



HUMPHRIES LAB

UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND

LAB MANUAL

Authorship of this document is collaborative and has benefited from substantial input by research group members, including: Lauren Josephs, Celeste Venolia, Elaine Shen, Evans Arizi, Paul Carvalho, Elle Wibisono, Annie Innes-Gold, Nicky Roberts, and Catie Alves.

I. Statement on Anti-Racism

last update: June 2020

first draft primary author: Elaine Shen

The Humphries Lab at the University of Rhode Island stands together in solidarity with members of the Black community calling for justice against historic and ongoing acts of state-sponsored violence, most recently highlighted by the horrific killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and David McAtee. It is clear that the deaths of these individuals and countless other members of the Black community at the hands of the police are not anomalies (and we recognize that this list is growing even as we draft this statement). Rather, they are the known product of institutions in the U.S. that systematically oppress Black people. The events underscore a long history of racism and discrimination in our country.

We unequivocally denounce racism in every form, however, we recognize racism, particularly anti-Blackness, has been at the foundation of the scientific enterprise. As a research group, we work in communities of color, both in the U.S. and internationally, and take seriously the subject matter that we study, our positions as settlers on stolen Narragansett land (where our offices are based), and the troubling colonial history of our scholarly fields (e.g., fisheries management, conservation science). We try, together, to always think and take action about how this implicates us in ongoing dispossession.

As a research group, we are committed to doing the work to make our learning environments and academic/research community more supportive of Black people and non-Black people of color. This includes:

1. Encouraging, incentivizing, and recognizing learning and training around systemic racism, colonialism, and other forms of oppression;
2. Using our privilege to bolster minoritized voices in our communities and defending them from acts of racism;
3. Advocating for and supporting anti-racist initiatives within our department, university, and scientific community;

4. Holding space (25% of our group lab meetings) to discuss and reflect upon what we have learned;
5. Codifying this in our lab's Code of Conduct that is always publicly available.

We are enthusiastic in engaging critically in the work of Black scholars and activists, being uncomfortable as we navigate, challenge, and reflect upon the structures of oppression that many of us admittedly benefit from, making mistakes along the way, and holding each other (and ourselves) accountable.

II. Research Group Culture

last update: May 2020

first draft primary author: Lauren Josephs

We believe the culture of our research group to be defined by the following elements:

“ **Solidarity** “ **Communication** “ **Collaboration** “ **Acknowledgement** “ **Inclusion** “ **Equity**
“ **Work-Life Balance** “ **Conflict Resolution** “ **Anti-Racism** ”

Solidarity: We work actively to cultivate a sense of belonging for all members of our research group. Although we don't expect that all members become friends, we seek out individuals who value companionship in their scientific endeavors free of competitiveness with peers. We work to make ourselves available to offer each other intellectual and emotional support, while also respecting the time that others must dedicate to their own work schedules.

Communication: We strive to be open with one another on all matters related to our membership in this research group. We recognize open communication as an exercise of mutual respect, and it is our goal that everyone feels empowered and comfortable enough to express themselves in this way.

Collaboration: Our research group is intentionally multidisciplinary. It is our belief that multiple perspectives and diversity in both person and practice make for more effective solutions to research problems. It is our hope that our research group members will benefit from the various types of expertise present within our group. We believe this requires that we are in the same place at the same time for a portion of every week, despite the research group being supportive of remote work in general. We have termed this collegial spirit as ‘Group Collaborative Vibrations’ or GCV, and together we discuss and intentionally select the days and times for GCV each academic semester. We expect that the default is to offer help when a fellow member presents a work-related problem, while acknowledging that personal deadlines may require that we suggest alternatives. Last, much of the research work we do is international. Part of collaboration as we have defined it is being culturally aware and excited about developing cultural knowledge from others whose experiences differ from our own, thus enabling more effective and equitable collaboration.

Acknowledgement: Our collaborative nature demands that we are diligent in acknowledging the contributions of others in our work. This is true of both formal (e.g., in published materials) and more casual (e.g., in conversation with others) acknowledgements of the time and effort an individual dedicated to a certain task or body of work. We have a formalized procedure for determining authorship within our research group, which is outlined in Section III.

Inclusion: As a basic rule of thumb, we celebrate difference. For us, this translates to an active curiosity about one another, valuing each other's personal backgrounds and stories, and considering how these influence the way each of us approach our research. Included in this is an awareness and acknowledgement that each member of our research group overcame obstacles of different shapes and magnitudes in order to be here, and that this continues to be true in our current efforts. We lift each other up and work to break down barriers to each other's success. We acknowledge and value all identities and the intersections of race/ethnicity, gender identity and expression, class, sexual orientation, ability, age, nationality and national origin, and religion/spirituality.

