

Social Perception and Human Evolution (SPHERE) Lab Manual

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This document serves as a guide and reference for most (if not all) activities ongoing in the SPHERE Lab. We are a lab of primarily undergraduates under the supervision of a single doctoral-level researcher with training in social psychology. We also welcome postbaccalaureate scholars and graduate students. Our primary goal is good science, which can be conducted by anyone interested in understanding the truth.

From a clear mission statement to a list of recommended software, this manual will help to get us all on the same page and maintain a sense of structure so that our work can be as enjoyable and easy as possible. Being a successful lab requires a shared mission, knowledge of our responsibilities, and commitment to excellence by trying our best. This manual will clarify how we will do this!

1. Mission

Broadly speaking, we investigate the interplay between ancestral motivations and social perceptions. We take an approach with complementary perspectives in social, personality, and evolutionary psychology. This approach seeks to understand how functional motivations rooted in solving survival and adaptive problems throughout evolutionary history shape social interactions. Our lab considers these processes as they relate to relationship formation, coalition-building, and the various social decisions humans make to satisfy relevant survival goals.

Although our lab focuses on several key topics primarily, my specific interests do not dictate the course of every study that we conduct. This is an approach based in “radical empiricism.” The psychological scientist can answer any question empirically, provided one has a careful understanding of rigorous methodology. This approach is a double-edged sword. Although I encourage an active part of the scientific process among all lab members that allows them to answer their own questions under my guidance, we do not have a “hedgehog”¹ focus typical among many high-profile psychology labs to provide clearer directions. Despite potential ambiguity in what we study to other research programs, we allow the data to indicate what are fruitful areas of inquiry that could lead to a deeper understanding of a given topic.

¹ This terminology derives from the Hedgehog vs. Fox distinction. The Hedgehog is a researcher that knows one topic very well at the expense of their knowledge on adjacent topics (akin to a hedgehog burrowing deep). Conversely, the Fox is a researcher who knows multiple topics well, albeit not having the depth of a single topic as a Hedgehog would (akin to a fox foraging for prey across a breadth of areas). Neither approach to research is superior, although tradeoffs exist.

To optimize the benefits of our relatively “fox” approach to research, it is important for the lab to adhere to a unified mission. We must all do our part to organize and commit to starting worthwhile projects and seeing them to completion. Such a commitment may involve needing to conduct follow-up studies to cut a process down to its theoretical joints or just sitting through the discomfort of learning a new methodology to take our work to the next level.

A few themes characterize the typical kind of research our lab does. First, we are interested in the **functional basis of social perceptions**. How do we use facial and bodily features to infer another person’s ability as a mate, friend, or parent? Can we infer personality, political affiliations, or health across various physical and behavioral channels? Second, we are interested in **how humans prioritize various traits in an ideal mate across contexts**. What could be particularly attractive for a one-night stand may prove disastrous for anything long-term (and vice versa). This lab considers the dynamics shaping human mate preferences. Third, we are interested in the **trade-offs people invoke to avoid disease**, even if such behavior is at the expense of social connections. The natural converse of this is identifying how people forgo this protection if social connections become more important in the moment. Finally, a growing area of our research is addressing the **functions of humor in forming relationships**. We address this topic by considering when people consider different types of humor desirable for friends and mates. This necessarily includes when people make a tradeoff in what types of humor become more or less important.

We are further interested in the **application of evolutionary principles in addressing societal problems**. How can ancestrally derived motives undermine people’s right to a fair trial? Do functional stereotypes made through physical appearance impede medical treatment or social support? Is it possible to harness survival motives to foster adherence to public health initiatives? Again, these topics merely reflect a relatively central identity of the SPHERE Lab for the sake of an “[elevator speech](#),” but such interests are continually evolving and reflect the dynamic nature of scientific evidence with an engaged research team.

2. Guiding Principles

Our priority is good and interesting research that can inform a larger theoretical framework. Did we solve a societal problem? That’s an added bonus. We value the truth only possible through scientific rigor. But we also strive to be a fun and welcoming learning environment that ensures all members remember how valuable they are to science. We strive to create a lab that will contribute to every member’s intellectual and personal growth. *My goal is to get everyone where they need to be professionally.* This success is contingent upon our commitment to some guiding principles.

