

Expectations- Your tenure in this **Masters Degree program will last 21-27 months** depending on how well things work out and on how diligent you are. This also assumes a full time commitment from the student. It is also assumed that earning your degree is the highest priority for the student at this point in their career. I consider graduate students as **apprentice scholars** and scientists, not as students in the traditional sense. My laboratory is not a classroom. It's a research work place where you do your scholarship.

- I expect you to **be independent**, requiring only direction from me and some degree of technical help from time to time, especially during the initial part of your career at YSU. I expect that you will try to solve problem on you own first, use the deductive reasoning “God” gave you to solve problems, before you come to me for advice (this is what is meant by advisor). **The student is expected to take the initiative required to move his or her work forward. I don't hold hands every step of the way.** You are expected to attempt to discover or find answers to any problems you may have before you come to me. I will be glad to help solve problems if you come to an impasse. I am always glad to discuss the science in which you are engaged. You can always bounce ideas off me. There are no dumb ideas, but it is dumb not to have your own ideas. **The student is expected to develop time management** skills and not depend on me to tell them when to do things. This is a flex time environment we do not punch time clocks. We are task and goal oriented.
- The lab **is not a social club**. If you are not **talking science or doing science** you are not considered working and should leave the lab. Of coarse like any work place there is a little socializing during the day, at lunch during a break in the work, but this should be held at a minimum.
- You are responsible for **keeping current in the literature**. You are expected to be fully engaged **intellectually** with your area of study- in cell biology several hundred articles are published every month. Your thesis should have as many current citations (within the past year) as you can obtain. The student should be current and up to date in thinking. In terms of your project your undergraduate education is already out of date.
- I expect **publishable quality data** from all my students. It is absolutely crucial to the student's future that **they publish in refereed journals**. If you don't know what I mean by this I will be happy to describe in more detail the importance of publishing you work in peer reviewed journals. A piece of paper stating you have a Master's Degree is not what most future employers will look for. They look **for evidence of scientific productivity** and this means publications. Because of the nature of some data your study may not stand alone as a publication. This is acceptable as long as the work is published in other forms such as poster presentations at national society meeting, such as the American Society for Cell Biology. Your data may be used in conjunction with other data in a future publication, you will be a co-author. You would be contacted and informed of the use and authorship if this eventuality occurs.
- **Your are expected to be a good laboratory citizen**. Cleaning up after yourself after completions of the days work is a must. Your fellow students and I are not your hired hands or maids. You are required to be competent enough to make up your own solutions and buffers. You will have to replenish commonly used buffers when you have used the last amount. When we get low on a reagent let me know so I can

reorder and we don't run out. The lab is a community and harmony allows us all to be successful. Interpersonal problems should be worked out in an adult fashion and I should not have to intervene. Disruption of the research activities in this lab will require me to take executive action to restore a productive environment.

- **Taking responsibility for your work or lack of work.** Your future is in your hands and it's not my fault if you don't succeed. I'm here to assist you toward your goal not to do your work for you.
- **I expect you to be focused on getting a research based Master's Degree education.** I will not accept you into this laboratory if you are killing time waiting to get admitted to Medical School or Dental School, etc. In my experience pre-meds are not productive and are a drain on the resources (both material and temporal) of this laboratory without usable science being produced. If in the second year you decide to apply for medical school my support for you in the form of letters of reference will be determined on the basis of the degree of success you have already attained.
- Every graduate student has to spend some weekend time in the lab depending on the task at hand. **Science is not a 9-5 five days a week activity.** Summer and spring breaks are not vacations for graduate students. I expect you to use these times to catch up in the lab work you are doing.
- The student should learn from the other graduate students. There is a graduate school culture here at YSU take advantage of it. Talk about what is going on in your research and science that you are doing. If you are not excited about your work, what are you doing here?

Stages toward your degree

First year-Your lab should be chosen by beginning of second term. Emphasis in on taking classes that prepare you for your area of science and satisfy the requirements for the Master of Science degree.

- **20 hours a week working on your research project** learning techniques (in the lab) and discussing the science behind your project your with colleagues and me Reading the scientific literature and relate activities are included in this time. This **time does not include** the time for such activities as studying for exams, classroom time, TA activities etc.
- **The goal of the first year is to satisfy the majority of your course work credit hours**
- **Thesis research proposal rough draft should be completed by the beginning of summer term.**
- **The Research Proposal absolutely must be defended in front of your committee by end of summer term or you are no longer allowed to work in the lab until it is defended. This holds unless there are extraordinary circumstance or situations that impede your ability to meet this deadline.** I will decide this on a case by case basis.
- If you are a Spending a total of about 45-55 hours per week on your Master's degree career you should successfully complete your degree in the duration mentioned above and you will be competitive in the scientific job market or in admission to graduate school.

Second year- The second year may require you to take occasional classes but more time should be applied to research.

1. **30-40 hours a week on your research project** –carrying out the experiments and activities outlined in your research proposal. This will vary from student to student we don't punch a clock. Research is goal and task oriented not clock watching. Duration of each project is variable and is impossible to predict how long your research will last.
2. **Thesis rough draft (one of many rounds of revision should be completed and submitted to your thesis advisor (me) by at least two months before you plan to graduate. Earlier than this, if possible. It take 3-4 re-writes before the thesis is ready for the rest of your committee to review. I base this statement on experience not an arbitrary desire.**
3. **The thesis should be to your committee as soon as possible but the absolute his deadline two weeks before the end of the term (two weeks before the defense date).**
4. If you are a Spending a total of about 45-55 hours per week on your Master's degree career you should successfully complete your degree in the duration mentioned above and you will be competitive in the scientific job market or in admission to graduate school.
5. **Defend your Thesis. A thesis defense has four parts and lasts about 1-1.5 hours.**
 - **First the student summarizes his/her work in a seminar style power point presentation to the general public.**
 - **Then the student fields questions from the audience.**
 - **The audience is excused and the committee asks more specific questions about the student's work.**
 - **Finally, the student is excused and the committee discusses whether the work satisfies the standards of the Master of Sciences Degree.**

I have read the above statements and understand the expectations of a graduate student doing research in Dr. Walker's Laboratory. I acknowledge that my performance will be, in part, judged using these criteria.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____