

# GRAD GUIDE TO SETTING EXPECTATIONS

## ADVISING & WORKING RELATIONSHIPS WITH FACULTY

### REMEMBER

- Relationships between graduate students and faculty members are crucial for education and professional development – including long-term career goals.
- Grad school is a different “work culture” involving your academic program and/or professional settings (i.e. field placements).
- Consider asking other students or faculty members directly what the expectations of that “culture” are to avoid difficulties.
- **Start these conversations – if faculty and others are open to discussing – as soon as possible to preemptively avoid future problems.**

### GENERAL ADVISING CONSIDERATIONS

- The faculty’s preferred title (“Dr. Longhorn” vs. “Bevo”) – in public and in one-on-one interactions
- Preferred method of communication (email, phone, skype, text, in-person) and how quickly is a response expected? (ie. within 24 hours including weekends)
- How often will individual advising check-ins occur?
- How will feedback on your progress be provided? How will evaluation occur? How regularly?
- What functions and level of mentorship will your advisor provide? How much autonomy is expected of you?
- What has the faculty member found to be successful in working with students in the past? What has been difficult?
- How are conflicts brought up with the faculty member? And resolved?

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### RESEARCH & LAB EXPECTATIONS

What are the research and lab expectations, including:

- ◆ Lab meeting frequency (i.e. required two hour block every week)?
- ◆ Clear understanding of slated research projects on semester-by-semester basis and yearlong goals?
- ◆ Available opportunities for independent research vs. faculty led investigations?
- ◆ Expected familiarity with particular research techniques or statistical programs?
- ◆ Availability to work with other students from other labs/departments?
- ◆ Freedom to work with other *faculty members* from other lab/departments?
- ◆ Student's research role, including expected time requirements or production of materials (literature review, leading focus groups, etc.)?
- ◆ How will authorship be decided — including revisiting decisions further into project?

### WHAT ABOUT YOU??

- What information are you comfortable sharing about your personal life with your faculty members?
- How much time and energy are you willing to consistently dedicate?
  - ◆ Will there be various “high points” during the year that will require more stamina from you?
  - ◆ What about your accessibility during winter/summer breaks?
- When will you know you've reached your limit? How will you communicate that? How will you say “No”?
- **How are you going to communicate your boundaries?**

### REMEMBER:

The Office of the Student Ombuds is always available to help you practice these skills and help you think through how you want to approach a difficult conversation. We offer opportunities for **mock discussions**.

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