The Monteith Shop (Kind of a Big Deal ™)

Vision, philosophy, policies and expectations

Vision

We are driven both by an intense curiosity about the world around us and by a sense of responsibility to wildlife, stakeholders, members of the public, colleagues, collaborators, and the natural world more broadly. We strive to address wildlife ecology and management questions that can advance ecological theory and simultaneously have on-the-ground applications. Using data collected from rigorous field studies, in partnership with a suite of collaborators, we address these questions with a longitudinal, individual-based approach rooted in nutritional ecology.

Philosophy

Our motto is to "advance science and management one data point at a time". Learning about wildlife in a way that can shape on-the-ground decisions is contingent upon data of the appropriate scope and duration. Consequently, our projects and data often are long term and collected from observations of animals, which are not always easily obtained. We rely on intensive and creative field studies, theoretical modeling, and both classical and contemporary statistical analyses. Additionally, many of the most pressing challenges animals face in our changing world occur on timescales that transcend the duration of any one graduate student. We therefore rely on close relationships with fellow members of the lab, stakeholders, natural resource agencies, and the general public to maintain long-term projects and datasets.

Policies and expectations

Independence

At its core, academia is not just about acquiring knowledge but also about cultivating the skills and mindset necessary to advance the frontiers of research. We expect members of the Monteith Shop to take intellectual ownership of their research and broader education, to develop and think critically about their research questions, and find innovative approaches to study, and ultimately solve, complex problems. Independence and resourcefulness are prized attributes, and we expect members of the Monteith Shop to build or develop these qualities during their time with us.

Group environment

While each member of our team has individual pursuits, goals, and responsibilities, we are all ultimately working towards a common cause. We treat each other with respect and dignity, we recognize that each of us has unique skill sets and experiences that we collectively benefit from, and we rally around each other during times of hardship both personally and professionally. While we obviously benefit from our personal progress and success, and are here to help each other along that path, each of us also reaps some benefit if the team succeeds. Ultimately, we strive to be a truly collaborative and productive team working towards a greater vision. By doing

so we can be more fruitful in our contributions to the field of wildlife ecology and management, form lasting bonds and partnerships with each other, and do so in a way that is more enjoyable.

We strive to provide an equitable, inclusive, and inspiring research environment. Harassment or discrimination of any kind will not be tolerated. Any such behavior within our research group whether directed at group members or others within our community may be grounds for removal. We uphold the University of Wyoming's Student Code of Conduct and encourage the reporting of behavior that might violate these policies, resources for which can be found here.

We seek the best possible candidates for positions within our group irrespective of race, religion, gender identification, sexual orientation, age, or disability status. We simultaneously recognize, however, that there are many challenges that threaten the realization of these ideals. We are working to identify and overcome individual and systemic barriers within ecology through actions such as the use of work time to attend trainings, reading and discussing papers as a research group that focus on barriers, and working to make the research we conduct more widely accessible.

Time spent working

Accumulating the knowledge, skills, and data necessary for doing innovative research, analyzing results, writing papers, and ultimately succeeding in this highly competitive field will take a lot of you, and a lot of time. For example, the peak of the field or capture seasons, comprehensive exams, or manuscript revisions may require 70 or more hours in a given week. However, working extensive hours can come at a significant cost to our ability to think critically, to maintain a healthy mental state, and can result in burnout. Thus, outside of these peaks, Shop members should shape their schedules to make steady progress and meet their desired goals. This can often resemble a 9-5 schedule so long as you are effectively managing your time, setting clear priorities, and attaining them. Much like conceptual thinking or statistical prowess, effectively managing one's time is a skill that must be learned, practiced, and refined. If sacrificing healthy work-life balance is needed to make progress on your degree or complete work requirements and additional academic pursuits, reflection on what you are working to tackle and a careful evaluation of how you are spending your time are warranted. Should this be warranted, we encourage discussion with Kevin and other Shop members.

Simultaneously, academia, and graduate school in particular, offers abundant learning opportunities that should be taken advantage of whenever possible. We acknowledge that members of the Monteith Shop may choose to engage in these opportunities to maximize their professional development, however they will never be forced to do so. Side projects and additional academic pursuits, regardless of the learning opportunity they represent, warrant careful consideration of the merits and costs before being taken on, and making progress toward your degree, work duties, and maintaining one's self should be prioritized.

