



Andrade Lab Statement of Values & Commitments

Version 1. August 2021

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Shared Values

We believe that a supportive, inclusive environment based on mutual respect, with a commitment to cooperation and constructive, thoughtful criticism, promotes the development of outstanding scientists and rigorous science.

Commitments

We recognize the challenges inherent in maintaining a supportive, empathetic environment that also supports the careful assessment of ideas and inferences, and commit to considering this as we learn how to productively deliver critiques, and how to receive them.

We recognize that science is connected to the scientist, and for many people, to feelings of self-worth. We commit to ensuring we balance fair critique of the science with encouragement and support of the scientist.

We affirm that the diverse identities (e.g., racial, gender, ethnic), interests, sexual orientations, socio-economic contexts, cultures, belief systems, family situations, and career aspirations among lab members can create a rich intellectual environment. We recognize that we will benefit from this diversity only if we all work to actively foster a sense of belonging for all personnel by seeking out and valuing these diverse perspectives. We commit to showing valuation of the ideas of the others when we listen and absorb their ideas, and consider how those ideas may change our own assumptions, approach to science, inter-personal interactions, or lab operations and processes.

Aggression (including [micro-aggressions](#)), bullying, and harassment are not welcome in any aspect of our interactions. We commit to addressing inappropriate behaviour and language in the moment, regardless of whether or not the person who is the object is present.

We commit to apologizing for and learning from indications that our behaviour has caused negative impacts on others. This requires learning how to center the experiences of others rather than our own discomfort.

We commit to actively engaging in learning opportunities to broaden our understanding of equity, diversity, inclusion, belonging, and accessibility, and to ensuring that our professional conduct reflects these University-wide commitments.

We commit to the respectful stewardship of the lands on which we work, and the organisms on that land. We will learn about the history of any lands on which we conduct field work and ensure we understand our treaty obligations, or whether we work on unceded lands. Whenever possible, we will seek permission for our use of the land from the Indigenous peoples who are, or were, local land-holders (independent of any permits required by the local government).

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Additional commitments specific to Professor Andrade

I commit to centring the importance of work-life balance and mental health for all lab personnel, including myself.

I will encourage and support the establishment of healthy boundaries in terms of time and emotional energy spent on research and related activities, and will make my own boundaries clear.

I will recognize, value and support the diverse career aspirations of personnel in the lab, and, where possible, support the development of competencies and experiences that will increase their chances of reaching their goals, while also ensuring they meet the requirements of their programs.

Processes & Actions related to this statement

- This statement will be reviewed each year with all research group members.
- Once each year, an anonymous **lab climate survey** will be circulated to allow the surfacing of issues or concerns. Professor Andrade will discuss the generalized results of the survey with the lab, but will not share identifying specifics of any issues raised there.
- All individuals seeking to join the lab will be asked to confirm their review of this statement.
- Learning opportunities related to equity, diversity, inclusion, belonging and accessibility will be shared in lab meetings.
- At least one lab meeting per term will focus on research related to data or best practices on inclusion or accessibility in science or related professional contexts. All lab personnel will be invited to this meeting (including undergraduate lab assistants).
- Lab personnel will be invited to share personal pronouns in lab meetings and/or in their website description if they so wish.
- Opportunities for undergraduate placements in the lab will be advertised through the career-learning portal, rather than through word-of-mouth connections, and offers will follow a standardized interview process. Assessment of applications will consider the following:
 - GPA will be considered only as an indicator of the ability to balance multiple competing demands, and only if there is a consistent pattern of academic challenges
 - Every term, some undergraduate placements will be available that compensate workers through work-study contracts, and/or research course-credits
 - Undergraduate volunteers who become adept at lab work will be offered priority for a work-study or other paid position as soon as such positions become available
- Pre-planned opportunities for graduate or post-doctoral positions will be advertised on the lab website and through professional societies

Addressing violations of lab values & commitments

It is a shared goal to address issues in a timely and empathetic way in order to:

1. reduce the impact on the affected person and provide supports to that person as needed.
2. provide learning opportunities regarding professional, respectful behaviour in the lab.
3. support healthy, productive working relationships among lab members.

Knowledge of, or experience with inappropriate behaviour or language could be addressed by any lab member in one of several ways:

1. speaking up in the moment to explicitly state why the behaviour or speech can cause harm. Referencing our shared lab values may be one useful approach. Some advice for productive ways to intervene is available in these sources: [Sue et al 2019](#) or [Terry 2020](#), [Washington et al 2020](#).
2. speaking to the person involved after the fact to describe how the incident can negatively affect others in the lab, and why it contravenes our lab values. If taking this route, recognize that a private conversation about a public aggression may leave the impacted person feeling unsupported.
3. communicate the details of the incident to Professor Andrade, who can then share possible next steps with the person who has been impacted, and discuss the incident with the person who may have contravened our lab values. This step could also be taken if approaches (1) or (2) do not result in an apology.
4. seek advice from one of the University's resources for counseling and conflict resolution (below)

University Counselling & Conflict resolution resources

Lab members should also be aware of the following University supports for conflict resolution and confidential advising on related issues.

- [University of Toronto Graduate Students' Union](#)
- [Health and Wellness Peer Support](#)
- [SGS GradHub](#)
- [Office of the Ombudsperson](#)

Document history:

Version 1 was drafted in August 2021 by Maydianne Andrade with input from Luciana Baruffaldi, Charmaine Condy, Catherine Scott, Lenka Sentenská, Nishant Singh, and Laini Taylor.