

Guidelines for REM Lab

January 11, 2024

Here are some general guidelines for our research group. If you have any questions or suggestions, please let me know. Above all, I expect every lab member to be kind, considerate, hard-working, and honest. Research is, at times, difficult, slow-going, frustrating, but also fun. I have three pieces of advice that my mom (a mathematician) gave me when I started graduate school:

- Be kind to the staff.
- Work on (at least a little) research every day.
- Just do your best.

Here are some more specific points:

- Read Steven Weinberg's [Four golden lessons](#).
- I do not monitor when/where you work; this is up to you. That said, you should spend sufficient time in lab/on campus to see and talk with your fellow lab members. I would suggest coming in at least 3 days/week.
- Please check email/slack at least once per day and respond promptly to time-sensitive matters.
- If you need to reach me immediately, call/text me at: 909-525-7318.
- We do not have a fixed vacation policy, but 4-6 weeks is reasonable. I try to take ~ 2 weeks over winter break, ~ 2 weeks over summer, plus a little more here and there. Some years you may need a longer or shorter break, depending on the circumstances (very busy previous semester, upcoming deadlines, etc.). You can always ask me or your peers about vacation plans. Please try to be available a week before classes start.
- In general, we will hold two weekly meetings during the academic terms: (1) individual, and (2) our reading and research group, UPSCALE. Canceling or postponing an individual meeting is no problem. If you would rather move to an every-other-week schedule, that is also fine. Less frequent (i.e., monthly) is an option although somewhat unusual.
- Summer schedules are decided year-by-year. I encourage you to look for internships at national labs or industry if that interests you. If so, let me know early (even years in advance), as sometimes a position depends on building or finding relationships at those places. Also keep in mind: summer recruitment and application deadlines often occur during previous fall.
- A good goal is to, by your graduation date, have a couple conference papers and 3 journal papers (submitted, not necessarily published). We will work on this and plan for this together. See next page.
- Besides standard department requirements, please write a proposal document to go along with your exam. Include a table of contents, and clearly delineate between background (not your work), past work (yours), and future work that you will (hopefully) accomplish before PhD graduation. This should not be longer than 20 pages; if needed, use an appendix for overflow.
- As you go through graduate school, you will find that paths to PhD can be rocky with gaps and false starts. This is normal. The important thing is to keep going and rely on your community of peers and mentors for support, and to support them in return.

More about papers:

- Conference papers have set deadlines and a fixed time period for review, usually about 6 months from initial submission to decision (and then perhaps another 6 months until the paper shows up in proceedings). Depending on the conference, acceptance can be an almost sure bet, or very competitive. We will look for appropriate conference venues together. This is not the primary way I and my co-authors publish, but it can be a good first way to do so. It also helps to have a deadline if you want to get a new project really going.
- Journal papers usually require at least a year or more of focused work. The review process can take 3 months with mild revisions, or 2 years with substantial revisions. This is hard to predict. Your first journal submission (as primary author) will probably happen around year 3 or 4.