Ultimately, we believe that finding a healthy balance between work and life is central to success and mental wellbeing in graduate school, academia, and beyond. We expect group members to build schedules that support their health and well-being, both personally and professionally. And while we value and expect hard work and commitment, we do not welcome attitudes where the

worth and identity of others is contingent upon them being completely consumed by their work. Regardless of the time an individual puts into their project, the Shop, and ultimately their careers, we value our group members as people above all else, and have a fundamental and inflexible expectation that work should not come at a cost to mental health.

More broadly, group members have flexibility and autonomy in setting their schedules. Although there are no set expectations for time spent in our physical office, working and spending time together in a shared space is a critical component of our group philosophy. We ask that group members have at least part of their working hours overlap with the 9 am to 5 pm timeframe, and that they spend at least some of their working time in the office. Kevin will normally not micromanage schedules, and although adjustments can typically occur without explicit permissions, having a conversation with Kevin about your work style will help ensure that expectations are being met. However, Kevin expects to be informed if you will be out of the office for more than 2 days during the week, and to have a conversation with him about more extended vacations or leave.

Participation in group and institutional activities

As noted throughout this document, our group prioritizes close relationships with one another. While not explicitly required, we hope and encourage all group members to participate in activities with one another outside of the professional/academic setting (e.g., group retreats, holiday and dinner parties, recreating, defense celebrations, etc). These activities help build trust and camaraderie and contribute to a more collaborative and productive team. While our group prioritizes close relationships with one another, you are not expected to be best friends with everyone. You are, however, expected to be courteous and professional colleagues with everyone.

We expect that each group member prepares for, attends, and actively participates in weekly group meetings where we discuss scientific papers, provide feedback on the work of our group mates', or meet with guests.

We will intermittently write scientific papers as a group. Given the individual nature of each group member's degree or career trajectory, participation in this effort is not mandatory. However, we hope that most group members will come together to work on these projects most of the time.

We expect that everyone will assist with the maintenance of the operations of our group. This includes helping to keep common spaces clean, helping to plan group retreats and social gatherings, and assisting during fieldwork associated with winter and spring captures.

There are multiple opportunities for seminars each week: Zoology and Physiology brown bag and departmental seminars, Haub School of Environment and Natural Resources departmental seminars, and many others. Seminars allow you to connect with the broader academic community at UW, learn about new and emerging science, and observe what makes effective presentations. Students housed in the Wyoming Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit are expected to attend Zoology Brown Bag as part of their program and all group members are

encouraged to attend a seminar each week especially in the early stages of their positions within the Shop.

Field work

While the specific field work demands of individual projects vary substantially, and include those without a field component at all, we generally believe that spending time in the field observing wildlife, their interactions with their environment, and the animals around them enhances the researchers' understanding of their study system and questions. This is true whether the researcher has a project that actively includes a field component or not; if you study a species, you should have some understanding of how it operates in the wild. Additionally, time spent in the field allows researchers to better grasp the perspectives of collaborators and stakeholders who themselves are deeply connected to these areas. We therefore encourage and support members of the Monteith Shop spending time in the field as part of their own projects, assisting fellow group members in the field, or otherwise finding ways to connect to their study system, study species and collaborators.

Support: It is the responsibility of the graduate student leading a field-based project to take care of logistics relating to field work and project management, including hiring technicians, finding safe and appropriate field housing, preparing for and leading capture work, arranging for field vehicles, etc. Kevin and the leaders of projects will work together to secure funding that is sufficient for conducting a field season. You will not be expected to use personal funds to collect data for field base projects or the equipment required to do so, but group members are generally responsible for preparing themselves for spending time in the field (e.g., outfitting themselves with appropriate clothing, boots, backpacks, food, etc.).

Time in the field: For graduate students that are running projects with a substantial field component, the expectation is for those students to complete or be a part of a significant portion of the field work. Field assistants are necessary to complete much of the work we do, but our understanding of the systems we work in and questions we pursue is better if we have a strong presence in the field.

