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Welcome to the Skin Microbiome, aka Epithelial Biology Section or ‘Segre’ lab at NHGRI, NIH. In this memo I set out to describe my expectations of myself as a mentor and you as a part of the project and lab. Some elements are simply practical ‘dos’ and ‘don’ts’ but many touch on the issue of collaboration and team science.

My goal as a mentor is to support and empower each team member to articulate and achieve his/her goals within the team’s vision. As a mentor, I am committed to helping you to develop scientific skills and learn the nuances of skin microbial genomics. I strive to help you achieve success along your chosen career path through assisting with networking, identifying opportunities and tackling complex scientific question. Most often I can do this by assembling the resources and sharing the formative successes and failures I (and others) have faced along the way. I may or may not be the right mentor to you at every stage (due to my own professional and academic limitations), but I will try to be a resource for identifying others who can help guide you in that role.

### **1. Lab and branch meetings**

- A Segre lab meeting is every other Tuesday at 1 PM in the fourth floor conference room of 49 for approximately 1.5 hours year round. This is a very informal meeting in which people ‘open up their notebooks’ and talk about what they’ve worked on since the last meeting. It’s also a great time to bring analyzed data and discuss how to visualize the central findings. This time can also be used to practice a meeting talk – but let me know if you want more than 10 minutes. I will discuss hiring decisions that are in progress; e.g. potential post-docs, students. I will also let you know about my upcoming deadlines – proposals, meetings. This is a private meeting and everything discussed here is considered in confidence. Attendance is mandatory – if you are running over or have a conflict on a particular day, let me know.
- Branch meeting is held Fridays at 12 noon in the first floor conference room of building 49 for 1 hour September through June. This meeting consists of all the labs of GMBB (Genetics and Molecular Biology Branch) and GDRB (Genetic Disease Research Branch) housed on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> floors of 49. This is a more formal meeting in that people have prepared presentations that often use PowerPoint. However, the ideas presented can vary from initial findings to paper in press. Typically, there are 2 presentations that each last 25 minutes with 5 minutes of questions. Post-docs are expected to present their data at least once a year, but you do get a pass for the first six months you are here. If you run over, expect to be interrupted by Dave or me. There is a sign up sheet posted in August and January to sign up for the next 4 to 6 months and one postdoc in the lab (currently Evan) is the lab representative to the committee.

### **2. NIH meetings and seminars**

- NHGRI retreat: Occurs in the fall, November. The lab has the opportunity to present 2 or 3 posters/year. Depending on your start date, you typically do not present your first year.
- NIH Meetings: There are a lot of meetings that occur at NHGRI and NIH-wide. Pace yourself. I would encourage you to attend NHGRI’s seminars (every other Thursday @ 11 AM) and relevant or interesting seminars that occur on campus, including NIH Director’s seminar (Wed @ 3 PM), Mucosal Immunology Interest Group. NIH maintains an online calendar of events. If you would ever like to meet one of the NHGRI/NIH

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speakers, there is typically a contact person listed for the talk. And ask me – because I might have a slot that I can share. It's very hard to get on the NIH Director's seminar speakers calendar, but there is a reception after the seminar.

- Research festival: Occurs in October. This is the major opportunity for post-docs to present their work and hear thematically related seminars from NIH investigators.
- Office of Training and Education offers a number of courses in grant writing, interviewing. Take these classes if you are interested and it's an appropriate time in your career development.

### **3. Outside meetings**

- Attendance at one outside meeting a year is typically supported and encouraged. There are myriad larger (Society of Investigative Dermatology (may), American society of microbiology (may)) and smaller (Gordon Conference (summer odd years), Cold Spring Harbor Biology of Genomes, Arrowhead, Keystone, Montagna) meetings. Think about what you want to learn, whom you want to meet, etc.
- You should pre-approval before registering for a meeting. We try to balance how many people from the lab attend the various meetings and who is going to submit what lab projects.
- A fellow can attend more than one meeting a year if for example s/he is presenting a talk, looking for a job.
- \*\*You can present your own unpublished work, recognizing the balance between the benefit of interacting with colleagues and possible competition to publish. However, you are not allowed to present or discuss other lab members' unpublished data or even the experiments that are underway without specific permission from the lab member. Similarly, if you give me pictures or slides of your unpublished work, I will not present it without specifically discussing this with you.

### **4. Travel**

Travel is one of the most regulated government endeavors. In fact it's so complicated, that it's not really worth trying to deal with yourself. Send Kasi an email with the NHGRI travel form filled out and include your preferred departure time and date, hotel, and return. If there is a meeting rate for hotels, there is some flexibility about you booking your own hotel room. Remember everything needs to be booked 15 days in advance for domestic, non-sponsored (NHGRI paying entire amount) travel and 45 days in advance for any foreign or sponsored travel.

