

## Ecosystem & Soil Microbial Processes Lab

### Principal Investigator Responsibilities (PI: Peter M. Homyak)

- Develop and maintain a supportive, inclusive, and safe atmosphere for all groups, in particular those of marginalized communities.
- Support scientific research through project development, data interpretation, and writing
- Offer guidance/support on research, careers, life-work balance
- Assist in identifying project ideas and offer resources/support
- Write proposals and keep the lab funded
- Maintain active teaching, service, and outreach
- Support the life-work balance of lab members

### Expectations for Lab Members

- Develop and maintain an environment of respect, camaraderie, and support—we work together as a lab
- Lead research projects
- Write and submit manuscripts
- Apply for external sources of funding
- Participate in lab meetings
- Represent the lab at conferences (department, college, national, and/or international level)
- Maintain life-work balance

### Balancing work

Academia is rewarding in many ways; for example, we have flexible work schedules. While there are benefits to having flexible schedules, it also means there isn't a specific time for taking time off. I encourage lab members to find the right balance between coursework, fieldwork, and experiments to take time off. Taking time off is critical to creative thinking and productivity, which are required to be successful scientists. Taking time off is also critical to personal development and well-being—it reduces stress and anxiety—and must be integrated into the schedule of our lab. Postdocs, students, and lab technicians accumulate time off according to their contracts.

*To take time off, please send me an email requesting your planned dates at least two weeks prior to the start of your planned break. Please wait for my reply before booking flights or paying for non-refundable goods/services.*

### Working hours

The university follows a typical 8-5 work schedule (9 h = 8 h workday + 1 h lunch break). While strictly adhering to this schedule is not critical (e.g., I follow a ~10-6 schedule), please be aware that most university staff who support your research do tend to work 8-5. Plans to deviate significantly from an 8-5 schedule must be coordinated with me. Please keep in mind that academic life does not always follow an 8-5 weekday—field work may require a weekend, proposals have strict deadlines that may demand extra hours, and experiments may require extra time in the lab (these should be exceptions, not the norm). To this end, lab members must manage their time wisely and schedule time off to balance extra hours.

**Emails** may be sent at odd hours—e.g., we may be traveling in a different time zone. Similar to how I won't reply to emails sent outside of my work hours, I don't expect lab members to reply to emails outside of theirs. Lab members are responsible for balancing *their* work hours.

## Lab Policies

- Manuscripts, proposals, presentations, conference abstracts, and any other form of writing/presentation representing our lab must be approved by me. I request this because it is my job to help you through this process, to give you access to resources, to make sure we follow research protocols, and to maintain our lab in good standing by submitting high-quality work.
- Please allow me at least two weeks to provide feedback on writing/presentations and to write reference letters (it takes time to write and provide good feedback). I understand there will be times requiring a quicker turnaround, but they should be exceptions, not the norm.
- Our field tool bag (heavy blue bag) is a critical component of our field research. Please remember to return all tools to the bag and to order new tools when they break/wear out. If you need to use a tool from the bag while in the lab, please do so, but immediately place an order for that tool so that we have one in our lab (red toolbox). The goal is to minimize the odds field tools get left behind in the lab causing problems to folks in remote locations.

## Attending Conferences and Travel Reimbursement

- Attending scientific meetings is critical to professional development and I encourage lab members to attend and present their work.
- Laboratory funds can be allocated to support conference fees and travel, if the attendee is presenting. *Please check with me regarding availability of funds before submitting an abstract and prior to booking travel.*
- There are many funding opportunities available through conference organizers, our department (Stolzy-Letey Travel; <https://envisci.ucr.edu/graduate/awards/scholarships-awards>), and the Graduate Student Association to reimburse travel expenses. Please apply to those funding sources before requesting lab funds.
- Travel expenses are covered via reimbursement after submitting individual receipts to our BEES administrative staff or the funding agency (e.g., GSA). Please keep in mind that individual receipts showing itemized charges and method of payment are needed for all reimbursements including lodging.
- Travel funds can be requested to cover expenses during official conference dates (i.e., one day prior to the official start of the conference, during the conference, and one day after the official end of the conference).