Capture work: We expect that all group members be available for winter and spring captures of bighorn sheep, mule deer, and other species being studied. This typically consists of 2-week stints of travel around Wyoming and capturing animals. Depending on the size of the group and the demands of the capture efforts, not everyone will be required to attend every capture run. That said, every group member should hold time in their schedules for capture efforts and prepare to potentially be needed up to and until capture schedules and crews are finalized, which is unfortunately often a day to day decision during the capture run itself. In short, be flexible and generally available in mid-March and early December.

Field safety: We conduct intensive field work in remote and rugged places. The Monteith Shop is building a field safety plan that includes medical and emergency protocols, confidential and accessible reporting protocols, and structures to identify and address potential issues before they escalate. This plan complies with and builds upon all current university protocols and other

permit requirements (e.g., UW COVID protocols). We expect that all project leads modify this field safety plan to meet their project needs.

Creating field safety plans and foreseeing potential issues can be difficult and takes time and energy to produce. Fortunately, many resources are available that provide templates and guidelines for creating these documents including the UC Field Operations Manual, UC Berkeley Guide to preventing sexual violence and harassment in field settings, and the Field Safety Tool created by the Environmental Health and Safety Office at UCSC. Group members are expected to help others in the group develop these plans and identify gaps or weaknesses in and offer constructive solutions to completed plans.

Time with Kevin

Moving forward in a timely and effective manner necessitates communication of both progress and obstacles. Each group member can expect regularly scheduled meetings with Kevin, typically once every two weeks during the academic calendar, for these conversations. Outside of the academic year, updates and meetings are generally handled on an individual basis depending on field obligations and student needs. In addition to updating Kevin, these meetings provide an opportunity to ask questions and obtain consistent feedback, provide an opportunity for alternative or additional research avenues to be discussed, and needs for practitioners and collaborators to be identified.

We are a large group, and although Kevin truly values interacting with students as much as possible, his time is limited. Students are expected to be independent and resourceful; in addition to Kevin there are numerous group members with various forms of expertise that should be capitalized on. Senior graduate students and research scientists often are expected to provide individualized feedback and mentorship to students as part of their employment and are a valuable source to get supplemental feedback and support. These relationships can, but do not need to be, formalized (e.g., true co advising). The structure of these support opportunities should be discussed with Kevin.

Additionally, each group member is expected to complete an in-house annual review and discuss it with Kevin. This review will provide a set of goals for the upcoming year, as well as an opportunity to discuss progress and growth, needed/desired support, potential career paths, and many other topics relevant to personal and professional growth. Research scientists and postdoctoral scholars will need to undergo an additional review through the university, although much of the contents of this review will be similar to the contents of the in-house review.

Publications

Members of the Monteith Shop are expected to publish their research in appropriate ecology and applied ecology journals. Masters students are expected to complete 2 separate chapters, while doctoral students are expected to complete 4 separate chapters, with each chapter being finalized in their own publications. Expectations for research scientists and postdoctoral scholars vary based on the position and will be discussed with Kevin as part of contract negotiations.

These expectations represent the minimum for group members, and we encourage the investigation of, engagement in, and publication of work outside one's designated project. Group members are welcome to participate in and complete additional work outside of our research group, so long as external projects do not interfere with contractual obligations.

In general, we strive to have expected products ready for submission within a month of the completion of graduate school or contract, although this is not a prerequisite. Specific timelines should be discussed with Kevin on a case-by-case basis.

Conference attendance

Members of the Monteith Shop are expected to present their work at professional conferences. We place especially high value on conferences and other events that focus on connecting with land and wildlife managers.

Graduate students are expected to present either a poster or oral presentation at the Wyoming Chapter of The Wildlife Society and Wyoming Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit Cooperative Meeting gatherings each year, and research scientists and postdoctoral scholars should do the same when appropriate. Funding and logistical support for attending WY-TWS will be provided. Attendance at The Wildlife Society's national conference is generally supported, but will be contingent on products that will be presented (i.e., either as an oral presentation or poster presentation), location of the conference, costs of the conference, and available resources.

Students and research scientists are encouraged to attend additional conferences (e.g., American Society of Mammalogists, World Conference on Mountain Ungulates, etc.), but conference attendance can be very expensive. Expectations for funding and support need to be discussed and approved by Kevin and group members are encouraged to apply for travel grants to support the cost of attendance. Given the variable nature of progression on projects, project budgets, and conference attendance costs, we do not have fixed guidelines on attendance for these additional conferences; students and research scientists should expect to have a conversation with Kevin.