Equity: By definition, working towards equity in our research group means being attuned to the different social, economic, cultural, and political positions of individuals and working to transform the power relations that lead to unevenness in opportunities and/or resources. We work to address this unevenness and work towards equity by listening for and identifying moments of bias, oppression, and other subconscious, identity-based assumptions and ideas during fieldwork, in our offices, and within our research group as a whole.

Work-Life Balance: We value equally prioritizing the demands of one's career and the demands of one's personal life. We expect and hope that all members of our research group will find fulfillment in other areas of their life outside of their research with us. We do not believe that our members should ever sacrifice physical, mental, or emotional health in order to meet progress benchmarks. Deadlines set within our group should reflect this. Although some of us may choose to communicate outside of normal working hours for multiple reasons, no one is expected to address work-related matters during these times unless explicitly agreed upon by all relevant parties for a certain task.

Conflict Resolution: We acknowledge that at times we will fall short of the goals we set forth in this document. When this happens, we encourage victims and perpetrators of any failures, or simply anyone experiencing a conflict, to follow the guidelines for conflict resolution outlined below and we ensure that there will be no retribution for doing so. In addition to this, each member of the research group is ensured an opportunity to provide feedback (at any level of gravity/severity) on their experience within our work environment at least once a semester during progress report meetings with Austin.

1. Clarify what the disagreement is about by discussing what needs are not being met on both sides and ensure mutual understanding of this.
2. Establish a common goal(s) for both parties by agreeing on a desired and acceptable outcome.
3. Discuss ways to meet the common goal(s) by listening, communicating, and brainstorming individually and together.
4. Determine the barriers to the common goal(s) by acknowledging what has brought you into the conflict and talk about what problems may prevent a resolution.
5. Agree on the best way to resolve the conflict by identifying solutions that both parties can live with.
6. Acknowledge the agreed upon solution and determine the responsibilities each party has in the resolution.

Anti-Racism: The ways we identify with race is powerful. We work to recognize and evaluate our own individual privileges as well as those afforded to us by being in an institution of higher education. We acknowledge that living in a society that privileges white people and whiteness, racist acts of violence and racist ideas are considered normal. We believe that racism is not only about mindset and actions, but also form the foundation of policies enacted by governments that

contribute to our polarization; racist ideas in policies have widespread impacts to Black people and non-Black people of color. We strongly believe that to create an equitable and just research group/discipline/society, we must commit to making unbiased choices and being antiracist in all aspects of our lives

** This part of the document was created using language and resources from the [Civic Laboratory for Environmental Action Research](#), the [Jackson Laboratory](#), [LabManager](#), and [The National Museum of African American History and Culture](#).*

III. Roles, Responsibilities, and Expectations

last update: February 2019

first draft primary author: Austin Humphries

My goal as a research advisor is to facilitate a relationship of mutual respect and trust that fosters professional confidence and encourages critical thinking and creativity.

Specific commitments of me as a research advisor:

- 1) I will be committed to mentoring you as a future member of the scholarly community.** I will strive to model professional responsibility, demystify graduate school, encourage the effective use of time, oversee professional development, and assist with finding other mentors. We will iteratively construct and complete a mentoring plan together.
- 2) I will be committed to your research project.** I will *help* to plan and direct your project, set reasonable and attainable goals, and establish a timeline for completion of the project. I recognize the possibility of conflicts between the interests of my own larger research program and your particular research goals, and will not let my larger goals interfere with your pursuit of thesis/dissertation research.
- 3) I will be committed to meeting with you on a regular basis.** I will meet with you on a regular (usually every two weeks) basis unless I am on travel. My door is open to unscheduled meetings during the week.
- 4) I will be committed to identifying and providing the resources you will need in order to conduct your thesis/dissertation research.** If there are resources you do not have access to, or I cannot provide, I will search alternative solutions.
- 5) I will assist you with the requirements and deadlines of the graduate program as well as those of URI, including any teaching requirements and human resources guidelines.**
- 6) I will help you select a thesis/dissertation committee.** I will help assure that this committee meets annually (or more frequently if necessary) to review your progress.
- 7) I will lead by example and facilitate your training in complementary skills needed to be a successful researcher.** Complementary skills may include education and outreach, oral and written communication skills, grant writing, lab management, animal and human research policies, the ethical conduct of research, and scientific professionalism. I will encourage you to seek additional opportunities in career development training.

