



Department of Animal Sciences

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Faciola Lab Mentor-Mentee Agreement

Mentee's name: _____

Position: _____

Expected duration: From: _____ to: _____

E-mail address: _____

Alternative e-mail address (optional): _____

Phone number with area code: _____

Welcome Message:

Welcome! It is a pleasure to have you join our research group; it is our major goal to give you the conditions and opportunities to learn and grow professionally. We are committed to help you to achieve your academic and professional goals. The objectives of this agreement are: 1) to provide you with clear information on what we will be able to offer you, 2) to explain what we will expect from you, and 3) to give you an opportunity to share your expectations and previous experience. The goal of this agreement is to help us achieve the best lab environment possible. We hope that you will join our efforts to have a professional and healthy work environment.

Laboratory Overview:

The overall research goal of our laboratory is to further our understanding of ruminant nutrition to improve the efficiency of nutrient utilization in order to enhance animal production and minimize environmental impact of livestock operations. Our laboratory has broad interests, which include, but are not limited to:

- Understanding the mechanisms that regulate feed intake;
- Improving nutrient digestion, efficiency of nutrient utilization and conversion into milk and meat;
- Improving microbial growth in the rumen and their contribution to the animal's supply of nutrients (amino acids, fatty acids, vitamins and volatile fatty acids);
- Improving the utilization of commonly used feedstuffs, evaluating alternative ingredients and fine-tuning diet formulation, especially within the context of Florida's agricultural realities;
- Improving accuracy, precision, and reducing time and cost of laboratorial methodologies as well as evaluating new experimental techniques both in the lab as well as on the field.

This is what you should expect from me and fellow lab members:

1. Communicate clearly what we expect from you.
2. Give you honest feedback (positive and negative) in a way that is constructive and helpful for your professional growth.
3. Respect your points of view and listen to your suggestions.
4. Give you advice and guidance on your current and future projects and work with you on a career plan, setting realistic short and long-term goals and assessing your progress towards them.
5. Incentivize and foster critical thinking.
6. Help you adapt to our lab culture and to comply with University's requirements, and help you beyond the lab to the best of our capabilities.
7. Provide a safe work environment and proper safety training.
8. Strive for excellence in the work place.
9. Provide equal opportunities to all lab members and enforce that all lab members comply with the rules of the lab.
10. Provide commensurable salary/assistantship and benefits.
11. Provide four weeks of vacation per year (in the case of a 12 month contract), which must be planned six months ahead of time in order to avoid conflicts with classes, conferences, and research projects.
12. Provide lab supplies, good equipment, office space, animals and infrastructure for proper research.
13. Encourage you at work and help you achieve a balanced and healthy lifestyle.

This is what I expect from you and your fellow lab members:

1. Communicate clearly your expectations and express your satisfaction (or lack of it) about the work that you are doing, my mentorship, and about your co-workers.
2. Be honest and ethical. You must take some ethics training/course or participate in an ethics workshop.
3. If you, as undergraduate, graduate student, postdoc, or visiting scientist are the leading person in a project, I expect that you will be responsible for writing the research manuscript in a timely manner. The first author is the person who contributed the most to the final version of the manuscript, which includes experimental design, running the experiment(s), data collection, analysis, and writing the manuscript. If you are not proactive in writing and editing the manuscript in a timely manner, I will assign other lab member to work on the manuscript and that person will be the first author if their contributions are greater than yours. If you leave this institution, you will have a deadline to finish your manuscript in a way that it is acceptable for publication; typically this is 2-4 months. If you fail to do so, another lab member, including me, will take the lead, and consequently will be the lead author in the manuscript. While I welcome constructive discussion about contributions, I have the authority to decide who provided the greatest contribution to the final version of the manuscript and I will assign the first authorship. Your opinion will be carefully considered; however, the final decision will be mine. Remember, publishing your result findings in a timely manner is part of responsible conduct of research, and I expect all members and visiting scientists of my lab to comply.
4. Be polite and respectful of others (there will be no tolerance with discrimination against gender, sexual orientation, race, religious beliefs, political view, culture, and country of origin).
5. Be proactive, responsible, and reliable.
6. Be available and easy to reach. You must inform me your class schedule, you may choose to study at the library or work from home from time to time; however, I expect that you will be available in the lab/office most of the times from 8am to 5 pm (Monday through Friday).
7. Be conscious about laboratory and University's resources.
8. Ask questions when you are not sure about something.
9. Be professional, accept and analyze constructive criticism.
10. Be a critical thinker and contribute intellectually to the projects with which you are involved.
11. Ability to interact positively with fellow team members, cooperating and collaborating with other's projects.
12. Be enthusiastic and committed to excellence in the working place.
13. Take time off, relax, and aim for a balanced and healthy lifestyle.

10. Do you have a specific project/area that you would like to work on?

11. Do you prefer working with animals or in the lab? Why?

12. Do you have any medical or physical condition that prevents you from working with animals or in the lab?

13. Have you mentored anyone before? If yes, please specify (no names needed).

14. Do you have interest in developing teaching skills? You may also share any previous experience with teaching if you have any.

15. Have you had any training on research ethics, authorship, data storage, data ownership, or notebook keeping?
16. Are you familiar with the research culture in the USA? Do you know what a tenure track is? For instance: the importance of research funding, publication records, and teaching evaluations.
17. Is there any other issue that you would like to discuss that was not mentioned so far?
18. Do you have any comments or suggestions to improve this document?

By signing this agreement, I hereby attest that I have read and understood the information provided to me regarding my rights and expectations of working in the laboratory of Dr. Antonio Faciola.

Mentee's signature and date

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