Depending on conference location and project budgets, some form of per diem may be covered after approval by Kevin.

Outreach and science communication

Beyond scientific inquiry, we strive to provide tangible and digestible information about intriguing nuances of the ecology of large mammals and the science that informs wildlife management decisions. Consequently, we place high value on public outreach and education and how best to communicate our science beyond our academic sphere.

We often communicate with stakeholders through written publications (i.e., white papers or articles in popular media), podcasts and interviews, booths at trade shows, public-facing talks, and more. The expectations for each group member will vary, but everyone is encouraged to build their skills and participate in relevant events at appropriate times.

Mental health and physical wellness

Graduate students have rates of anxiety and depression that are higher than the general population, and many academics experience these and many other mental health concerns. As a group, we strive to talk openly about mental health in an academic context, while also maintaining professional boundaries. Additionally, we are committed to reflecting upon the actions and mindsets within our research group, and identifying ways we can change our operations to promote the health and well-being of our group.

We encourage all members to seek out the numerous services available at the University of Wyoming and broader community that can help with various aspects of mental health, including counseling, mindfulness training, food cabinets, and more. More information about these, and other campus resources can be found here:

- UWYO Emotional and Mental Health Hub: Broad collection of campus resources
- UWYO Psychology Clinic: Low cost mental health care
- Pathways Mental Health Professionals: An affordable community mental health program if you're seeking to get outside of the university system.
- Campus Recreation Wellness Center: Offers mindfulness workshops, training opportunities, cooking classes, massage chairs, and other wellness activities
- The Collective Center For The Healing Arts: Community based wellness center with broad offerings
- Additional resources from, and contact information for, the Zoology and Physiology Mental Health and Wellness Committee

We expect that if you are feeling ill, you stay home. Take time off from work to recover, and do not expose your group mates to potential illness.

Classes

Classes are an important component of graduate school, but students should not let class work consume the majority of their time. Students would be well-served to take classes that emphasize both skills (i.e., scientific writing, statistics, coding) and conceptual background (i.e., broad ecology), both of which are readily offered on campus.

Relevant external classes and workshops may be supported, financially or otherwise, if students can demonstrate the need or benefit to their projects, the Shop, or the broader scientific community.

Students are expected to be aware of and responsible for meeting the requirements of their degree programs (i.e., PhD students in PiEE or MSc students in Haub ENR) which may include required classes.

Teaching

Most graduate students within our group are hired as graduate research assistants, and their funding is therefore provided through the completion of their research; some students, however, will be expected to teach as part of their degree.

PhD students that are housed in the Program of Ecology and Evolution (PiEE) are required to teach at least one semester. Additionally, even if a teaching assistantship is not required, Kevin is supportive of students taking on teaching roles if they are interested in gaining this experience. Kevin teaches a sophomore-level wildlife and fisheries survey class, and group members most often are teaching assistants or co-teachers for that class.

Funding, stipends, and cost of living

New members of the Monteith Shop are generally brought in only when funding to cover positions (e.g., stipend, university tuition, etc.) is immediately available. In other words, projects will typically have funding to cover their duration; however, all prospective group members are encouraged to pursue alternative internal and external funding opportunities available to them. A list of possible funding opportunities include, but are not limited to:

- Wyoming Governor's Big Game License Coalition
- Biodiversity Institute
- Departmental scholarships (Zoology and Physiology, Haub School of Environment and Natural Resources)
- Nonprofit organizations (e.g., Muley Fanatic Foundation, Wyoming Sheep Foundation, Bowhunters of Wyoming)
- National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship Program
- Wyoming NASA Space Grant Consortium
- Future Investigators in NASA Earth and Space Science and Technology

As of 2023, the baseline stipend for master's students before tax deductions is $2,000/month and $2,200/month for PhD students, as set by the Wyoming Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit. Students within the Monteith Shop can expect equal compensation to this baseline even if their degree is housed outside the Co-Op. Stipends are provided each month of the year. Fellowship opportunities, such as those listed above, can and should be used to supplement typical stipends. Graduate students are provided student health insurance through the University, but vision and dental insurance are not provided. Stipends cover tuition up to 9 credits per semester, and typically includes some on campus amenities such as gym access.

