

Research Assistant Agreement for D3CC Lab

GENERAL POLICIES

(UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT VERSION)

Lab requirements for Research Assistants (RAs)

10 hours a week spent on lab activities. Tasks would include, but not be limited to: Running participants, organizing undergraduate researchers, writing papers, reviewing literature, cleaning databases, running statistics, writing papers, recruiting subjects, and other tasks that are not listed but may come up. I need someone I can rely on for these things.

For the first semester of lab participation, you are most likely going to be placed on data entry tasks. In rare cases, we may change this procedure as circumstances require.

These data entry tasks will require entering data, coding data, content analysis, or other forms of data entry. At the meeting, you will be required to hand over the physical forms that you have coded and entered into a database and provide progress reports for the entry.

The most critical features of a research assistant (RA) are: ***Punctuality, organization, following directions***, and ***enthusiasm***. These are critical attributes, and you have been selected to participate in the lab, because you appear to have those features.

Expectations and consequences

- **Attending meetings:** All lab personnel are required to attend a one hour meeting once per week in addition to your general lab duties. You must let me know if you will miss a meeting PRIOR to the meeting. Emergencies happen, but without documentation, missing a meeting will result in a write-up. Additional meetings are likely, especially as you begin to run subjects. Missing rehearsals and such will also result in write-ups.
- **Punctuality:** If you are running a study for which there is ***minimal*** setup, you are required to arrive at the lab a minimum of 10 minutes prior to the scheduled subject (more time may be necessary, depending on the study). Arriving with less than 10 minutes to spare (or failing to arrive for a scheduled participant) will result in a write-up.
- **Adhering to protocol:** You are free to voice your opinion and changes to studies during design and rehearsal phases. In fact, we encourage that. However, once we have gone live with a study, **THERE ARE NO CHANGES PERMITTED TO A STUDY**. You **MAY NOT** ad lib, or run subjects without reading **VERBATIM** from the script. Failure to comply with the exact procedures decided upon during rehearsal will result in a write-up.
- **Speaking up:** If there is something unusual, something that doesn't make sense, or something we did not anticipate, bring it to my attention or the attention of a lab graduate student **immediately**. Most of the time, we can make these corrections and not lose a semester's worth of data.
- **General Respect** (*Things, I hope, are common sense*): No one at any time will be mocked, ridiculed, or made fun of in any way. No one will be made to feel different, badly, or excluded

based on sex, gender identity, ethnicity, race, belief, creed, orientation (sexual or otherwise), political beliefs, or their dealings outside of the lab.

Write-up policy

Violating or failing any of the five above requirements will result in a minimum of one write-up. Depending on the egregiousness of the situation, I reserve the right to dismiss anyone from the lab at anytime, or fail a directed studies student. The write-up consequences are as follows:

- **1 write-up:** I am disappointed, but no formal penalty will be logged. Anyone can make a mistake once.
- **2 write-ups:** It changes the nature of the letter I will write on your behalf, should you ask for one. A letter may still be given, but it will not be strong.
- **3 write-ups:** You are dismissed from the lab, you will **not** receive a letter from me or anyone from the lab, and if you are directed studies, you will most likely fail the term.

Chain of command

My current graduate students are my seconds in command. Problems that arise should first be discussed with them. If adequate solutions cannot be reached, then these issues can be brought to me. They are to be *respected*. These students are experts in their areas and are the life-blood of the lab. Unless corrected by me, the graduate students' directions are to be followed at all times.

My advising style

Although interpersonally, I strive to maintain kindness and empathy, I am a *very harsh critic*. I will not settle for anything less than your best. Job markets – both academic and non-academic – will not “go easy” on you, and neither will I. My job is to prepare you and your job is to let me. Writing, statistics, scholarly rigor, timely academic pursuits, these things will be demanded on a regular basis. Very often, you may feel as though I am “pushing too hard” or “unfairly harsh.” These responses are normal. I hold myself to extremely high standards and I do the same for all my students, especially those in which I see great potential.

