

Protocol for switching labs:

Switching Lab Initiated from Student:

If students have issues in communicating with their mentors, the first step is to consult Head Graduate Advisor (HGA).

- 1) When students decide to switch the lab, students must contact the Head Graduate Advisor (HGA) and the program Equity Advisor as early as possible before they make arrangements to leave a thesis lab. This is to ensure the student understands the potential liabilities of the transition, including issues obtaining a degree, tuition support, stipends, health insurance and potentially visa status.
- 2) HGA should meet with students to remind the policy and answer any concerns from students. In addition, the HGA should consult with the program Equity Advisor. If a student in HGA's laboratory needs to switch the lab, the Chair or another member of the Executive Committee should serve the role of HGA to provide the consultations to student.
- 3) HGA (or Chair) should inform all executive committee members about student's status and provide the progress report regarding student's search of a new lab.
- 4) During student's search for a new mentor, it is the responsibility of student's original PI to fund the student's stipend and tuition until the end of the current semester or summer session.
- 5) Once a student finds and transitions to a new lab, both student and the new PI mentor will sign an agreement form in which the PI's responsibility, including student's funding, will be stated in detail. If the PI does not adhere to this policy, the PI will be suspended to accept new students from the Graduate Group for 3 years.
- 6) If the student requires more than one semester to find a new mentor, and a potentially new mentor requires the student to work in the lab on a trial basis before the decision to accept the student into the lab, the program will provide funding support.
- 7) If the student needs more than one semester (or summer session) to find a new lab, or if the student needs to work in a second laboratory on a trial basis, then the program executive committee will decide on funding from the program on a case-by-case basis. **The committee will determine a plan that does not conflict with the student's original admission offer letter from the program and also follows campus policies and current union contracts.**

Switching Lab Initiated from PI:

The PI should provide students with syllabus for the research course (299), in which the specific requirement should be clearly stated. If, based on the existing evidence (thus the students do not meet the requirements stated in syllabus), the PI believe that the student is unlikely to be successful in the PI's lab, the following step should be taken.

- 1) The PI should reach out to HGA and GSAO (graduate student affairs officer) to alert them that the student has not been making sufficient progress toward their degree. HGA and GSAO could send a warning letter to the student.
- 2) At this time, the PI should make sure the student is aware of the basic expectations required of them to remain in the lab. The PI should maintain a written record of what was shared with the student and should make sure that it has been discussed with the student in a meeting and via email. The PI should cc the GSAO in the email. So GSAO can place a record in the student's file. (Graduate Division will ask that the expectations and the discussion be clearly stated. Thus, the PI is encouraged to discuss with this step with HGA and GSAO).
- 3) If the student still does not meet the basic expectations, the PI should contact HGA and GSAO before dismissing the student. There are two situations. First, the student's background does not fit into the PI's expertise. Thus, despite the hard work from the student, the possibility of completing the degree in the PI's lab is low. In this case, the student should search for a new lab that fit better to the student's background. Second, the student does not show required work ethic. In this case, the PI should provide documentations of the lab policy that the student does not adhere (such as missing the group meeting and the reports). If HGA agrees with the PI's assessment, they can submit a recommendation to the Graduate Division that the student to be placed on probation in the coming semester.