As of 2023 the cost of living in Laramie overall, is slightly below the national average but a bit higher than average for groceries and transportation. As of 2023 the median home price in Laramie was $365,690 and average rent for a 1-bedroom apartment was $899. Generally, the graduate student and broader academic community are aware of house opportunities and happy to assist in locating housing for families and individuals making the transition to Laramie.

Authorship

We generally follow the *Journal of Wildlife Management's* guidelines for authorship: "All those listed as authors should have made substantial contributions to ≥1 of the following: conception, design, data collection, and data analysis. All authors should have some responsibility with manuscript preparation and should give final approval of the version to be published. Each author should have participated sufficiently in the work to take public responsibility for appropriate portions of the content and agreed to be accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved." We expect that all relevant group members, committee members, and agency partners will be included as coauthors on peer-reviewed manuscripts.

At the beginning of collaborative and group papers (i.e., non thesis or dissertation manuscripts), we will have an explicit discussion on authorship order and expectations of each author for the work. Authorship contributions are highly variable, and for some, debatable. Authors, therefore, will often include individuals beyond those that analyzed data and produced the paper including those involved in funding acquisition, coordination and implementation, data collection, or sample processing, which are fundamental to peer-reviewed products. We have an appreciation for what happens long before data ever exist to be analyzed and turned into a paper, and as such, we strive to acknowledge our partners accordingly.

Given the large scale and collaborative work of many of our projects, there often are many authors on a manuscript. To maintain transparency in contributions and to properly acknowledge each group member's role on a manuscript, an author contribution section is required for all Monteith Shop manuscripts when allowed by the journal.

Collaboration

A cornerstone of our research has been, and will remain, focused on strong collaborations and coproduction to yield meaningful science. Group members are expected to regularly engage with agency collaborators throughout the scientific process—from question development and analytical approach to publication of manuscripts and public facing research briefs. Engaging in this process improves the ability of our science to translate into on the ground management and ensures we maintain positive relationships with a wide breadth of collaborators, managers, and biologists across agencies.

Reproducibility and open science

We expect all members of the Monteith Shop to be committed to conducting reproducible science, aiming to work as transparently as possible. The goal is to 1) maintain raw data exactly as they were collected and document how they were collected, 2) analyze those data transparently so that someone else could reproduce the same results and 3) and store necessary pieces of this process in a secure manner that is accessible and intuitive for Kevin, future group members, and as appropriate external viewers.

All data must be saved on a cloud-type system dedicated to the purpose (we currently utilize the University of Wyoming's Google Drive). Although exceptions may exist, data generated during your time in the Monteith Shop are jointly owned by the Monteith Shop, and in many instances agency partners so they MUST be saved on the Shop's cloud platform to ensure universal access. While, ownership of data originating from partners and collaborates varies, cloud storage of these data are still the expectation

Cloud platforms are backed up but maintaining additional copies is required—this can be locally on your own hard drive, an external hard drive, etc. At a bare minimum there should be a copy of the "raw" data in a format that can not be corrupted—this can be paper data sheets, a pdf version of a digital excel file, etc.

All processing of data from cleaning to analysis to the derivation of final results should be documented, typically in well annotated R-scripts or a similar structure if processing occurs outside of R.

We recognize that managing all the files related to a project is difficult, and each individual has their own system. At a minimum data should be saved using intuitive and clear file naming practices organized in a logical structure of folders and subfolders. This includes all raw and processed data and the documentation of that processing.

All project files should be organized as described above and include a final 'README' file that gives a broad overview of the status of the project, especially if the project is not completed. These files and their general organization should be discussed with and shown to Kevin and the group data manager prior to departure with sufficient time to make corrections or clarifications as necessary.

Timeline, milestones, and general degree structure

Depending on field work and the scope of each project, master's degrees at the University of Wyoming typically take 3 to 4 years, and doctoral degrees typically take 5 to 7 years to complete.

All students in the Monteith Shop are required to give two public facing seminars during their graduate education: a presentation on their proposed work and a presentation on the findings of their final thesis/dissertation.

