

Sep 18, 2024 Version 2

## Welcome & Onboarding V.2

DOI

**[dx.doi.org/10.17504/protocols.io.14egn6m6zl5d/v2](https://dx.doi.org/10.17504/protocols.io.14egn6m6zl5d/v2)**

Andy Alexander<sup>1</sup>, Emma Cimino<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>UC Santa Barbara; <sup>2</sup>UCSB



Andy Alexander

UC Santa Barbara

OPEN  ACCESS



DOI: **[dx.doi.org/10.17504/protocols.io.14egn6m6zl5d/v2](https://dx.doi.org/10.17504/protocols.io.14egn6m6zl5d/v2)**

**Protocol Citation:** Andy Alexander, Emma Cimino 2024. Welcome & Onboarding. **protocols.io**  
**<https://dx.doi.org/10.17504/protocols.io.14egn6m6zl5d/v2>**Version created by **[Andy Alexander](#)**

**License:** This is an open access protocol distributed under the terms of the **[Creative Commons Attribution License](#)**, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited

**Protocol status:** Working

**We use this protocol and it's working**

**Created:** July 11, 2024










**Last Modified:** September 18, 2024

**Protocol Integer ID:** 107317

## Abstract

Must knows for onboarding at UCSB and in the Alexander laboratory.

## Attachments

|   |   |   |   |  |   |
|---|---|---|---|--|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| <u><a href="#">researcher_training ...</a></u>                                    | <u><a href="#">986-B.pdf</a></u>  | <u><a href="#">Login Instructions f...</a></u>                                    | <u><a href="#">Employee Volunteer S...</a></u>                                    | <u><a href="#">Employee Worksheet 2...</a></u>                                     | <u><a href="#">New Demographic</a></u>  |
| 190KB   | 560KB   | 1.5MB   | 41KB  | 278KB  | <u><a href="#">Form...</a></u><br>28KB  |
|  |  |  |   |  |   |
| <u><a href="#">NEW Voluntary Self-I...</a></u>                                    | <u><a href="#">VolunteerInfoForm.pd...</a></u>                                    | <u><a href="#">WaiverElecActivities...</a></u>                                    |   |  |   |
| 920KB   | 251KB   | 178KB   |   |  |   |



Welcome to the Alexander lab! 😊 Below you will find useful information to help you get started working with us.

## 1 **ABOUT YOUR ADVISOR.**

I prefer if you call me Andy. I am from a mountain town called Jamul outside of San Diego, California. I completed both my bachelors and PhD at UC San Diego and a postdoctoral fellow with Prof. Michael Hasselmo at Boston University. I live in Goleta with my partner (Jessie), dog (Cooper), and two cats (Stevie and Sukie). Jessie works on campus and swings by the lab or my office occasionally. Outside of lab I like to golf, skateboard, run, camp, hit the beach, go to breweries, go to concerts, and hang out with friends. For the most part, I have the same taste in music as I did in middle school/high school (hardcore punk). My Santa Barbara goals are to build a healthy and productive lab, camp at the beach more, learn to swim well, and learn to surf (again). I've been told that I 1) make poor eye contact and 2) have a resting grouchy face. If either of these things occur and make you feel like I'm angry at you I assure you I'm not, I'm just zoning out or thinking.

## **MY ROLE AS PI.**

My role as your mentor is to help you succeed while at UCSB and beyond. You are a trainee and my job is to train you. In many ways we've entered an extremely important contract. Our interpersonal working relationship is likely one of the most significant of your life. In situations like this, it is often helpful to lay our ground rules and expectations from the get. That's what this section of the protocol seeks to achieve.

Here are some specific things I can help you with with respect to your career as a scientist: writing grants, writing papers, coding, electronics, analyzing data, interpreting data, reading papers, performing surgeries, training animals, building rigs, meeting people and establishing connections, preparing and presenting talks/posters, recognizing areas where you need improvement, and finding opportunities to help you improve those areas. Informally, I can also serve as a resource for: learning to skateboard, irrigation, finding a good beer or coffee in town, curing your hiccups, and carpentry. Wherever I cannot fill your training needs I will work with you to identify someone who can.

