

# Huffenberger Group Undergraduate Student Expectations

*Revised 3 October 2013*

New students often know neither what's expected of them nor what they can expect of their faculty advisor. This handout helps to orient new students to the group.

## *Expectations of you as a student*

Your goal is to execute your research in a way that is careful and precise, but also efficient. Science is not a 9 to 5 job, and you cannot succeed as a 9 to 5 student. You will often find yourself reading, doing research, analyzing data, or writing manuscripts on weeknights or weekends, whether you are on campus or off.

My expectations of you depend on the level of support you are provided. If you work in an informal manner for your own enrichment, then the expectations are low. Your only requirement is to contribute more to the group's research (in the long term) than the effort it takes to train you. Beyond that, you will get out of the experience what you put into it.

If you work under a formal, long-term arrangement, for course credit or for pay, the expectations for you are higher, as follows.

I expect you to update me regularly about your progress, successes, and concerns in one-on-one meetings, usually once per week. You should prepare and send me an agenda for the meetings, which I will add to. These are in addition to formal updates in periodic group meetings. Communication is critical to keep our working relationship productive. I expect you to communicate to me concerns that you have about your research or our interactions.

I expect you to attend seminars regularly and to participate in other departmental activities.

I expect you to develop proficiency with the Unix/Linux operating system and computer programming (e.g. C, Python).

I expect you to pursue scholarships and grants related to your project. These are particularly important to pay for stipends for your summer work or for travel to national conferences. These can be scholarships from FSU's office of undergraduate research, Sigma Xi grants, or other external sources.

By your senior year, I expect you to read the primary literature. Read articles in scientific journals that are relevant to your work or the broader field, or that interest

you. I will point you to relevant journals and articles, but do not rely on me to point you to everything.

By your senior year, I expect that you will be producing publication-quality research with your project.

I expect that you will be willing to contribute to the group as a whole, both intellectually and by assisting with research and training outside of your project.

Finally, I expect you to treat members of the group, including me, with dignity and respect.

*Expectations of me as an advisor*

I understand that your primary job is as an undergraduate student, and I commit to allow you the time and space to excel in your coursework and exams.

With advanced notice, I will always make time to discuss your research and your academic training. I commit to a minimum of 30 minutes even during the worst weeks, but it will often be much more time than that.

I will advise you about the career path that you select (graduate school or non-academic), and the necessary next steps. If I am not familiar with that career path, I will refer you the best I am able to people or resources that can help to guide you.

I will read and comment on any manuscripts, applications, or other written materials you give me within two weeks (excluding theses). Generally comments will come quicker, but please get these to me at least this far in advance of any deadline.

I will write you detailed letters of recommendation based on your research experience.

Upon request, I will update you on my assessment of your progress, both in research and in your overall training.

I will introduce you to others in the field and help you make contacts that will be useful throughout your career.

I will treat you, and all the members of the group, with dignity and respect.

*Adapted from Noor (2012).*