Much of this process may feel like starting over for more experienced students, and in a way it is. I do not want to lie to you: anytime you join a new lab, there is an adjustment period. At the end of the day, this lab is going to be run my way. I will occasionally welcome feedback, but there are aspects of the lab (e.g., productivity, certain topics of pursuit) that are non-negotiable.

Idea security

I have had ideas of mine stolen in the past. In fact, I have had entire bodies of work taken and used without my consent. In this lab, we work as a unit and come together to share ideas. No one should be afraid to speak up because of idea theft or fraud. That will not happen here. Anyone who takes the intellectual property of someone else and uses it for selfish gain will be reported to the department head – no exceptions.

Sexual harassment policy

It is my rule that no one in the lab will become romantically involved while working in my lab. This is not a university policy, but it is MY policy. Things get ugly really fast, (I've seen it before!). Hostile work environments can be created by unwanted advances, inappropriate comments, and even mutual romantic interest that end badly. **JUST DON'T DO IT!**

If two individuals in the lab become interested in each other, and the situation is inevitable, **SEE ME AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!** With romantic involvement, I will need one person to leave the lab within the term (fall term, spring term, or summer). Projects will be turned over to others and projects will be finalized so that future work between the two parties is no longer mediated through the lab. It is a big hassle, so while I don't want to get in the way of "fate," I don't want romance to get in the way of work!

That said I encourage people in the lab to hang out, be friends, and spend time getting to know each other. I simply find that romantic entanglements are too much to handle in a work environment (even if you **THINK** you can handle it).

Use of lab facilities

The use of ALL lab resources, including the computers, equipment, data, and research discussed are property of the lab. Use of these facilities for personal issues (unrelated class-work, a job, or another non-lab related use) must **FIRST** be discussed with me. Unless previously agreed, no one is to use the lab resources for anything other than sanctioned lab work.

AUTHORSHIP

According to the American Psychological Association (APA) authorship is only granted when an individual has made unique and sufficient intellectual contributions to a finished product.

Instances of work that warrants authorship:

- Conceptualization of idea, domain of study, or hypothesis to be tested
- Refinement of hypothesis and alternative hypotheses to be tested
- Methodological approaches including control conditions and operational definitions of variables.
- Statistical approach including unique suggestions and advanced statistical execution, interpretation, or write-up
- Contribution to the writing in the form of literature summary, theoretical background, or logical framework.

*Instances of work that does **not** warrant authorship:*

- Data collection or entry
- Subject recruitment and/or scheduling
- Running subjects
- Cleaning datasets
- Grammatical, typographical, and/or stylistic screening (e.g., APA style)
- Participation in weekly discussions and meetings
- Running basic statistics (e.g., means, standard deviations, t-tests, etc.) and reporting them in written form

Overall, authorship is not something to be bartered for, nor should it be the sole motivation for participation. We are scientists, we grow as a community. Ideas should always be shared with the group in a trustworthy and cooperative fashion. No one will ever take someone else's idea and publish with it in this lab! If someone wants to "run with" an idea, all will be invited to participate. Authorship is based on work, not on firing off ideas. Nevertheless, individuals will always be given credit for their unique insights through authorship or acknowledgement – depending on what is appropriate based on the work that was done.

General encouragement

Graduate Students and Undergraduate Research Assistants (RAs) are encouraged to contribute maximally to projects in which they are interested. All interested students will be involved at every level of research that is practical. However, it is extremely unlikely RA contributions will result in authorship credit. It is not impossible, just highly unlikely. This lack of authorship is not a reflection on valuable insights and contributions that RA's can make to the research. However, it takes years to understand and contribute to research literature and, as a consequence, it is highly unlikely that RA's will be ready to push the literature forward.

In the HIGHLY UNLIKELY case that an idea stemming from a RA warrants a research project, the URA will be given control of the project as a directed study or an honor's thesis.

Please sign below to indicate you have read and understand the above document:

STUDENT:

Full Name (printed): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

HEAD OF THE LAB:

Full Name (printed): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____