In addition to teaching you the things I mentioned above, here are some expectations I believe you should have of me:

1. You should expect me to be your advocate. This means that I will always operate with your best interests in mind and that I will continuously seek to assist you in gaining success.
2. You should expect to have one-on-one time with me. Meetings of this nature build our trust and ensure we are on the same page.
3. You should expect me to provide you with the resources you need to succeed. This can range from financial support to equipment to reagents. Resources also include direct

training.

4. I did not accept you into our laboratory because I have an expectation that you will continue in academia. If you decide that a career other than academic science is ideal for you please tell me ASAP so we can ensure you are getting all of the training, networking, and other resources you need to succeed in that goal.

In return, I have the following expectations of you:

1. You to be a good citizen of the lab. This means many things (some of which fall under this category but are elaborated on below) but in general it means that you work to be a friendly, supportive, and helpful team member.
2. You treat every member of our team with respect. There is no room for bigotry, rudeness, anger, violence, condescension, bullying etc. of any form in the lab (or frankly anywhere). If I catch wind of any type of negative interpersonal behavior it will be addressed immediately with appropriate consequences.
3. You are honest and accountable. You are going to f\*ck things up from time to time. The best way to learn and grow from these scenarios is to address them head on and work with me to fix them.
4. You treat the privilege of this job with respect. This means acknowledging how cool it is to be a neuroscientist and graduate student and to try to remind yourself of this frequently. Recognition of this will help you when you have inevitable difficulties in graduate school/experiments
5. You respect the research animals that give their lives for our pursuit. I have an expectation that we make something of every animal that comes through the lab. This means we strive to publish all of our results, big or small. Obviously I understand when things don't work out, are unpublishable, or other responsibilities get in the way but in general I will have an expectation that you work with me to complete our projects. If an animal is not behaving well or is not useful for an experimental cohort for some reason try to use it for training purposes.
6. You work to keep tidy. This includes both physical space Code and data storage.
7. You respond to me in a punctual manner. I have no expectation that you respond to emails/slacks immediately but typically within a business day. The urgency of responses will obviously depend on various factors including deadlines. I will sometimes email you on weekends but in general I have no expectation that you will respond.
8. You should apply for grants. More on this later but the gist is that it is an extremely important skill to develop as an academic scientist and it benefits you now and into the future.

These expectations are by no means complete and I anticipate that they will evolve throughout the years. If you have feedback or suggested changes please submit them anonymously here.

## **THE LABORATORY.**

You probably already know why you are here, but just in case you've forgotten the Alexander lab is focused on unraveling neural mechanisms of spatial cognition/navigation and episodic memory. To these ends, we train rodents (mice and rats) to perform a variety of spatial navigation and memory tasks while recording neural activity using in vivo neuroimaging and in vivo electrophysiology. When it is warranted, we employ circuit perturbation methods to test hypotheses regarding the relationship between neural activity patterns and behavior. There are 3 main themes in the laboratory in 2023:

### **THE PHYSICAL LABORATORY.**

The laboratory is primarily housed in the Neurosciences Research Institute in the 5175 corridor (5th floor just outside of the elevators) of Biological Sciences II. The lab in 5175 consists of multiple shared spaces (surgery, necroscopy), a testing room, a fabrication workshop, a wet lab, and a small amount of personnel space. There is ddH<sub>2</sub>O and crushed ice in the NRI/MCDB/EEMB core on the 4th floor near the southeast side of the building. There is an NRI/MCDB microscopy core directly adjacent to the 5175 corridor that we are permitted to use following training.

If you are a graduate student you will be given office space through your department (and if not contact Andy to discuss). There is a break room on the opposite side of the 5th floor that you are welcome to use. Our -80 is located near the break room (shared with the Goard lab, our stuff is on top). There is another outdoor 'break room' all the way down the main corridor when exiting to the right from the lab. It is not really a break room, its a patio for the fire stairwell on the south(?) side of the building but it has a nice view and fresh air. Our lab is in close proximity to the Goard and Smith labs, don't hesitate to get to know them and ask for help.

All of our animals are housed on the 6th floor in the ARC and just outside of it. Mice that participate in experiments on the 5th floor are housed in a 'dirty' room near the entrance to the ARC (rm. 61XX). Once mice exit the ARC they are never permitted back inside. We have an additional testing room on the 6th floor in the Animal Research Facility (ARC). This room is used for rat experiments while all space on the 5th floor is used for mice. We are awaiting renovations to provide additional testing rooms in the near future (slated to begin October 2024). There are additional surgery suites on the 6th floor that can be reserved as needed.