### **5. Money and property**

- Use of the credit card is the other highly regulated government endeavor. The credit card is in my name and I am personally responsible for any purchases made on it. Do use it to pay for meeting registration. Do not use it to pay for a hotel.
- For most purchases, if you can put it into POTS, don't charge it to the credit card.
- Do not pay for things personally and expect to be paid back. There is no 'petty cash' with the gov't.
- You cannot take a computer or other device (projector) off campus without a property pass (issued by Roger Johnson, Maraqui has the form).

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## **6. My work habits**

- My core hours at work are 10 AM to 6 PM.
- Usually e-mail is the best way to reach me. I usually read and respond to emails in the morning before 8 AM and throughout the day.
- If I have not responded to an email in 2 days, feel free to bug me. Sometimes I don't know the answer and need to find out.
- I try to come into the lab every day to find out what is going on. You should also stop by my office.
- If I'm travelling, I will try to tell people this in advance at lab meeting. I also tell Clay and Maraqui when I'm on travel.
- If I'm on vacation and do not plan to respond to e-mails, I will turn on my 'out of office' automatic response.
- I am notoriously bad about checking cell phone messages or even answering my cell phone. I will try to at least look at my cell phone when I am on work travel.

## **7. My expectations of your work habits**

- Maintain core hours that are ~8 hours a day and overlap with the rest of the lab for at least 10 AM to 4 PM. I do understand that people value a flexible work schedule given the area commute. It will not always be possible to accommodate this when you are running an experiment with other lab members. For example, the microbiology lab starts really early in the morning (6 AM) and finishes early (2 PM), so you cannot be trained in microbiology and expect to arrive at 10 AM.
- Respond to emails, even just to give me an estimate of when you will have an answer for me, within 2 days.
- I treat post-docs like other NIH employees in terms of time off: 2 weeks of vacation plus holidays. Let me know (email is fine) if you are planning a vacation. Sick leave (including doctor's visits that prevent you from working a full day or week) is up to 2 weeks and you should be prepared to provide a doctor's note (can go to OHR if personal) if you miss more than 3 days for an illness. Maternity/paternity basically follows FMLA (family medical leave act).
- Turn on your out-of-office automatic response if you are sick/on vacation and do not plan to respond to e-mail.

## **8. Evaluation**

- There will be a formal NHGRI evaluation every June. The forms include feedback from both of us and your career goals. A copy can be given to you in advance.
- Additional evaluation on a formal or informal basis can be performed if requested by either party on a quarterly basis.

## **9. Notebook, record keeping**

- All molecular biology experiments should be stored in notebooks and data archived on a CD when submitted and finally published.
- Electronic notebook policy and central place for storing these sorts of things will be in place by end of calendar year 2010. The options we are using and hoping to standardize are wiki on a stick (WoaS) or a self-modifying HTML/Javascript-based wiki. Wikis are rich documents with the ability to include pictures, etc. Other issues that we are

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discussing are the storage of software versioning system (CVS) and detailed documentation of processing pipeline.

- Primary sequencing data are handled by NISC. Instead of storage of secondary analysis, I prefer documentation of scripts to repeat the analysis if needed at a later date.

#### **10. Authorship, publication**

- If you are submitting an abstract for a meeting, please send it to me at least 2 days in advance for approval. If it's an abstract that you've submitted previously, please still let me know. Sometimes there are authorship or other considerations based on who else is attending the meeting (e.g.; CSH meetings are closed, ASHG is an open meeting).
- When you make a significant intellectual or experimental contribution to a project, then you will typically be an author on the manuscript.
- However, there have often been considerable resources devoted to a project before you ever receive the samples/data to analyze (e.g.; development of an IRB approved protocol, recruitment of patients). Even if others do not contribute a figure to a paper, they may also deserve authorship.
- Authorship (including order of authors) is always discussed before a manuscript is submitted from the lab.

#### **11. Collaboration**

- Do not send or give reagents to someone who asks you for them. Send them on to me. We may have received the reagent from another lab and not be allowed to share it. Or we may not be able to freely distribute reagents (especially clinical samples) without paperwork and justification. Or the person requesting the reagent may be a direct competitor of an existing collaborator.
- If you initiate a new collaboration, copy me on initial email interaction. I ultimately assume responsibility for all transactions (mice, clones, clinical samples).
- If there is a misunderstanding or a conflict with a collaborator – talk to me. Remember that the lab may have multiple interactions with this lab or individual that could be impacted. We might also have a history with this individual that helps to explain what you perceive to be an odd response.