Research

We aim to foster an environment of continually improving scientific excellence and personal development. This environment is one that supports every lab member in reaching their full potential. We also value fun and humor, which I believe is necessary for a research team to do great science. The primary means to achieve these goals are respect for your peers, hard work, consistency in your efforts, and an openness to the various unexpected turn science provides us. Very rarely do the data turn out “perfectly,” but that can be a fun experience itself! If we only confirm our predictions, there may not be a chance to understand a process more thoroughly. Unexpected results have historically led to some interesting follow-up studies. I expect these findings to be reported fully as the truth is what our lab follows.

We stay organized and document everything. We communicate openly and often. I will communicate *everything* with you and expect the same in return. We correct mistakes without judgment of each other. Your mentor has made many mistakes. It is important to remember that mistakes can happen to anyone regardless of career stage. We also conduct honest research, with an eye toward Open Science and transparency. We collaborate with others. Although it is reasonable to expect that not all ideas will be good, or even work, we welcome all ideas to the table from anyone. Being the PI does not mean I know everything; I am frequently wrong. This should be an environment for researchers of all levels to challenge each other if it means we move closer to the truth. ***Openly disagree with me if you think I am wrong.***

We aim to stick to three types of research projects:

- **Original confirmatory research:** Many of the projects in this lab will be this type of project, as this is your primary way of creating a footprint in psychology. Newer members of the lab will have opportunities to help me with some of my projects to serve as an impetus to develop your interests as (and thus projects) as you become a senior member of the lab.
- **Original exploratory research:** Sometimes, we do not know the droids we’re looking for. That is completely fine, as many big ideas started by accident. This is an exercise in transparency and theory-building that I welcome. This approach involves the researcher investigating topics for which they have no hypotheses, unlike with confirmatory research, but we have a level of objectivity that moves us closer to the truth.
- **Replications:** The cornerstone of improving science. I am always excited to provide a chance to conduct replication studies with the lab, though I expect careful thought in determining what would benefit from replication. Undergrads who are feeling particularly skeptical about anything they read *should* tell me how they feel, and we will do a replication.²

² Replication studies are a valuable tool but should never be treated as anything more than that. We will try our best to answer the questions carefully, which is all we can do. It is okay to voice skepticism of an effect in light of a failure to replicate. **It is not okay to assign value judgments or being flippant about good-faith efforts.**

Culture

Respect: Respect for each other is important. We aim to foster an intellectually inclusive atmosphere that respects the likely well-intentioned perspectives of each member. For scientific discourse, I assume good faith. This has helped me remember the human and guided me toward more critical thinking. It is completely okay if you do not agree with a lab member (or me) on a topic. This should be a moment of dialog to clarify someone's points. It could also be the start of an adversarial collaboration where two "camps" of a research team pit competing hypotheses against each other and let the data provide the answers. One of the few hardline stances that I make as PI is the commitment to respectful dialog between members. I will not tolerate *ad hominem*. Such behavior will result in formal remediation. Continued destructive behavior will result in dismissal.

I expect failures, technical problems, and mistakes. You are a human before you are a scientist. I do not believe in "scolding" my students if they make mistakes. I will not be particularly receptive toward a negative attitude that harms yourself, though. This reservation will be much greater when it impedes the morale of the lab. I also have little patience for carelessness or behavior that could harm the reputation of the lab or evolutionary psychology. Such negative experiences will be handled appropriately through proper channels. I am happy to employ remediation plans and probationary study checks to ensure lab members have the safeguards they need. Your responsibility is to report any problems to me as soon as possible so we can work it out as a team. I further expect you to do what you can to support and encourage your fellow lab members, make sure you have the resources you need to feel supported yourself, and do your part to keep the atmosphere of the laboratory fun and productive. I expect everyone to attend all lab meetings and participate in the discussion.

