role models to their student, and will lead by example, facilitating the training of the graduate student in the skills needed to be successful. In addition to scientific expertise, these skills include oral and written communication, management skills, ethical conduct, and scholarly professionalism. The advisor will encourage their student to seek opportunities in professional development.

Advisors will recognize the power differential between themselves and their student, and the disproportionate influence of their words and actions. Advisors will recognize that their students are learning new skills, and will take longer to accomplish tasks than it might take the advisor. Advisors will recognize that failure is an important part of learning. Advisors will be supportive, accessible, encouraging, and respectful to their student. They will foster the graduate student's professional confidence and encourage critical thinking, skepticism, and creativity. Advisors will be respectful of their student's intellectual, cultural, political, ethnic, gender, and other forms of diversity.

1. An advisor will establish a research environment that is intellectually stimulating, supportive, safe, and free of harassment.
2. An advisor will be knowledgeable of the policies, requirements, and deadlines of the graduate program as well as those of the institution, including curricular group requirements and applicable business office guidelines. The advisor will guide their graduate student in these areas to ensure academic and professional success.
3. An advisor will meet regularly (at least once per month, or at some mutually agreed-upon interval) with their graduate student, and provide constructive feedback on the progress and results of ongoing research and/or coursework. Meetings are an opportunity to ask questions, discuss expectations (including, but not limited to, coursework and research), receive feedback, and set goals.
4. An advisor will work with their graduate student to develop and execute a thesis project. This will include providing advice in writing a thesis proposal, and discussing how to achieve the goals of the proposal. The advisor will work with their student to ensure continuing progress.

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5. An advisor will work with their graduate student to select a thesis committee. The advisor will support their student in arranging annual committee meetings to review the student's progress.
6. An advisor will provide feedback on their graduate student's written documents within a month, or provide a timeline for feedback if that timeframe cannot be met.
7. An advisor will mentor their graduate student in following proper lab procedure and maintaining documentation of their work (e.g., lab procedures, computer code).
8. An advisor will discuss expectations of their graduate student's work hours, working remotely, sick leave, and vacation. The advisor will inform their student in advance of any planned absences.
9. An advisor will discuss acknowledgement of intellectual contributions to and authorship of presentations, publications, and other publicly disseminated work with their graduate student. The advisor will work with their student to present and publish the student's work in a timely manner.
10. An advisor will discuss intellectual property issues with the student regarding disclosure, patent rights, and publishing research discoveries.
11. An advisor will encourage their graduate student to attend professional meetings or workshops, and make an effort to secure and facilitate funding for such activities. The advisor will promote attendance at seminars and journal clubs that are beneficial to their student's professional development.
12. An advisor will provide career advice and assist in finding a position for their graduate student following graduation. The advisor will provide honest letters of recommendation and be accessible for advice and feedback on career goals.
13. Securing graduate student funding is ultimately the responsibility of the advisor. The advisor will work with their graduate student and the graduate department to ensure the student remains funded and has adequate resources to accomplish their proposed research.
14. An advisor will anticipate conflicts between the interests of externally funded research programs and those of their graduate student, and will help keep these interests from interfering with the student's thesis research.
15. An advisor will not require the graduate student to perform tasks unrelated to their academic and professional development (e.g., babysitting, dog walking, etc.).

Doctoral Student Expectations

Graduate students have the primary responsibility for the successful completion of their degree. They will be committed to their graduate education and will demonstrate this through their efforts in the classroom and research activities.

Graduate students are expected to maintain a high level of professionalism, self-motivation, engagement, scholarly curiosity, and ethical standards. Students must recognize that they represent their advisors, labs, and the institution in public and professional settings, and conduct themselves accordingly. They will seek guidance from available resources, including their research advisor, thesis committee, career counseling services, peers, and any other mentors. Graduate students will acknowledge their own responsibility for developing their career following the completion of their doctoral degree. Students will be respectful of their advisor's and lab-mates' intellectual, cultural, political, ethnic, gender, and other forms of diversity.

1. A graduate student will contribute to maintaining a research environment that is intellectually stimulating, supportive, safe, and free of harassment.
2. A graduate student will be knowledgeable of and compliant with the policies, requirements, and deadlines of the graduate program and the institution. The student will strive to meet these policies and requirements in both letter and spirit.
3. A graduate student will meet regularly (at least once per month, or at some mutually agreed-upon interval) with their advisor(s), and provide updates on the progress and results of ongoing research and/or coursework. Meetings are an opportunity to ask questions, discuss expectations (including, but not limited to, coursework and research), receive constructive feedback, and set goals.
4. A graduate student will work with their advisor(s) to develop and execute a thesis project. This will include soliciting advice in writing a thesis proposal, and discussing how to achieve the goals of the proposal. The student will work with their advisor(s) to ensure continuing progress.
5. A graduate student will work with their advisor(s) to select a thesis committee. The student will meet with this committee at least annually to report on progress, and receive advice as well as constructive criticism from the committee members.
6. A graduate student will keep complete documentation of their work (e.g., lab procedures, computer code), and be prepared to share it with their advisor(s).
7. A graduate student will discuss expectations of work hours, working remotely, sick leave, and vacation with their advisor(s). The student will consult with their advisor(s) in advance of any planned absences.

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8. A graduate student will discuss acknowledgement of intellectual contributions to and authorship of presentations, publications, and other publicly disseminated work with their advisor(s). The student will work with their advisor(s) to write and submit their research in a timely manner.
9. A graduate student will discuss intellectual property issues with their advisor(s) regarding disclosure, patent rights, and publishing research discoveries.
10. A graduate student will expect to attend and/or participate in professional meetings or workshops, as well as seminars and journal clubs that are beneficial to the student's professional development.
11. Though securing graduate student funding is ultimately the responsibility of the advisor(s), graduate students will work with their advisor(s) and the graduate department to ensure they remain funded and have adequate resources to accomplish their proposed research.

If you need guidance or support in fulfilling the above expectations, or to address issues that cannot be resolved between the above parties, useful resources may be found in the [SIO Graduate Student Handbook](#) and the Faculty Handbook.

The content of this document was modified from:

“Compact Between Biomedical Graduate Students and Their Research Advisors,” Association of American Medical Colleges, January 2017.