

Weekly Lab Meetings- Goals and Norms

The goal of research in our lab is to help individuals develop the skills and understanding needed to advance the field of ecology in meaningful and impactful ways. We recognize that everyone in the lab will be in different places in this process- some may be developing their understanding of the field, whereas others will be deep into the process of developing research at the boundaries of the field. The goal of work in the lab (and the lab meeting, by extension) is to support everyone regardless of where they are in that process. We encourage individuals in the lab to resist comparing themselves to one another, and to take a growth mindset towards your own development. As the ultimate goal of research in science is to be able to effectively communicate it to a broad audience, we all can play an important role in giving feedback on the presentation of research, regardless of our expertise in a particular area. Presenters should strive to connect with all members of the meeting, regardless of their background and experience. Finally, progress into new areas (in science or otherwise) requires risk taking and mistakes, and so we aim to create an environment in lab meetings where folks feel supported to take risks in discussion without fear of negative consequences of being 'wrong'.

Norms of interaction

We aim to create a culture of respect, support and curiosity towards one another and towards our science. This is enabled by assuming the best of one another and by striving to share the group's time equally in meetings. Please frame any disagreements around ideas, not people. Participants are encouraged to pay attention to the context of feedback they might want to give and consider the manner in which it is offered. Are the comments, to the best of your understanding, timely, helpful, true and kind? If not, consider re-framing the point, or perhaps offering the feedback in another form (over email, over coffee after the meeting, etc). Finally, in order to encourage intellectual risk taking, it should be assumed that the content of all lab meetings (data, results, manuscripts, personal stories, etc) is confidential unless the presenter states otherwise.

Expectations for presenters

Lab members are expected to lead one meeting per quarter on a subject of your choosing, schedules permitting. When introducing the content of the meeting, practice providing context for an audience with a general ecology background. Please define any jargon or specialized concepts relevant to your work when it is first mentioned, and invite clarifying questions from the audience periodically. Presenters are expected to specify the kind of feedback they would like from the audience (ie- detailed edits on a near-final manuscript, big picture ideas from a brainstorming presentation, etc). Any reading for the meeting should be shared as early as possible, ideally 5-6 days in advance of the meeting. Presenters can bring food to share with the audience if desired, but this is not expected. Nathan can reimburse any food expenses (within reason!).