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# LAB CODE OF CONDUCT

## Purpose

Welcome to the Sogin Lab at UC Merced! I am excited to have you join our team. Before doing so, it is essential you get a strong understanding of our lab code of conduct. Here, I outline promised I can make you as well as general expectations of all lab members.

I believe our job is centered around people first. We work together as mentors and mentees to advance our research and career goals. Therefore, I believe this document is critical to fulfilling the mission of our lab. There are many reasons (see [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#)) for publishing a lab code of conduct and mentorship agreements. However, the most important reasons are for you to understand the basis of mentorship in the lab, how we do science, and for you to feel welcome in this space.

**My mentorship goal** is to mold my students into independent researchers so that they have the skills they need to follow their chosen career path. **As a mentor**, my role is to provide advice and guidance in your research and professional careers. **As a mentee**, your role is to seek out said advice, skills, and counseling. I also believe that no single mentorship style works for every member of the lab and the amount of mentoring you need may change over time. Therefore, it is essential to remain flexible in our relationship and to avoid comparing oneself to others in the research group.

## Lab Philosophy

*I firmly believe that our science is best achieved when all people from all backgrounds feel welcome in research laboratories. My goal is to make my lab a welcoming space for you. My philosophy is largely inspired by my and my peer's experiences as PhD and postdoctoral students and generally follows the rules outlined [here](#). I believe it is essential to develop an environment where members of the lab feel as though they are on the same team, working towards the same goals. As such, I want the members of my lab to work together and bring in outside collaborators to facilitate their research. In turn, it is essential to give credit where credit is due and celebrate our successes (and troubleshoot our failures) together. The lab should be a space where we all feel welcome and I invite members of the lab to share their ideals, culture, excitement, beers, and backyards with one another.*

## Maggie's Promises

- **My number one job** is to make the lab a **safe, happy, and productive place** for all members regardless of their backgrounds. This means I am actively searching for

funding to help support your research. This means I am listening (and trying to respond) to your needs and concerns. This also means I am aiming to full fill the promises outlined below. If there is something you think is missing from this list please let me know.

- **I am here for you.** I will meet with each of member of my group, individually, once per week, except when I am traveling or on holidays. If I am traveling, we can arrange a meeting via Zoom. If you need something from me outside of these meetings, and if my door is open you are welcome to come and ask. In addition to our once per week meetings, we will meet 1 time every two months to specifically evaluate progress in our career and mentor/mentee goals. I believe these meeting are essential for us to evaluate our relationship and is a safe space for you to provide feedback to me on my mentorship style and general activities in the lab.
- **I will practice open communication** by responding to emails, slack, requests within 48 hours unless I am traveling or on holidays. I am also available for emergencies via cell phone (508-566-5933). I do not check my work email on my phone so please be patient if I am away for my response. *I believe communication is essential in order to provide an environment that is healthy and happy for all lab members. If I am not meeting your communication needs, please let me know ASAP.*
- **I will connect you with my network.** One of the most exciting things in academic research is to interact with others. I am happy to extend my scientific network that I have cultivated over my career with you. If there are researchers you would like to meet (for whatever reason), I'm happy to facilitate these introductions. I also maintain that scientific meetings are excellent places to meet others in our field and they often motivate us to succeed. My goal is to ensure you have the ability to attend local meetings at least 1 time per year and international meetings 1 time every other year.
- **I will provide feedback on your products.** This includes feedback on papers, proposals, presentations, posters, code, etc. I will try to provide feedback within 1 week and no longer then 2 weeks after receiving your request. Feedback is often really hard to ask for and sometimes challenging to receive. *In no way shape or form is the feedback I provide you a comment on your self-worth.* My goal is to make you into a better writer and presenter.

- **I will work with you to help shape your dissertation projects** including providing you with expertise needed to be successful or connecting you with researchers who have that expertise. This also includes finding topics and projects that are exciting and relevant to your research interests. When possible, I will also provide opportunities for you to collaborate with others on their research projects.
- **I am not a micro-manager**, but I am committed to being present and to helping you through your project. I believe members of my lab work with me, not for me.
- **I will give credit where credit is due.** If you contribute to a project in the laboratory this means you will be a co-author on the publication. It also means when I present work from the laboratory, I will highlight your role in the ongoing research. My goal is to promote you and the work you do.

## Maggie's Expectations

- I ask my students to be willing to **openly share their research** with each other and the broader community. My goal is to facilitate open science and collaboration within and outside the group. To this end, I expect you to deposit your data into data repositories, share your code on [GitHub](#), create open lab electronic notebooks (ENL), be willing to present your work.
- **Communicate – the good bad and ugly.** I expect you to share with the group both positive and negative outcomes of your experiments either on slack and/or during lab meetings. I also expect you to communicate with me on the following example topics: 1- if you wish to invite outside collaborators (totally OK to do) into a project; 2- if you need to take time off or if you are sick; 3- if there were any major accidents in the lab; 4- if you feel things aren't going well. *Nr. 4 is particularly important: Imposter syndrome is real and the more we acknowledge that we are going through it the better equipped we are at fighting it.* To maintain effective communication, I expect you to check slack on a daily basis and respond within 48 hours if you are at work.
- I expect you to be **organized and manage your research practices so that they are reproducible.** Please follow the labs data management plan and protocol documentation practices.
- I expect you **to be present** at lab meetings and at journal club (when possible), to respond to discussions on slack, to know and be able to speak about your colleagues

projects and scientific topics. I also expect you to manage your own time as you need – we all work best at different paces and times in the lab and on projects. It is your responsibility to manage your time – I do not mandate core hours in the lab, however I do expect you to try to be present during the week so that you may engage with others in the group.

- I expect you to be **creative in your daily pursuits**. This applies to your scientific research, thoughts, ideas, etc. This also is related to you achieving independence. I expect that you will try to find answers on your own at first and then ask for help when you need it.
- I expect you to be **willing to write EVERY DAY**. Even if it's just a paragraph, a figure legend, a line of code, a journal entry outlining your thoughts of the day. Make it a habit and you will find it less intimidating to express your words on paper.
- I expect you to contribute to **building our lab culture**. We are a group that works together and it's essential we all feel that we belong together. Please take the time to get to know one another, try new things, interact.
- Finally, I expect you to **take time off when you need it**. In my experience, more time spent performing a task does not always equate to higher productivity. More importantly, we live in this beautiful world, take time to recharge, enjoy the great outdoors, go to visit friends and family, enjoy life.