Masters Students - Students seeking a MSc degree are required to write and present a proposal of their work within the first 2 years of their graduate education. The written proposal must be approved by Kevin and submitted to their committee ≥2 weeks prior to the public proposal defense. Students must complete a public-facing seminar (typically during the Zoology and Physiology brown bags) of their proposal, followed by a 2-hour committee meeting.

Following the successful defense of a proposal, masters students will finalize their thesis work. Students will submit their thesis ≥2 weeks prior to the public thesis defense and will present their work in a public-facing seminar (typically during the Zoology and Physiology brown bags) of their thesis, followed by a 2-hour committee meeting.

Masters students can receive either 1) a Master of Science in Zoology, where they are housed in the Zoology department in conjunction with the Wyoming Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit or 2) a Master of Science in Environment and Natural Resources where they are housed in the Haub School of the Environment and Natural Resources.

Doctoral Students - Students seeking a PhD degree are required to write and present a proposal of their work within the first 3 years of their graduate education.The written proposal must be approved by Kevin and submitted to their committee ≥2 weeks prior to the public proposal defense. Students must complete a public-facing seminar (typically during the Zoology and Physiology brown bags) of their proposal, followed by a 2-hour committee meeting.

Following the successful defense of a proposal, doctoral students also must complete both oral and written comprehensive exams, typically within the first 4 years of their graduate education. The written exams consist of a series of 5-6 questions (many that are multi-part) that are answered as a long-form written document and students have 1 week to complete the written portion of the exam. After the written exam is approved by the committee, the student will undergo the oral examination which consists of a 3 hour long meeting, typically 2 weeks following the submission of the written document. The oral exam consists of committee members asking various questions related to the students project, the written exam, and general area of expertise of the student.

After passing their comprehensive exams, doctoral candidates will finalize their dissertation work. Students will submit their dissertation ≥2 weeks before the public dissertation defense and will present their work in a public-facing seminar (typically during the Zoology and Physiology brown bags) of their dissertation, followed by a 2-hour committee meeting.

PhD students can receive either 1) a Doctor of Philosophy in Zoology, where they are housed in the Zoology department in conjunction with the Wyoming Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit or 2) once accepted can apply for the Program in Ecology and Evolution (PiEE), which is an interdepartmental umbrella program at UW and results in a a Doctor of Philosophy in Ecology. PhD students in PiEE will still be required to meet expectations of the Wyoming Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit.

Kevin's responsibilities to graduate students

- Follow the Monteith Shop vision, philosophy, policies, and expectations.
- Provide financial support for projects, travel, etc., whenever possible.
- Develop the broad framework of the project, and assist with refining and developing questions for the graduate student to pursue.
- Provide substantive feedback and, when appropriate, proofread manuscripts, grants, and other written products.
- Meet with students regularly (i.e., biweekly during the academic year) to discuss progress on projects or hurdles that are preventing progress.
- Be attentive, prepared, and engaged at group meetings, practice talks, etc.
- Provide moral support, as well as mentoring on career growth and development.

- Ensure that students are treated in a respectable and professional manner by the University of Wyoming community and broader collaborative network.
- Comply with institutional policies when necessary (i.e., sign stuff).

Kevin's expectations of graduate students

- Follow the Monteith Shop vision, philosophy, policies, and expectations.
- Apply for relevant grants to support projects, travel, etc., whenever possible.
- Take intellectual ownership over your research project, which includes taking the lead on developing research questions, as well as designing and implementing protocols and analyses to address those research questions.
- Initiate writing of manuscripts, and coordinate with co-authors and collaborators to acquire and incorporate feedback.
- Meet with Kevin regularly to discuss progress towards completion of thesis/dissertation.
- Be attentive, prepared, and engaged at group meetings, practice talks, etc.
- Support group members whenever possible through sharing code, providing feedback on manuscripts and presentations, saying an encouraging word when it's needed, etc.
- Comply with all institutional requirements for completing the degree, including identifying and creating a committee, filling out appropriate paperwork, etc.
- Maintain reproducible and efficient workflows for code, data storage, etc.
- Take care of logistics relating to field work and project management, including hiring technicians, finding safe and appropriate field housing, receipts and reimbursements, arranging for field vehicles, etc.
- Work with other group members, professors, or other professionals to develop critical knowledge, skills, and connections.
- Develop independence and learn from failure.