3. Etiquette and Professional Procedures

Lab Meetings: I expect lab meetings to be an intellectually engaging experience. For the fun to be optimized, I expect everyone to have come prepared with updates on their respective studies. Please have the article read in some capacity before the meeting so that you can contribute to the discussion. If it is your week to choose the article for discussion, please have it chosen ***no later than 12:30pm the following day from when you were assigned (assuming a weekly assignment).***

You will notice that I allow free discussion on issues during lab meetings with a loose structure. We can digress and shoot the shit, but this is predicated upon getting business discussed first. Part of my goal as your mentor is to model professionalism. I expect the same professionalism from you. Lab meetings are only one hour of your week with me, so I expect your undivided attention during that time. Even with digression, it remains important to lab morale to have everyone fully participate in the meeting. I do not want anyone doing homework during the meeting nor do I want completely unrelated sidebars while everyone is there. You must treat everyone with the respect that you want yourself to have. I am not necessarily saying that everyone should be incredibly loquacious in

every meeting about a given topic. I want thoughtful participation in all forms; you can participate thoughtfully in any way that feels comfortable for you (e.g., quietly listening).

Atmosphere: This should go without saying, but I expect each lab member to foster a welcoming atmosphere for anyone interested in science. Science transcends any aspect of our immutable identities, and I strive to ensure that anyone who is passionate can be a member of my lab. You have probably seen a diversity statement on a syllabus. This statement is an equivalence without partisanship. Insert whichever demographic variable you want here before an administrator essentializes your minority status and assumes that you think in a very specific way.

Another aspect of respect in this lab involves respecting each other's time. My efforts toward lab members' endeavors will be commensurate to theirs. That is, I will work quickly on providing feedback on lab tasks when a mentee is working with a similar speed. My expected turnaround for a given task from you will range from a couple of days to a week, depending on what is needed. But I cannot guarantee anything for students if their work does not come to me in a timely manner. **If you would like for me to set specific deadlines for your work, we can devise that plan. This said, I reserve the right to set any deadline if I need to foster professional habits.**

Attitude: I ask that everyone be aware of and communicate your needs. I expect you to work both individually and as part of a team through open and honest communication.

Professionalism: As a mentor, I value boundaries. Being the PI puts me in a unique position of where I have invested considerable time into you. But I need to remember you are my student before you are my future friend. You can share as much or as little with me as you feel comfortable. I will not pry. To this end, I will strive to keep discussion of my own personal life to a superficial level unless I believe it can serve as a teaching moment for your professional development (e.g., anecdotes from my family – Ask me about my grandpa's long con on my grandma to mispronounce words).

Reporting: I am a legally mandated reporter. I am obligated to report incidents disclosed to me that leave me concerned for your health and wellbeing. Share anything with me under the assumption that I will report sufficiently distressing information to the appropriate people (e.g., Department Chair, Title IX, CARES) when I see fit.

Contact Information: There is a GroupMe available of which I am a member. *Do not feel obligated to share your phone number with anyone if you feel uncomfortable.* Your university email is the only piece of contact information that must be available to everyone. One aspect of communication boundaries is that I will not send text messages outside of business hours beyond good news that does not require immediate actions from you (e.g., accepted papers). You have every right to a weekend and quiet hours, starting with your research mentor. There are certainly extenuating circumstances that

supersede this rule. Exceptions include calling and texting members for conference travel to ensure no one misses a flight and finding each other during lab gatherings off-campus.

Weekends: I have a moratorium on responding fully to emails outside of business hours. The best way to send me something is between 08:00 and 18:00 during the work week. My responses during the weekend will be delayed, and I will not go over documents from Friday at 19:00 to Monday at 07:00. The only exception is if abstracts for a conference are coming due or we need to complete revisions on a manuscript quickly. Working on the weekend is often a good way to get ahead; I work on weekends frequently to free up my time during the week. But it is not for everyone, and I should not compel you to work at my pace. Part of my job as a mentor is to make sure you practice good email etiquette with someone who will be far more pleasant with a faux pas compared to future advisors who are (rightfully) more protective of their afterhours time. Even then, I do not think it is a moral imperative to deprive yourself of a weekend.

