

1 What students can expect from me

Advising philosophy. In my view, the goal of a PhD is for a student to become an independent researcher: to be able to identify interesting, meaningful questions and have the tools needed to address these questions. I see my role as supporting my students in developing holistic (both technical and nontechnical) expertise within one or more research topics. As an advisor, I value *effort* and *high-quality research* much more than paper quantity – that is, when tie-breaking between different projects, I tend to favor depth over breadth.

In my view, this is **your** PhD and **your** research; I'm here to mentor you in the process and support you as best as I can. You should not feel that you are doing **my** research work for me. In my view, the sooner you take ownership of your research agenda, the better it will be for you down the road.

Inclusion. I maintain very strong views around Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and I plan to take intentional measures to make my group welcoming and safe for students of all backgrounds and identities. I am aware that being inclusive is a constant learning process, and I encourage students to give me feedback on how I can be a more inclusive advisor.

Meetings. I will meet weekly with my students one-on-one, where we can discuss projects, collaborations, and broader career considerations. Career considerations include, but are not limited to: vision for your research, new directions to expand to, fellowships/awards to apply to, internships, new collaborations to pursue. Outside of the standard 1:1, you can usually find me on demand for quick questions on Slack or email.

Schedule and work-life balance. My “normal” (i.e., when not on deadline mode) weekday schedule is 9am - 5pm. I occasionally extend these hours to encompass time in 7am - 8pm when in deadline mode. I will be physically at my office at least three days per week. My dog, Terra, a 60 lb female lab mix with a lot of personality, will probably be joining me in my office. *Let me know in advance if you are uncomfortable with dogs or have allergies, and I can plan around it!*

Each week, I try to take (at least) one day per weekend completely off, but I generally reply to emails within 24 hours, especially during deadlines. If I haven't responded to you within 24 hrs on a weekday, it means that your email/message slipped through the cracks and you need to ping me again.

Vacations: *I strongly encourage students to take at least 4 weeks, and up to 6 weeks, of vacation per year.* This means 4 weeks with no access to email, to paper writing/reviewing, and no other responsibilities work-wise. I would just like to have a few weeks notice beforehand, so that we can plan around it. I understand that mental health and other emergencies happen, so if my students need extra time off, they should always talk to me and I can accommodate that, no questions asked.


Collaborations. I strongly support students in collaborating with other faculty and students, as well as with members of other disciplines / external NGOs. When doing so, one thing I will keep in mind is that, in cross-disciplinary collaborations, there may be different norms across disciplines regarding authorship order. I try to be intentional about setting expectations with the collaborators at the beginning of a collaboration.

If a student feels they are treated unfairly in a collaboration by another student or professor, they can expect me to listen, believe them, and do my best to advocate for them. This is the case if the person by whom they feel mistreated is someone I know or regularly work with.

Internships. I will generally support students to go on internships, particularly research internships (over, e.g., software engineering internships). Here some factors I will have in mind:

- I encourage students to wait until at least their third year to do an internship. This is because, during their first 1-2 years, students will be mostly focused on classes and learning the basics of doing research. Having sufficient research independence is an important part of a successful internship.
- Your research/thesis work should take priority (especially as you are closer to graduating). This means that internships ideally should help students advance / broaden their agenda.
- Based on a student's research direction, research companies or labs may not be the only options for internships: there are many government organizations and NGOs that take interns, I can help students think through which of these options are best for their research goals.

Receiving feedback. I value feedback from my students, even negative feedback, in any form. I will encourage you to give me feedback about what works/doesn't work for you in the way I advise you. In our group, we will check in every semester via this form:

 [DoctoralStudentReview_SupplementForm.pdf](#) ,

which was created by Bailey Flanigan is used by CMU CSD since 2020 as part of their semesterly student-advisor check-in process.

Giving feedback. My students can expect to receive feedback on a very regular basis.

- Example 1: I will be going over their papers (more thoroughly when they are more junior) and explaining how and why the writeup and the technical parts need to be changed. Before I make any changes in your writeup, I will ask you what is your preferred method of feedback (e.g., direct colored changes in the manuscript, comments etc).
- Example 2: I will be giving you advice regarding taking classes, giving talks, and how to handle collaborations with other faculty and students.

Note: My way of communicating tends to be more straightforward than average. You should be aware of this and let me know if it doesn't work for you.

2 What I expect from my students

Honesty. Be truthful with me, I'm on your team! Everyone makes mistakes. In general, it's better for everyone involved if I know about something sooner rather than later. Here are some examples of where this expectation might be important:

- *Example 1:* You have identified a bug in one of your published papers. Please don't try to hide this from me. I can help you navigate the options. Mistakes happen all the time. However, it is academically dishonest to knowingly claim something false as true.
- *Example 2:* You realize that you have contributed to a conflict with a collaborator, especially with another student. Please try to explain the situation to me as accurately as possible. I can again help you navigate the options.

Academic integrity. There are a lot of norms and expectations surrounding academic integrity that students will learn as part of a PhD. If a student is unsure regarding such a norm, I expect them to ask me. Here are some norms I consider important:

- *Example 1:* If you are discussing new research with a colleague, you should always clarify what parts of your conversation are confidential and which parts are public knowledge.
- *Example 2:* If a colleague talks to you about their own research which is similar to something you are working on, you should always disclose this to them.
- *Example 3:* You should always attribute credit properly and not use ideas that others have shared without appropriate credit, even at informal conversations.

Work-life balance. In "normal" mode, you should not feel obligated to respond to my email/ping during the weekend or after working hours, even if my email/ping came during the weekend or after working hours. Things are slightly different when pushing for a deadline – see below.

Submission deadlines. While I will suggest venues to submit students' work for publication, students are free to push back and suggest different deadlines/venues. However, if we both agree to plan on submitting to a given venue, I expect both of us (in potentially different capacities) to work together to make it happen. It is totally okay if we miss one or multiple deadlines. I just expect that we try within the limits of our physical, emotional, and mental resources.