### **GETTING ACCESS TO THE UCSB NETWORK/ OUR SERVER.**

#### **To connect to UCSB WiFi.**

Begin by contacting Shane Zheng (zheng@psych.ucsb.edu) of the Life Science Computing Group to request a PSYH-ADS account. Tell him you are in my laboratory and in what role (e.g. graduate student, undergraduate RA, etc.). All personal computers will need to be registered to get on the campus WiFi, Shane will help you with that.

#### **To connect to ASA-LAB data server.**

For PC users:



Open a file explorer window and click on the 'Network' drive then enter \\**asa-nas1.psych.ucsb.edu** in the directory window. If you are off campus you will need to be **connected to the UCSB network via VPN**. You will be prompted to enter your network credentials (PSYCH-ADS) at this time. From there you should have access to our data server. For more information about data server usage see the 'Data Organization' protocol.

For Mac users (courtesy of Xiaoxiao Lin):


The IP addresses with connections to PsychGadget and UCSB Wireless are treated as not private so we need to establish the campus VPN connection first before trying to connect to the server.

1. Download the VPN to your laptop: <https://www.it.ucsb.edu/ivanti-secure-access-campus-vpn/get-connected-campus-vpn>
2. Follow the instructions below to build the connection
3. For mac: <https://www.lscg.ucsb.edu/tutorials/connecting-network-file-share-or-nas-drive-mac>
4. Windows: <https://grit.ucsb.edu/tutorials/connecting-network-file-share-windows>
5. Reconnect to server: Choose Apple menu > Recent Items, then choose from the list of recent servers.

### **REQUIRED TRAINING FOR ACCESS TO OUR LABORATORY.**

Our lab space is controlled by the Neurosciences Research Institute. Accordingly, you need to complete the following trainings to attain full access to both the laboratory and Bio2 during off hours.

#### **IACUC researcher training checklist:**

 researcher\_training\_checklist.pdf 190KB

Email IACUC

- PI: Andy Alexander, Protocol: 986

Skim through our protocol located in the lab server (for access see above, or click:



986-B.pdf 560KB

): ASA-LAB>Resources>Protocols. You will NOT be quizzed on the protocol by us or IACUC, but it is good to familiarize yourself with it regardless.

*OHS form:*

Boxes:

- Husbandry: never
- Anesthesia: weekly
- Surgery: weekly
- Behavioral testing: daily
- blood/tissue collection: never
- Injections: monthly
- Trapping wildlife: never
- Tagging wildlife: never



- Euthanasia: monthly
- Hazard administration: never
- Animal transport: never
- Noninvasive sampling: never

Species we work with: mice and rats

Laboratory safety fundamentals (LSF) training: Login to UCLC netID (if you have done training through this website before)

- If unable to login, contact Emma to make an account for you
- Skip animal husbandry step

CITI Program training: follow PDF here:  Login Instructions for Citiprogram.pdf 1.5MB for login instructions


- Complete all boxes besides wildlife research and wild rodents/birds sections
- For “working with... in research settings” and “aseptic surgery” courses, complete those for both mice and rats (unless you are certain you won't work with both).


After completing the checklist, have Dr. Alexander sign and send it to IACUC.

You will next meet with IACUC via Zoom and schedule a tour of the Animal Research Center (ARC). After these steps are completed you will have access to ARC, animal holding rooms, and be fully authorized to work with animals.

Access to the laboratory (5175)


- Fill out the 6 documents you were sent and send them to Christy Xu ([christyxu@ucsb.edu](mailto:christyxu@ucsb.edu)) along with a picture of your UCSB access card and LSF training certificate
- The 6 forms are only required for undergrads, all other researchers can just send Christy a picture of their ID and LSF certificate

- 6 forms:  Employee Volunteer Staff Employme... 41KB

 Employee Worksheet 2019.pdf 278KB

 New Demographic Form U5605.pdf 28KB

 NEW Voluntary Self-Identification of ... 920KB

 VolunteerInfoForm.pdf 251KB

 WaiverElecActivities.pdf 178KB