Research Rotation Expectations – Finzi-Dunlap Lab, Fall 2022

General expectations

* Your coursework needs to be your highest priority this semester, along with your teaching duties (if you are a teaching assistant). The research rotation should be fun because you are excited about what you are learning and doing.
* In general, you should aim for about 12 hours of research work each week. Exceptions are permitted in case of major exams. This weekly time includes one-on-one training/meetings with Laura and/or David, attending group meetings, attending the biophysics journal club, reading papers on your own, and time-in-lab. Therefore, time-in-lab is close to 8-9 hours/week while the other tasks take up the rest of your time.
* The goal of a research rotation is for the two of us to figure out how well we work together, for you to figure out how much you enjoy the research in the Finzi-Dunlap lab in general, and for you to get to do research in addition to your regular coursework.
* Keep a well-documented OneNote diary of your rotation research activities and share the link with Laura and David.

Specific meetings

* Laura and/or David will meet with you one-on-one each week at a regularly scheduled time convenient to both of us. We’ll try to give each other advance notice if we need to reschedule a meeting. Please, always email both Laura and David for whatever communication and whenever we can help, either to get advice or to set up an extra meeting to answer your questions or teach you a technique. We commit to responding to your emails within 24 hours and usually faster (on weekends we may take longer).
* Hopefully you will be able to attend lab group meeting regularly, unless it conflicts with your coursework or teaching duties. You’ll likely present your work regularly at the lab group meeting.
* Hopefully you can attend the biophysics journal club (talk to Laura to get on the biophysics Journal club mailing list if you aren’t already) and group meeting regularly, unless you have a conflict. In Fall 2022 this meeting is every Friday, 3:30 – 5:30 pm, in N215.

Project goals

* You should plan to read at least 3-6 papers this semester to get background on your project. Laura and/or David will suggest some, others you may find on your own, and will also be happy to discuss these papers with you. By the end of the semester, you should be comfortable with the “big picture” behind your project.
* You will hopefully be able to prepare samples, take data, and do some data analysis of your own data by the end of the semester.
* If you join the lab long-term, we can use the results of your rotation project to assess whether we want to continue that project or try something new. In particular, you aren’t obliged to continue your rotation project if you have become interested in something different.

We can discuss this document together and modify or clarify anything that concerns you. The aim is to set clear expectations for your rotation so that you are as successful as possible!