I expect professionalism. Handshakes are a must, as is respectful language. Your constant inner dialog when representing the lab should be whether your actions reflect a good ambassador for science and evolutionary psychology. Additionally, if you are ever made to feel uncomfortable or unsafe by someone in any professional setting, whether through words or actions, your first priority is to tell me. I will provide the necessary documentation to the appropriate parties.

Another aspect of professionalism is understanding that your presence in scientific literature reflects your mentorship. Students in my lab must consult with me before submitting a publication or conference abstract (and the final presentation) based on research that you have conducted with me. You are my collaborator and APA ethics require all members of a collaborative team to sign off on a project in some capacity.

You are required to have me sign off on any submission you make.

Authorship and author order for projects will be determined based on conversations about individual contributions and commensurate effort. If you would like to include someone on a paper, it needs to be (1) justified through their work and (2) approved by me. I will not tolerate academic bullying or spiteful behavior, which could include leaving someone off a paper whose efforts warrant authorship. *This is not Don Dokken feuding with George Lynch. Leave your drama out of the lab.*

4. Lab Structure

There are three primary levels of participation in the SPHERE Lab. Each level has its own unique responsibilities and commitments. No level is valued higher than any other, though a hierarchy exists based on experience so work can be performed efficiently without overwhelming junior members.

- a. **Principal Investigator:** I am the PI of this lab and thus will have final say in whatever we conduct as a lab. In this role, I implement my own research studies

while assigning you tasks to complete the research goals of our lab. I expect an open dialog with you to ensure this is a positive experience.

b. **Research Managers:** These are typically undergraduate (or post-bac) students who have considerable experience with programming and study implementation. They will also complete similar tasks as Research Assistants when needed. The primary role of Research Managers is to provide me with support for day-to-day operations. I expect you to be capable of training junior colleagues in lab business. My typical policy is to appoint a single Research Manager based on effort and seniority, though I am happy to have multiple managers if needed.

c. **Research Assistants:** These are undergraduate volunteers (or in some cases, students participating for course credit) who provide crucial support to the lab in various capacities. This could include running participants for in-lab studies, coding, data entry, doing literature searches, and so on. Basically, they will keep the lab running. Early stages of your career in this position will involve you assisting me or your senior colleagues with data collection for their studies, which could serve as an initial foray into the publication process. *It is my goal to ensure that everyone is published at least once in my lab, provided they put forth considerable effort in their assignments.*

d. **Friends of the Lab:** Though not an official level of participation in the SPHERE Lab, I am a highly collaborative researcher who works with many graduate students and PhD-level scientists. I may introduce you to these friends as needed for various projects.

5. Work Ethic and Grading

Maintenance of Standards: I expect maintenance of standards throughout your time in the lab. When you are working in the lab for credit, you should have at least one study implemented and collected in a semester to receive an “A” for that semester. You must also maintain a grade-point average of 3.0 or higher while in the lab. If your psychology GPA is much higher than a cumulative that is below this threshold, we can negotiate a remediation plan for you to join lab.

Expectations for Productivity. Your expectations for work will vary, although I have several minimum standards for students to meet. For students starting out on a volunteer basis, you are required to work on a training wheels project with me wherein you will try your best to complete it by the end of the semester. Keep in mind that this minimum standard is fairly easy to complete, with most committed students exceeding it by moving onto a so-called Study 2 in that project or developing their own independent project. Each successive semester will see you gain more autonomy in designing and implementing projects with me when you are participating on a volunteer basis (i.e., you have exhausted taking the number of credits for your degree requirements; see below).

Grading: For students who are participating in the lab for credit in a given semester, the rules are a bit different. You must first participate as a volunteer for a semester before

requesting to participate for course credit. This is to ensure you know whether you like working in the lab, which should provide an easy index for ability to graded work for me in following semesters. Once you are taking credit for this course (PSYC207V or PSYC399H), you are required to run a study for me from conceptualization to completion to receive full credit. I do not have a fully delineated syllabus for these efforts, which means that we cannot have you fall behind from a lack of formal paperwork.

