

Lab Code of Conduct and Expectations

Updated 9/7/24

Open policies and clear expectations promote a more equitable, just, and inclusive learning environment in the laboratory. This document, and the corresponding [“Lab Etiquette”](#) document, are living documents that provide guidelines for appropriate conduct. The policies expressed here apply to the PI, graduate and undergraduate students, lab managers, postdocs or other collaborators who work with us in our lab space.

The lab is an equal-opportunity group, and we are committed to enacting policies to remove barriers for anyone wanting to pursue science. This includes promoting inclusivity in our lab, at our university, and in the sciences in general. Everyone in the lab comes from unique intellectual, cultural, economic, and experiential backgrounds, and we require that lab members respect each other and those backgrounds and experiences. We want everyone to be excited to come to work, where we can share ideas, collaborate on research projects, and generate impactful science. We also want to create a workplace where we can grow both personally and professionally.

Some guiding principles that we follow:

1. Be kind.
2. Be respectful and professional in the lab environment, and communicate issues or problems accordingly. Sarcasm, condescension, etc. are not helpful in this regard and should be avoided in professional settings.
3. Anyone, at any level of experience, can make valuable contributions to science and research. Therefore, we treat everyone's views, opinions, hypotheses, ideas, as equally worthy of consideration and respect, regardless of whether you are a new undergraduate or a PI.
4. We are all human beings with lives outside of our work. Lab members will set their own schedules. Time is the only irreplaceable resource, so manage it well, but as long as you are making progress, the number of hours you work each week does not matter to me. I am happy to help with time-management strategies, if requested.
5. Related to the above, I encourage lab members to participate in outside activities, sports, volunteer work, etc. that provide counterbalance to their scientific work, and keep them mentally and physically healthy.
6. I encourage everyone to set personal/professional boundaries for their own comfort (and possibly sanity). If you're in a place where you feel like your life may be falling apart, please communicate with me and I will do my best to help you by adjusting work schedule, giving advice, providing resources, etc.
7. We participate in departmental DEI and outreach efforts to help students who want to pursue scientific careers overcome barriers. This includes our department URGE (Unlearning Racism in Geoscience) pod, Fall Preview, Earth Camp, and supporting undergraduate research in our laboratory.
8. Science is (sadly) full of rejections! We counter this by celebrating lab members' accomplishments and life events (birthdays, awards, papers, new pets/babies, holidays)!

What we do not tolerate:

1. Microaggressions, microinsults, invalidations, or bigotry of any kind
 - a. E.g., saying that someone has only gotten a fellowship or an award because of gender or ethnicity; implying that someone doesn't belong; touching hair or clothing without permission; commenting on how someone is not like others of their ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc. Need more examples? Carlton has a great resource [here](#).
2. Harassment. See UM's policy on what constitutes harassment [here](https://spg.umich.edu/policy/201.89-1) (<https://spg.umich.edu/policy/201.89-1>)

Scientific Integrity/Data Quality Control

We will regularly discuss best practices with members of the lab, but in general lab members should use appropriate citation/quotation of published material to support their work and writing. When generating figures and plotting data, statistical methods (not visual alone) should be used to determine outliers in the data. Making a figure “pretty” should not include adjusting the presentation of the data in a way that misleads the viewer or hides any “less desirable” qualities of the data. It's not acceptable to delete any data point without a very good reason (e.g., instrument failure, clear statistical outlier).

No data is to leave the lab without my permission; this is so that I have the opportunity to make sure it meets our quality standards.

Lab organization and responsibilities

Lab members will likely be responsible for a small set of lab chores, which will be assigned according to experience level and distributed equally among lab members. **Lab members are responsible for cleaning up after themselves and in general being a good lab citizen** (see lab etiquette document for more details.)

Every lab member must also keep a lab notebook and document their work therein. I will provide guidance on best practices for this, if requested. In general you should document so that someone else could read your notes and reproduce what you did. That person is likely to be you, in a year, or two years, and you'd be surprised at what you won't remember at that point, so be as detailed as you can. The lab notebook should be in hard copy, although you are also welcome to keep an electronic copy. I have terrible handwriting so I sometimes prefer to type up my work or procedures afterward.

Authorship

In contrast to the stereotype that scientists work alone, in reality science is a team effort and requires diverse input and ideas. Collaboration within and with other labs at U-M and beyond is encouraged. Criteria for authorship on a paper are that you have contributed an important piece of data or analysis, AND made intellectual contributions to the manuscript (editing, generating a figure, comments/revisions). We will always discuss who should be included as co-authors when the first author is preparing the manuscript, i.e., well before submission.