

What to do if something's wrong. 08/11/15

I anticipate that research in the group will be a mostly positive experience with ups and downs along the way. There will be some frustrating times. However some people can feel things that deserve special attention:

If you have feelings of being trapped,
feelings of despair,
feelings of depression,
think you're being abused in any way,
have severe money problems,
have trouble at home,
think your having trouble with drugs or alcohol,
please note that there are resources available at OSU to help you.

What are the resources for students and postdocs at OSU?

1. Your advisor.

I know that I push you hard, but I am also your single biggest advocate here, and I take that job very seriously. We have a great track record of doing well at OSU and securing competitive postdocs and jobs. This is largely because of your hard work and dedication, but also because I'm an enthusiastic supporter. Even if you think I'm being unreasonable, I still try to have your best interest in mind. If something is wrong, either personal or professional, and this is interfering with your ability to work and be successful, I want you to let me know. My door is always open for this, it is fine to discuss at weekly meetings, and is especially appropriate at the 6-month meeting. It's okay to tell me if you think I'm doing something wrong.

2. Your coworkers.

Probably the people with the best insight into your situation and your relationship with your advisor are your lab coworkers. Older students are likely to have a lot of insight into the workings of the group, and how things are managed. Go to them with concerns. However, be aware that they may not see the "bigger picture" that your advisor sees (or thinks he sees).

3. The department chair.

If there is a conflict between you and someone in the department (including your advisor) the department chair is a resource for you. Set up a meeting by email. Note that the department chair's time is limited so

only serious matters should be brought to his/her attention. The department chair is charged with solving personality conflicts in the chemistry department such that the unit runs smoothly. You should also consider that the department chair is a chemistry professor, and is a colleague of your advisor, so the chair may go to the advisor if a complaint is raised.

4. Your committee, especially your GCR.

Your committee should give you advice, and most committees are able to provide a collective body of experience that can be quite valuable. However, many committee members are not fully up-to-speed with student progress. The GCR is a representative of the graduate school, and they are primarily charged with watching for fairness in committee proceedings. You can approach your GCR with concerns about your advisor, your committee, the department, or your department chair. The GCR is an OSU faculty member, and they have some (albeit limited) power to intervene or escalate serious issues up the chain of command.

5. The Dean of the Graduate School (currently Prof. Brenda McComb).
300 Kerr Admin. 7-4881

You can make an appointment with the graduate school, whose members report to Dean McComb. She may be able to meet with you depending on the circumstances. In the past, she has been involved with various serious issues that have affected our department. I personally find her to be very fair, involved, and particularly interested in shielding students from unfair practices. She is unlikely to prioritize loyalty to a faculty member above helping a student.

6. Student Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS).
500 Snell Hall 7-2131

CAPS is staffed with psychologists, counselors, and social workers that help students with a variety of concerns. They are particularly valuable to students who experience or have questions about mental health concerns. What you tell them is completely confidential.

7. OSU Police

Campus Non Emergency:	7-3010
Campus Emergency:	7-7000
Corvallis Police Emergency:	911