

One of my previous assumptions about working in a lab was that I would have constant meetings with my mentor or lab group and always be sitting through them learning about their work or just sitting there as an intern and taking in everything. Another assumption I had was that I would just be thrown into the project and be told to swim on my own to survive. However both these assumptions were proven wrong. I have only had 2-3 meetings with my mentor so far, and only when necessary to discuss work on the project and plan what the next steps would be. And I have, thankfully, not been thrown into the deep end and have had a gradual progression into the project, all thanks to my amazing mentor. My experiences this week have significantly changed my notion of working with a University lab. I have learned that everyone working in the lab is not only very responsive to my questions, but also engaged and interested in the progress I am making. My mentor holds me accountable and keeps me on track and is always able to answer my questions. I have not been left alone or just told to do stuff with no direction or guidance. There is a perfect balance of independence and guidance and I love that. My capabilities have also been kept in mind very well as I have been assigned stuff that challenges me, but is still within my reach and capabilities. These new insights will help throughout the program because now I know exactly what to expect from my lab and mentor as well as what is expected from me by my lab and mentor. They will also help me work accordingly in lab moving forward and put in more work and effort since I know what our plan is and what I can accomplish.