You must design and program a study for implementation and then begin collecting data. Once you enter the data collection phase, you have earned an “A” for the semester. Sometimes, data collection bleeds into subsequent semesters based on participant pool constraints; that should not impede your ability to receive a high grade. You will receive a grade below an “A” if you do not meet that bare minimum requirement. I reserve the right to assign you a lower grade based on what I view as a lack of effort. There is no discussion on this, as I try to keep every student on-track with lab meetings each week. The onus is on *you* for not earning an “A” for participating in the lab. There are alternate paths to receiving an “A” in my course (e.g., serving as a primary mentor to a new student, managing projects); we can determine the best route forward for each student. If you are experiencing an emergency or crisis during this semester, it is your responsibility to be transparent about this fact. You do not need to share every detail with me (sometimes, it’s better not to do that), but I should know that you are not in the best place and should give you some latitude. This compassion is incumbent on transparency because I am not a mind-reader. Please share when you need help.

Dismissal: In the exceedingly rare instance that I need to dismiss a student from the SPHERE Lab, there will be a clearly delineated remediation process before any final decisions are made. Students will be notified ahead of time of issues with the hopes that a meeting would correct them without formal sanctions. If problems persist, I reserve the right to develop a remediation plan to keep you on-task with checkpoints and deadlines. This process will differ from student-to-student, so simply try your best with what you have available at a given time in all lab-based endeavors. Nonetheless, some transgressions are grounds for dismissal. Students who do not reach any milestones in a semester will be subject to an appeals process to see if they should remain in the lab. Research misconduct (e.g., falsification, fabrication, plagiarism) are grounds for immediate dismissal upon their discovery. Cases of interpersonal problems in the lab will be handled through private meetings between me and all parties involved to ensure due process. I reserve the right to dismiss a student from the lab whose conduct has become especially egregious and a liability to proper functioning.

6. Time Commitments

Weekly Duties: Members of the SPHERE Lab are expected to commit to the number of hours for which they have signed up, either running participants in the lab, or through some other form of work (e.g., programming, writing IRBs). Duties will vary from week-to-week, but the commitment you made during the semester should determine your

overall hours at the end of it. There are also weekly lab meetings of which I expect lab members to be part. If you are unable to meet me during a meeting time, we must set up an alternate time for checking in with me.

Deadlines: I understand that you are a volunteer. You have other academic commitments and likely a job. To this end, I strongly encourage you to set manageable deadlines for yourself with me. For publications, I expect a degree of speed with writing and revising, though I do not expect you to work at my speed. Please check in with me if you cannot reach the predetermined deadline so we can make it work for you. **To submit an abstract for a conference, it is completely unacceptable to send me the first draft on the last day of the window for submission.** You must have the first draft submitted to me at least three weeks before the deadline so that we can do the necessary back-and-forth on drafts. Once I give thorough comments on the first (or sometimes second) draft, I expect you to provide me with quick revisions so that you may submit it at least a few days before the deadline. This is to prevent anxiety and avoid problems typical of last-minute submissions (e.g., down servers). My overarching lesson for you is to realize that getting things done ahead of schedule will reduce your anxiety for the inevitable glitches that are bound to happen when everyone else submits things at 11:59pm.

7. Capstone Expectations

Honors Theses: I am open to taking honors students in the SPHERE Lab. Choosing to do your thesis with me is common during your sophomore or junior year. Being my honors student requires a time commitment (e.g., 6 hours of PSYC 399V) and an ability to meet deadlines. We will develop a concrete thesis topic by the end of your first semester. The sooner you develop this idea, the easier it will be to complete the project.

I expect you to be self-sufficient in getting the paperwork in order during that period. This can be done easily by attending to [Honors College website to see the appropriate forms](#) for each step in the process (i.e., Forms A, B, and C). If you are graduating in the spring of your senior year, you must submit Form A to the Honors College by the deadline on the website during Spring of your junior year (i.e., one year in advance). Apply everything with one more forward if you are graduating as a third-semester senior in Fall. An initial draft of your honors thesis is due to me by the start of your junior year. Consider this draft to be Form A for the Honors College. **You must be in the lab for at least two semesters before I agree to chair your honors thesis.**

I expect the first draft of your honors thesis to be written as an APA manuscript like what you may have done during your research methods class. Write this draft in the future tense and with no results section, because you will be conducting the study at a later date. This will then serve as the base document for the final draft that should ostensibly be publication-ready following your defense, provided you make necessary changes recommended by your committee. I have many templates laid out in my own published work for you to follow, and we will have constant feedback in the writing process. Your

effort and humility will go a long way in this writing process. Take solace in your mentor saying that *the first draft will suck*. I have been conducting psychological research since 2012, and the first drafts of most manuscript I write (especially on a topic that is new to me) is *usually the suckiest of suck*. This is how you grow.