Kevin's responsibilities to research scientists and postdoctoral scholars

Because the positions are so varied, the responsibilities to and expectations of research scientists will largely be laid out in the official offer letter. However, a few general responsibilities and expectations apply:

- Follow the Monteith Shop vision, philosophy, policies, and expectations.
- Provide financial support for projects, travel, etc., whenever possible.
- Meet regularly to discuss progress on projects or hurdles that are preventing progress.
- Be attentive, prepared, and engaged at group meetings, practice talks, etc.
- Provide moral support, as well as mentoring on career growth and development.
- Ensure that research scientists and postdoctoral scholars are treated in a respectable and professional manner by the University of Wyoming community and broader collaborative network.
- Comply with institutional policies when necessary (i.e., sign stuff).

Kevin's expectations of research scientists and postdoctoral scholars

- Follow the Monteith Shop vision, philosophy, policies, and expectations.
- Apply for relevant grants to support projects, travel, etc., whenever possible.
- Take intellectual ownership over your research project, which includes taking the lead on developing research questions, as well as designing and implementing protocols and analyses to address those research questions.
- Initiate writing of manuscripts, and coordinate with co-authors and collaborators to acquire and incorporate feedback.
- Meet with Kevin regularly to discuss progress towards completion of thesis/dissertation.
- Be attentive, prepared, and engaged at group meetings, practice talks, etc.
- Provide individualized support, feedback, and mentorship to group members whenever possible through sharing code, providing feedback on manuscripts and presentations, saying an encouraging word when it's needed, etc.
- Maintain reproducible and efficient workflows for code, data storage, etc.
- Comply with institutional policies when necessary.
- Research scientists and postdoctoral scholars are expected to operate at a slightly higher capacity than graduate students, this means there may be explicit products that are required each year (e.g., 2 peer-reviewed manuscripts, coordinating 4 outreach events, etc.). These will be determined and explicitly defined for each individual.

Conflict resolution and failure to meet expectations

If you are having difficulty interacting with another group member, Kevin, or the expectations outlined above are not being met, you will first be expected to communicate and attempt to resolve conflict with each other directly. We encourage clear and open communication, identifying and communicating issues before they become a bigger problem, and a commitment to listening and understanding each other's perspectives.

If grievances cannot be resolved with each other directly, you will next be expected to seek a neutral member within the group to help facilitate conflict resolution. Senior graduate students and research scientists, given their long-term experience with the group, often are prepared to mediate conflict and expected to help do so as their schedules, mental health, and relationships with Kevin allow.

Finally, if neither pathway outlined above adequately resolves the conflict, there are multiple institutional pathways that should be sought out next. Graduate student committees, if one has been formed, requires a faculty member from outside the academic home of Kevin. This outside committee member can serve as a more unbiased perspective to uphold the rigor and fairness of the graduate process. If grievances are more personal in nature, the Ombuds Office provides an informal setting in which to share dilemmas, ideas, questions, without fear of exposure, retaliation, or recrimination, and may offer a suitable space to work towards reconciliation. The Ombuds Office will help you navigate the process from there, providing guidance given the specific situation.

Education and growth

We freely admit that this is a living document, and we will revise it as values, philosophies, expectations, policies, and procedures change. To that end, group members should feel welcome to provide constructive criticisms and be open and honest about this document. Group members will be asked to revisit this content and make time to discuss it on an annual basis.

References

We are grateful that we did not have to reinvent the wheel while constructing this document. We drew from the following documents in crafting our own.

https://rilab.ucdavis.edu/expectations.html

https://merkleresearchgroup.org/join-us/

https://dossgollin-lab.github.io/lab-guide/expectations/expectations/

https://laskowskilab.faculty.ucdavis.edu/lab-values-expectations/

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1wa067HF3iBv5M0_ao6M1GzPg4mUof_PoVlEAKyIn8Xk/edit

https://www.science.org/content/article/why-some-professors-welcome-new-lab-members-clear-expectations-writing

https://www.mouncelab.com/expectations