8) I will encourage you to attend professional meetings and try to help you secure funding for such activities. I will commit to funding one professional meeting for you if you are a MS student and two if you are a PhD student during your tenure in the lab.

9) I will openly discuss authorship and intellectual policies regarding peer-reviewed publications. I will acknowledge contributions to projects beyond your own, and I will work with you to publish your work in a timely manner. I will discuss norms on authorship credit for the field and the extent to which I can assist in preparing work for submission to journals and conferences.

10) I will provide career advice and assist in finding a position for you following your graduation. I will provide honest letters of recommendation for your next phase of professional development. I will also be accessible to give advice and feedback on career goals.

11) I will provide an environment that is intellectually stimulating, emotionally supportive, safe, and free of harassment. Throughout your time in graduate school, I will be supportive, equitable, accessible, encouraging, respectful, and receptive to needs that you have as a graduate student that I may not have already anticipated.

I expect my graduate students to be self-directed, highly motivated, and eager to devise a plan that keeps you on it.

Specific commitments of you as a graduate student:

1) Acknowledge that you have the primary responsibility for the successful completion of your degree. You will be committed to your graduate education and will demonstrate this by your efforts in the classroom and in research settings. You will maintain a high level of professionalism, self-motivation, engagement, curiosity, and ethical standards.

2) You will meet regularly with me and provide me with updates on the progress and results of your activities and experiments. You will be expected to *take the lead in these meetings*, send me an agenda 24-hrs in advance, ask any questions or talk about relevant material.

3) You will work with me to develop a thesis/dissertation project. This will include establishing a timeline for each phase of your work. You will strive to meet the established deadlines.

4) You will work with me to select a thesis/dissertation committee. You will commit to meeting with this committee at least annually (or more frequently if necessary). You will be responsive to the advice of and constructive criticism from your committee. You are responsible for keeping committee members abreast of all facets of your project, including deadlines, etc.

5) You will be knowledgeable of the policies and requirements of the Biological and Environmental Sciences (BES) graduate program (or MESM), the Graduate School, and URI. You will commit to meeting these requirements, including teaching responsibilities.

6) You will attend and participate in relevant group meetings and seminars that are part of your educational program.

7) You will comply with all institutional policies, including academic program milestones. You will comply with both the letter and spirit of all institutional research policies (e.g., safe laboratory practices and policies regarding animal-use and human-research) at URI.

8) You will be a good research citizen. You will agree to take part in relevant shared research group responsibilities and will use research resources carefully and frugally. You will be attentive to issues of safety and courtesy, and will be respectful of, tolerant of, and work collegially with all research personnel.

9) You will consult with me and notify any fellow research group members in advance of any planned absences to collective events.

10) You will maintain detailed, organized, and accurate records of your research, as directed by me. You are aware that your original notes and all tangible research data are the property of the PI of the grant (usually Austin Humphries), URI, and the associated funding agency, but that you are able to take a copy of your research records and data with you after you complete your degree.

11) You will discuss authorship and attendance at professional meetings with me. You will work with me to submit all relevant research results that are ready for publication in a timely manner to internationally recognized peer-reviewed outlets (see attached Authorship & Publishing Code of Conduct). I expect you to take publishing seriously and submit your research for publication within 12 months of your defense.

12) You acknowledge that it is primarily your responsibility to develop your career following the completion of your degree. You will seek guidance from me, thesis/dissertation committee, other mentors, and any other resources available for advice on career plans.

Other general expectations:

Goals: I expect you to develop and share with me a work plan that includes a series of short-term and long-term goals, as well as the timeframe for reaching these goals. I will make sure your work plan meets the program's requirements and are feasible.

Thresholds: You may contact me on my cell phone at any time for emergencies, but academic matters past regular work hours should be addressed via Slack.

Assessments: I will give you an assessment of your general progress every year or as frequently as we deem necessary. You can expect iterative feedback from me in terms of research and program progress. I will generally provide a response to your work within one week of receiving it and if not, you can remind me via Slack. Always plan on a week, however, for timelines.

Drafts: I expect first drafts to have whole sections complete (e.g., Introduction, Discussion), or the entire paper/manuscript complete (including References and Figures/Tables), before they are submitted to me. I also require that these drafts be peer-reviewed by at least two of your lab-mates before sending them to me.

** This part of the document was created and modified from a sample published by the [Graduate Research, Education and Training group of the American Association of Medical Colleges](#)*

IV. Authorship and Publishing

last update: March 2019

first draft primary author: Austin Humphries

Publishing research results is an important part of the scientific process. The norms for publishing vary among disciplines. In an effort to make it clear for those in the Humphries Lab, the following publishing code of conduct is in place.