I will not set you up to fail in any stage of the process as long as we collaborate and grow together. But you must actually try to put forth effort and not rely on an attitude that I will fix it for you all the time; that is unacceptable, and we will have a conversation about that if it happens. If the first draft of your thesis proposal is not a full draft (albeit an imperfect one), I reserve the right to employ remediation. This means you must have a thought-out introduction and methods. It is unprofessional to submit a half-written document, even when you email me to say that you know it “needs some work.”

This proposal (i.e., Form A) should be a literature review for at least one experiment. If we find something interesting that is worth exploring as additional studies for your thesis, a dialog can happen to determine the appropriate steps. That said, I do not think it is wise to contract ourselves to a study that we may not want to run in light of previous studies that yielded nothing to justify subsequent studies. A thesis for the Honors College only requires a single study. Your thesis project needs to have *at least one experimental variable*, or a variable that can be manipulated by a researcher. This is a decision to ensure students have an appreciation of testing for causality through temporal precedence. An additional requirement is the inclusion of at least one proposed moderating variable (i.e., testing for statistical interactions). This moderator can either be another experimental variable (e.g., male vs. female target faces) or it can be non-experimental (e.g., personality traits, participant sex, participant ethnicity).

Inclusion of a moderator is designed for you to appreciate the complexity of human behavior while providing you the opportunity to develop additional hypotheses. It is certainly possible to have an honors thesis that has no experimental variables in it, but such an allowance from me would require considerable preparation and thought from a student with strong theoretical, and preferably empirical, justification for why conducting a non-experimental study is necessary (e.g., scale development). My only hardline stance on which I will not budge is if you seek to conduct a systematic review (not empirical), meta-analysis (takes too long), or something purely qualitative (beyond my ken).

The proposed study should be completed by the end of your junior year (extenuating circumstances apply). You must have your thesis defended *at least one month* before you graduate, with the final draft of your thesis delivered to your committee members one week in advance as a courtesy. Like with conference abstracts, this approach should reduce anxiety with getting done on time. This is also to show respect for your committee’s time because many other labs will likely be defending right before the deadline. Our lab does not contribute to that backlog. Committee members will be chosen as a collaboration of thinking based on who would work well with me and make less

work for you. Aside from me, you must choose one other person in the Department of Psychological Science for your committee and someone not in the Department.

Letters of Recommendation: I am happy to write a letter of recommendation. Follow the guidelines posted on my website in the Excel Spreadsheet you can download on my “Contact” page. You must ask me for a *positive letter of recommendation* to ensure that I provide a positive recommendation for you. Without asking for that aspect of the letter, it would be legally possible for a referee to write something negative. Please make sure to ask me at least one month in advance to ensure that I have adequate time to prepare a thoughtful letter without waiting until the last minute.

8. Lab Tools and Tech

We use a variety of different tools to run the lab and stay connected. Much of our work together is through the Qualtrics platform, though I am open to any other route of data collection that you may suggest. In addition to our online tools, we have opportunities to use behavioral measures, which we determine as a lab what to use. I am also versed in statistical software, though I do not expect my undergraduates to use this software unless they are especially interested in learning. I use SPSS and Excel. If you would like to learn R, I will arrange for you to discuss this with a colleague.

Some other things that might be needed are [OSF](#), [OrcID](#), and [Google Scholar](#) accounts. If you are looking to enter graduate training, I encourage you to get an academic Twitter account and follow me ([@ExtravertedFace](#)). This is a new route that will help you gain attention from prospective advisors and a chance to see how these prospective advisors engage junior researchers on the site. I will also tag you in relevant posts for professional development or research ideas. Our Listserv has an additional list of interesting accounts to follow as junior researchers, both to learn how to engage people professionally and what you should not do online. Several accounts I have listed are those of people with whom I disagree or view as unprofessional; it is important to develop a plurality of thought from these competing perspectives.

