

Statement on The Srivastava Lab Expectations.

(Adapted from OMSE Lab, MIT)

Lab Culture.

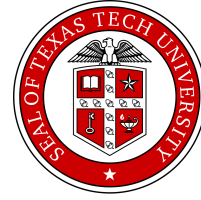
- **Inclusive Environment:** We aim to foster a welcoming atmosphere where all individuals feel empowered to express their authentic selves at work. **Respect, kindness, and support for each other** are fundamental principles we uphold in our lab.
- **Active Participation in Lab:** We encourage active participation in our lab's academic events, including lab meetings, journal club discussions, and external presentations. Participation entails more than attendance; it involves attentive listening, asking insightful questions, and offering constructive feedback. These are opportunities to contribute meaningfully to each other's scientific growth and share progress updates. Furthermore, if a lab member is **presenting a poster or giving a talk on campus**, you are expected to attend and provide support unless you have a scheduling conflict.
- **Interest & Engagement:** Take an interest in your colleagues' work by engaging with them informally. Whether it's a quick chat or a casual conversation during breaks, learning about each other's projects fosters a deeper understanding of our collective goals and enhances teamwork skills for future collaborations.
- **Open Communication:** We value transparent and direct communication. Don't hesitate to voice your opinions, concerns, or suggestions for improvement. Constructive dialogue is essential for maintaining a supportive and productive environment where everyone feels heard and valued. We further value effective communication to foster collaboration and productivity. To facilitate smooth coordination, please ensure that during working days and working hours, we aim to respond to Slack messages within a few hours and emails within a day. This practice ensures a dynamic exchange of ideas and keeps our projects on track. **You are not expected to reply to any messages or emails I send over weekends.**

Work-Life Balance.

- Maintaining a healthy work-life balance is paramount. Your well-being is crucial, and I expect you to prioritize rest, recreation, and personal commitments alongside your lab research responsibilities. Remember, our pursuit of science should complement, not overshadow, other aspects of life.
- Flexibility in work hours empowers you to manage your time efficiently, ensuring tasks are completed while allowing for personal needs. While I trust you to organize your schedule, I'm available to assist with planning if needed.
- During regular work hours, your presence for scheduled meetings is generally anticipated, with accommodations made for special circumstances. However, evenings and weekends are designated for personal time; exceptions may arise before critical deadlines, in which case I'll communicate the need for temporary adjustments.

Social events. Our lab enjoys a vibrant social calendar, featuring a variety of events and activities designed to foster camaraderie and relaxation. Whether it's treating ourselves to ice cream post-lab meetings, catching the

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latest movies, or sharing a meal as a group, there's always something for everyone. While we enthusiastically encourage participation, it's completely optional, and opting out won't ever be met with judgment. Should anyone encounter challenges with participation, please don't hesitate to communicate them with me openly. We're committed to working collaboratively to find accommodating solutions. Furthermore, I actively encourage everyone to take the initiative in suggesting and organizing social gatherings. Our lab party occurs at the end of each semester, usually hosted at my house, and is a perfect opportunity for team bonding in a relaxed environment.

All expenses for our social gatherings, whether it's parties, movies, dinners, or any other activity, are personally covered by me. This ensures that everyone can fully enjoy the experience without any financial burden.

Handling Mistakes.

Despite our best efforts and proper diligence, mistakes do happen. Please share with me any mistakes that happen so that we can talk about potential strategies that can prevent mistakes in the future. Mistakes are not the end of the world; they offer valuable lessons for improvement. However, if we notice repeated patterns, let's work together to understand them better and find solutions. I'm committed to supporting your growth and development, and I may need to provide more guidance in those solutions.

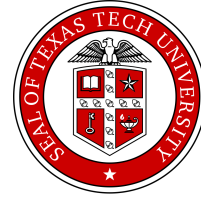
Effective Writing, Oral Presentation, and Poster Making Skills.

- Writing and oral presentation are crucial components of scientific research, regardless of whether you choose the academia vs. industry route. Thus, clear comprehensive writing and compelling oral presentations are indispensable skills. It requires relentless practice, and I'll actively support all lab members in honing these abilities. Our group meetings also serve as platforms for improving their oral presentation skills by showcasing their research or conducting literature reviews. I expect all undergraduate and graduate students working in the lab to continuously work and improve upon these skills.
- Creating an impactful poster is an art that often requires refinement and practice. I understand that achieving perfection or winning a poster competition may not happen right out of the gate. FYI I never won a poster competition but what I never lacked was investing significant efforts and time to make sure that my poster stands the best chance to effectively communicate my science to both the audience and judges. So, it is important to devote substantial time and energy to this process. I am committed to assisting students in crafting their first posters and guiding them through the intricacies of design and content. Consequently, it'll be expected that they will take ownership of future poster modifications and submissions with minimal supervision, excelling independently, and even mentoring new students joining the lab.

Individual Meetings Expectations.

- Individual meetings serve a multitude of purposes, delivering into project progress and your well-being. Typically, the work aspect will involve sharing updates through figures or data representations. However, it's common to encounter and that's perfectly fine. These difficulties can be openly discussed without fear of judgment during our sessions.

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- Currently, the standard meeting schedule entails bi-weekly meetings of 30 minutes, with additional meetings that can be scheduled as required. Short meeting times are often more effective, as they emphasize efficiency and focus. Moreover, I'm flexible regarding meeting frequency, especially with early-stage graduate students and undergraduate students.

