Mentor Profile

I am available to mentor students in career and life decisions, even if they do not choose research.

Very Untrue 1 --- 2 --- 3 --- 4 --- 5 Very True

My students are/can be involved in the creation/development of their projects.

Very Untrue 1 --- 2 --- 3 --- 4 --- 5 Very True

I expect students to contribute to manuscripts/publications.

Very Untrue 1 --- 2 --- 3 --- 4 --- 5 Very True (don’t expect but welcome it!)
Students have the option to continue to work on this project.

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My students often work closely with a research team, e.g., lab tech or other students.

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I frequently touch base with my research team—e.g., students, technicians, etc.

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My mentoring style is very hands off.

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Current/active project profile & timeline, including clinical vs. basic science.

My research centers on the needs of the Mutant Mouse Research and Resource Center (MMRRC). It is our goal to continually seek to optimize mouse models so that they are optimally reproducible and translatable to human disease. Our main focus is to understand how differing gut microbiomes influence this reproducibility and translatability. Summer projects can be readily developed from these ongoing projects and can involve, work with mice including inoculations and necropsies, bench work (e.g., DNA isolation, PCR) and microbiome analysis of complex data sets. Students can also shadow studies in our Biosafety Level 3 facility, the Laboratory for Infectious Disease Research (LIDR).

Lab structure, if applicable.

The MMRRC, along with its partners, the Rat Resource and Research, the Animal Modelling Core and the Metagenomics Center are located at Discovery Ridge. I have one lab devoted to research and access to several other labs of the MMRRC/RRRC as well as a vivarium devoted to resource center activities. I also have access to the LIDR.

What does a typical day of research look like for VRSP scholars?

Days can include working with mice in either the Discovery Ridge vivarium or the LIDR, bench work such as DNA extraction, lab meetings or one on one meetings, background reading, and preparing abstracts/posters for the symposium. Scholars also can shadow or assist graduate students in the lab and any laboratory animal activities being performed by the laboratory animal medicine residents of the Comparative Medicine Program.

What does engagement look like for your lab/project?

Engagement = ownership. This is your baby. I expect students to take initiative and drive their project with questions like “I think we should do this, what do you think?” rather than “what should I do next?” This requires delving into the literature and frequent brainstorming. I want them to be comfortable expressing their ideas and asking questions as no question is a bad question. I also recognize that many have not done much research and will do my best to draw out the inherent curiosity we all have and not let them get too far off.
track. We will have regular meetings to ensure that mutual expectations are in place and adjusted as necessary for optimal growth for both of us.