It is also important that we maintain a nice website (see above for the URL). Please send me a picture and short bio for the “People” page on the website. Your picture should be professional, as this is your opportunity to create an online footprint to show you mean business. I would also recommend that you use an email signature for your UA account. It could be as simple as providing your name and relevant contact information or you can provide your lab affiliation, major, or other pieces of information to ensure people are aware of who you are. I would simply recommend that you do not make your signature too long and cumbersome, as it is important not to inundate someone with details about you beyond what is directly germane to the situation.

9. Open Science

We are committed to open science practices. This means that we post data, materials, and

code on the Open Science Framework for transparency with the public. This provides a chance to improve our reputation in the scientific field beyond our already high-quality research. This is the way of the future, and I expect you to enter graduate training understanding why this is necessary. When feasible, we will also pre-register our studies.

Part of our commitment to open science is developing an atmosphere of respect that assumes good faith of most researchers. Despite the possibility of fraud existing (it does), most researchers were explicitly trained to do the right thing. It is unacceptable for our lab to have a reputation of nasty or toxic behaviors toward other labs, especially when that reputation is “earned” from disrespecting others in professional settings. We can have friendly rivalries with competing hypotheses. *Do not become hostile.* None of you are trained enough to place a strong value judgment on most scientific findings to conclude that a large swath of the literature bullshit (we will talk about exceptions). I do not feel confident in my own ability to make those judgments myself. You are not Harry Houdini, and most researchers are not fake psychics needing to be smoked out. Most people in this field are honest and none of our discussions on possible heterogeneity in effects will center around flaws in their character or abilities as a scientist.

10. Public Engagement

We are committed to ensuring open access to our work with the public. Part of this commitment is research that can impact society. It is important to communicate science to non-academic audiences. I strive to mentor students in using digestible language for a lay audience that does not sacrifice scientific precision.

This transparency with the lay public is our way of returning to the taxpayers what they are investing in us. We do this by writing press releases, communicating with the press, and Twitter. I am also committed to sharing your achievements with the department and university for more attention.

11. The PI’s Role

As the PI, I will do everything that I can to help you envision, implement, and publish your studies. I am invested in your career development, whatever your goals may be. You can expect me to make sure that the lab has opportunities for research and that you get whatever you need to succeed. We will work together in attracting grant moneys for bigger projects and I am constantly looking for new ways to keep the lab funded. I will work hard to help you prepare for all your personal milestones. You can expect me to nominate you for awards, provide support at conferences, and write you letters of recommendation. We will share in your successes and failures, growing together as a research team. My hope is to have you as a lifelong collaborator.

12. Recommended Authors

Part of evolutionary psychology is grasping on the overarching theory about adaptive function of human behavior and cognition. Doing so involves reading publications from the wide range of scholars in our field. Below is a list of recommended readings that would serve as a good primer before coming into the lab. Please read at least a few of these papers (go to Google Scholar) before meeting with me for the first time.

Brown, M., & Sacco, D. F. (2018). Put a (limbal) ring on it: Women perceive men's limbal rings as a health cue in short-term mating domains. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 44, 80-91.

Brown, M., Sacco, D. F., Barbaro, N., & Drea, K. M. (2022). Contextual factors that heighten interest in coalitional alliances with men possessing formidable facial structures. *Evolution and Human Behavior*, 43, 275-283.

Buss, D. M., & Schmitt, D. P. (1993). Sexual Strategies Theory: An evolutionary perspective on human mating. *Psychological Review*, 100, 204-232.

Gangestad, S. W., Garver-Apgar, C. E., Simpson, J. A., & Cousins, A. J. (2007). Changes in women's mate preferences across the ovulatory cycle. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 92, 151–163.

Kenrick, D. T., Griskevicius, V., Neuberg, S. L., & Schaller, M. (2010). Renovating the pyramid of needs: Contemporary extensions built upon ancient foundations. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 5, 292-314.

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