Evaluating the Progress of Projects. In overseeing projects, my primary role involves providing overarching guidance, articulating the project's purpose, direction, and strategies for attainments including planning specific experiments. I will also be involved in developing a publication strategy that involves identifying suitable journal selections or determining pre-print releases by your graduation or interview timelines. As your time in the lab progresses, the expectations for both graduate and undergraduate students will be to assume ownership of your projects and see them through fruition. Please anticipate that most of our projects span from 0.5-2 years being typical of completion.

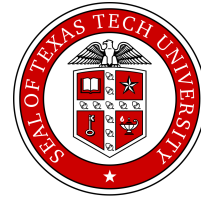
Authorship Conundrum and Publications. Authorship on academic publications appears straightforward, but unfortunately, nuances arise when assessing smaller contributions. I emphasize that all authors need to contribute to a project's conceptual development substantially. To tangibly gauge this, I require lab members to actively participate in project meetings upon joining. However, there are instances where external collaborators, whether from within or outside the lab, offer significant assistance, leading to authorship inclusion. For those who primarily aid in data collection or providing materials without substantial intellectual input, an acknowledgment in the paper is sufficient, rather than authorship.

Determining the completion of a project poses its challenges, contingent upon our target journal. I prefer addressing this on a case-by-case basis, although you're encouraged to initiate discussions on this matter. Most of our projects have a translational focus and may warrant *in vivo* studies. We will discuss and brainstorm about which project should be pursued further for *in vivo* studies.

Dissertation expectation for Texas Tech graduate students. For a PhD student's dissertation, I expect that it should be ample material for 2-4 papers. While publication or submission isn't mandatory for each, it's advisable to have them completed and uploaded to the pre-print server (bioRxiv). Typically, the thesis comprises three substantive chapters, prefaced by an introduction and succeeded by a discussion chapter. If your content is nearly finalized, anticipate dedicating 2 months of full-time work to wrap up the thesis.

Time Commitment for Undergraduate Researchers at Texas Tech. As you consider joining our research lab, I place great emphasis on your commitment and dedication. For undergraduate researchers, we require a minimum commitment of two regular semesters and one summer semester. During these regular semesters, we anticipate your involvement for approximately 10 hours per week, and during the summer semester, approximately 15-20 hours per week. These hours should be dedicated to various research activities including conducting experiments, reviewing journal articles, engaging in online research seminars, composing review articles, and participating in lab meetings. I understand that exam weeks can be demanding, and meeting the regular commitment might not always be feasible. However, we encourage you to make up for any lost time post-exams. To gauge commitment levels, enrollment in either the URS Scholar or TrUE Scholars' program is necessary. If you're ineligible for these programs, please consider enrolling in research credits with me *via* the

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Mechanical Engineering department. It's important to recognize that your involvement is not just an individual endeavor; it's a collaboration where I invest significant time, energy, and laboratory resources into your training. Your commitment plays a pivotal role in our mutual success.

Room for Improvement for me as a PI. I acknowledge that there are certain areas that I need to improve as a PI, and I am constantly working on improving them. It would be useful for you to be aware of and can certainly be useful for me to improve them by giving feedback.

- **Realistic Timeline Feedback.** Sometimes, I set overly optimistic deadlines for projects, leading to frustration for everyone involved. This tendency stems from my optimism and occasionally losing touch with practical aspects of the work. Please speak up if you notice this happening, so we may establish more achievable timelines together.
- **Expressing Positive Feedback Frequency.** While I tend to focus on areas for improvement and future steps in projects, I truly value each of your contributions. However, I may not always vocalize my appreciation for your work. I aim to improve in acknowledging and praising the positive aspects.
- **Celebrating Small Wins.** I do not overlook the significance of small victories, but if I do, and rush into the next tasks without acknowledging achievements, please remind me to take a moment and celebrate accomplishments in the lab. Your encouragement in this area will help foster a more supportive and positive work environment.
- **Flexibility and Punctuality.** I admit I can be overly punctual and impatient when others are late. To address this, I need to cultivate greater flexibility and understanding that unforeseen circumstances can arise. If you anticipate being late, a heads-up would be appreciated, allowing me to occupy myself constructively while waiting.

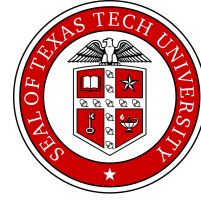
Leaving Lab.

If for any reason, you contemplate leaving the lab, know that open communication is key. Whether it's a mismatch in research interests, a desire for a career transition, a shift in personal interests, or concerns about lab culture, don't hesitate to discuss it with me. Your decision will be respected, and I'll offer support by facilitating connections, exploring alternative options, and discussing ways to potentially publish your work even after departure.

Professional Developments.

- As you embark on your journey with our lab, know that I am committed to supporting you in navigating your next career stage. From the moment you join, feel free to engage with me frequently to discuss your aspirations and goals. Whether you're considering different career paths or seeking guidance on specific steps, I am here to assist you. This includes writing a recommendation letter, providing insights into application processes (especially for PhD programs or academic positions), and offering feedback on presentations and written statements.
- My role as your mentor extends far beyond your time in the lab. Beyond providing recommendation letters, I'm here to offer ongoing guidance and support, regardless of where your journey takes you. Just as I maintain connections with my mentors, I'm committed to being a resource for you long after you've

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moved on from our lab. Feel free to reach out for advice or simply to share updates on your journey-I'm here for you.

Sincerely,

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The Srivastava Lab