

Graduate Student and Postdoctoral Associate Advising Statement

(Advisor Name)

Date

PURPOSE

The purpose of this statement is to share my philosophy and expectation of advisees while completing graduate school or a postdoctoral tenure. My job is to provide guidance and access to facilities and resources to conduct research and opportunities that develop young professionals. There are many demands of a faculty member; however, being an advisor is one privilege I find most rewarding and one I prioritize. As my responsibilities have grown, I depend more on my advisees to help build and maintain impactful research, Extension, and teaching programs.

RELATIONSHIPS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Our Relationship: As your advisor, I am committed to treating all advisees with respect and fairness. Any issues or conflicts should be brought to my attention immediately as I've found small issues and conflicts tend to fester and usually turn into bigger ones if not immediately addressed. Although I have high expectations for myself and my advisees, I feel these expectations are appropriate, achievable, and set advisees up for future career success. I have three simple guiding principles – be nice, work hard and have fun. I prefer casual work environments and relationships; however, that should not be interpreted as lower expectations. Once you are my advisee, I will always consider you a colleague, collaborator and friend. I enjoy forming both professional and personal relationships with my students and will be one of your biggest supporters and cheerleaders.

Resolving Conflict: Communication is key to minimizing conflicts. For example, this document is an effort to clearly communicate my expectations to reduce the possibility of misunderstanding between my advisees and myself. If you have concerns about your interactions with me or others, please do not hesitate to talk with me. If you are uncomfortable speaking with me, feel free to talk with the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), Department Head, Administrative Director, or the Office of Student Conflict Resolution. If you wish for a conversation to remain anonymous, please indicate that.

Timeline: I expect my advisees to develop both short- (e.g. 6 months) and long-term (e.g. 2 to 3 years) goals and plans that outline their time as my advisee. Obviously, timelines can change and evolve for various reasons; however, developing practical and achievable timelines and goals will result in a more productive and positive experience as my advisee.

THESIS, COURSEWORK AND OTHER LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Coursework: I do not have any standard course requirements beyond those of the graduate program. I expect my advisees to develop a solid background in the concepts and skills their research and potential career path require. This can be accomplished through coursework, workshops, journal clubs and other informal arrangements. Even though you might not be enrolled in ANSC Seminar, I highly encourage you to attend every presentation.

Thesis: In cooperation with their committee, I expect my advisees to develop their research projects within the disciplines of horse management, horse nutrition and forage utilization. Graduate students working towards a M.S. degree tend to develop two research projects, while graduate students working towards a Ph.D. degree tend to develop three research projects. I expect my advisees to develop research projects that are designed to test a well-defined hypothesis. In addition, the topics should pique the student's interest, excite them, address a timely issue or problem within the industry, and add to the scientific literature. Each thesis chapter, except the literature review, should be written with the expectation to publish in an appropriate scientific journal. Ideally, manuscripts would be submitted prior to the defense.

Review of Literature: Regardless of career path, a current knowledge of the literature is essential. Therefore, I expect my advisees to spend significant hours each week reading. Recommended journals include Journal of Animal Science, Journal of Equine Veterinary Science and the Agronomy Journal. Finding new ideas and research directions nearly always begin with the literature. Reading scientific journals will make you a better scientist and advisee.

Service: I feel strongly that organizations run more efficiently and make better and more mission-driven decisions when everyone contributes their time, talents and energy. Therefore, I think it is important for my advisees to gain experience in service and organizational activities. However, I do not expect these activities to take $\geq 5\%$ of their time. Service examples include leadership roles within the Animal Science Graduate Student Club, mentoring other students, or being a graduate student representative for a scientific organization.

FUNDING AND GRANT WRITING

Stipends: I guarantee funding for two years for graduate students seeking a M.S. degree, three years for graduate students seeking a Ph.D. degree, and one year for postdoctoral associates. The nature of that funding is often unpredictable and may change from year to year. However, I do expect my advisees to write and submit grant proposals and fellowships that include stipend funding, when possible. Grant writing is a critical activity for a postdoctoral associate.

Grant Writing and Research Funding: Grant writing is a critically important skill regardless of career path pursued. Therefore, I expect all of my advisees to be active in writing grant proposals for both internal and external funding opportunities. Writing these proposals is an excellent experience and successful grantsmanship increases a student's competitiveness in the job market. By the time my advisees graduate, I expect them to be able to list several grant writing activities (funded or non-funded) on their CV.

ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND OTHER EXPECTATIONS

Career Paths: One of my main jobs as an advisor is to help my advisees be successful in their chosen career. I want my advisees to let me know the range of career paths they are interested in early in their graduate school tenure. I will do my best to help my advisees obtain the experience and skills needed to succeed in various careers, and am happy to serve as a reference.

Independence: I expect my advisees to work without daily input or guidance from me. I am always available for consultation; however, you are expected to use your own good judgement. I am happy to initially provide more regular guidance to advisees who are not used to working

independently or ones who are early in their career. By the time my advisees leave the university, I expect them to be able to function as independent scientists, take responsibility for their actions, initiate projects, and advocate for their needs.

Time Management: This document makes it clear that I have high expectations of my advisees. The less time efficient one is, the more hours per week it will take to meet those expectations. Therefore, I expect my advisees to learn and practice good time management. My advisees do not “punch a time clock”; however, I expect them to be on campus during normal working hours (Monday through Friday; 8:00 am to 4:30 pm). It is essentially true that it takes a certain number of hours to complete a research project and this can be done more quickly, or more slowly, depending on your own commitment; my advisees commonly work evenings and weekends. I do care more about quality of work vs. hours worked. Good time management is a critical component of success in my laboratory.

Attitude. It is critical to keep an open mind and positive attitude. Activities (e.g. grant writing, scientific presentations, manuscripts) surrounding research are usually fraught with constructive criticism. I will do my best to ensure feedback is constructive and I ask that my advisees do not take offense to constructive criticism and feedback; it is a necessary component of research. Additionally, an enthusiastic attitude is infectious and adds to a positive laboratory environment.

Personal Life: I want my advisees to have one. People who spend all their time on work activities generally tend to be less productive, less creative, and less fun as colleagues. Most people become overly stressed and unhappy if they do not put sufficient effort and time into their personal lives. I do want to be consulted before any vacations or long periods out of the office.

Ethics: Always displaying high personal and professional ethics and integrity is important to me and your future career path. My advisees should familiarize themselves with, and abide by, the University’s Code of Conduct:

https://regents.umn.edu/sites/regents.umn.edu/files/policies/Student_Conduct_Code.pdf.

Handbook: The department maintains a Graduate Student Handbook. I encourage all advisees to thoroughly read the handbook immediately after beginning graduate school.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

Please include your three main expectations of me, as your advisor:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

I hereby acknowledge that I have read and discussed this document with my advisor.

Advisee signature and date

Advisor signature and date