Discussion of a manuscript (e.g., topics, timelines, analyses) should be done as soon as possible at the onset of a project and negotiated iteratively and as much as needed should roles change or when deliverables are met. Early versions of papers should include authorship to help resolve any future disputes. Authorship order should be discussed as well, including who will lead (first author) and in what order authors will be listed.

In order to be an author when you are a member of the lab group, you must make a significant intellectual contribution to the research. Because the definition of what this means varies widely, we have adopted a two-part process for determining authorship.

PART 1

When considering an individual for authorship, ask if the following statement is true: “I could not have produced this paper without X because they brought to the project a unique and indispensable skill or perspective.” If yes, assign that individual authorship. If no, continue to Part 2.

PART 2

An individual should be a coauthor if they had a significant role in at least three of the five following criteria:

- a) Formulating the initial idea
 - This can be very hard to judge so it is best to be generous with these criteria
- b) Planning/facilitating the research
 - May include figuring out how to collect data, outlining a modeling approach, writing/getting grants to fund the work, providing key equipment, developing and testing the survey instrument, etc.
- c) Collecting the data
 - This could be fieldwork, lab work, literature review/synthesis, etc.
- d) Analyzing the data
 - May include database manipulations, statistical and graphical analysis, or providing new insights that derive from the results, coding a model, or working through challenging math
- e) Writing and publishing the results
 - This could include writing some section(s) of the manuscript, providing significant editorial comments, assisting in the review process, etc.

The above applies to any data you collected while a member of the lab. This means that even after you have moved on to another position (i.e., graduated or otherwise), future publications may still make use of data you collected, but you would still need to meet the above criteria in order to be considered for authorship. In general, once a dataset has had a paper published using it, any subsequent papers using the data in different ways do not necessarily warrant authorship if you were previously considered a co-author.

What happens when you leave the lab? If the project involves a student milestone such as a thesis/dissertation defense, the manuscript must be submitted for possible publication no later

than 12 months from the date of the successful thesis or dissertation defense (not graduation). If it is a non-thesis degree, this timeline refers to approval of your major paper or graduation, whichever is first. Should the manuscript not be submitted within 12 months' time, I (Austin) reserve the right to take primary responsibility for submission of the manuscript and will become first author if appropriate. Finally, simply submitting a manuscript within 12 months is not sufficient for retaining first authorship. What is required is that progress must continue to be made towards publication (e.g., in the form of manuscript revisions or resubmission to another journal). Inaction or demonstrated lack of commitment on your part during the publication process may also result in loss of first authorship. As part of the authorship criteria above, it is the responsibility of the lead (first) author to submit the manuscript and lead all co-authors through the review process. If not, as stated above, you may lose first authorship.

As stated in the Advising Plan, your notes and all tangible research data are the property of the PI of the grant (usually in this case Austin Humphries), URI, and/or the associated funding agency. You are, however, free to take a copy of your research records and data (e.g., Excel files) with you after you complete your degree. Should you want to use the data for future publishing purposes, see #6 below.

In situations where manuscripts will likely involve co-authors outside of the lab (outside of this code of conduct agreement), effort should be made to establish an authorship agreement among all potential coauthors ASAP and make clear communication about authorship and expectations.

General publishing code of conduct:

1. Researchers will not add or delete authors from a manuscript submitted for publication without consent of those authors.
2. Researchers will obtain consent to submit a manuscript for publication from all who have been identified as coauthors on that manuscript and will not include as coauthor(s) any individual who has not agreed to the content of the final version of the manuscript.
3. Researchers will not represent research results as new if they have been published or submitted elsewhere, or submit a manuscript for publication while it is under review for possible publication elsewhere.
4. When using ideas or results of others in manuscripts submitted for publication, researchers will give full attribution of sources if they are not a coauthor. If the ideas or results have not been published, they may not be used without permission of the original researcher. Illustrations or tables from other publications or manuscripts may be used only with permission of the copyright owner.
5. Researchers submitting manuscripts for publication will promptly report to all coauthors any errors in research results or interpretations discovered after submission or publication.
6. Researchers wishing to use data collected during their degree program at URI and with the Humphries Lab will contact Austin Humphries and discuss ideas and authorship, using the above criteria as the basis for decisions of authorship.

** This part of the document was created using resources provided by the [Ecological Society of America](#), [David Post's Lab at Yale University](#), [American Psychological Association](#)*

By signing, I acknowledge the expectations stated above and understand that failure to meet them may result in dismissal from the research group and/or degree program.

Student: _____

Date: _____

Advisor: _____

Date: _____