

IMPACT Lab Policy

Acknowledgement

This document was inspired by the lab policy of the Emotion and Social Cognition Lab at the California Institute of Technology and the Social Computation Representation And Prediction Laboratory at Dartmouth College. This document is work in progress - please feel free to let Chujun know if you have any feedback and ideas on improving the lab policy.

Lab Philosophy - RHO ρ

R - respect

Treat others the way you want to be treated. Understand that individuals are different, having different habits and ways of thinking. Respect others even if you do not agree with them. It is also important to respect yourself. Be proud of your strengths, use them to help other people, and accept your weakness. Whenever you feel disrespected, speak up.

If you face or observe any forms of discrimination (e.g., based on race, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, medical condition and disability, mental health, marital status, socioeconomic status) or any forms of harassment (e.g., gestural, verbal, written, physical including sexual and aggressive harassment), let Chujun know immediately.

H - honesty

Conduct research honestly and rigorously. Never fabricate (e.g., make up data), falsify (e.g., change the data), or plagiarize (e.g., copy what others wrote). Copy-pasting what you wrote in your own prior publications and using it in another new publication also counts as plagiarism. Any forms of research misconduct will be destructive to the field, the public, and the entire career of yourself and others who work with you.

Conduct research carefully. Develop a clear plan for your research question, hypotheses, procedures, and analyses before you start carrying out the research. Report your results truthfully and never cherry-pick. Pay particular attention to your code, add clear comments, test it section-by-section, and clearly document your workflow and progress. If you make a mistake, do not panic, let Chujun know, and we will correct it and learn from it together.

O - openness

Your voice is valuable and unique. Always feel free to ask questions if there is anything that is unclear to you, speak up if you have a different perspective, and provide constructive feedback whenever you can. Keep an open mind as you receive constructive feedback from others and encounter different research ideas and approaches – look at them from a positive perspective.

If you are struggling with personal or professional issues, be open to seeking help. Feel free to talk to Chujun and others in the lab. The process of verbally describing a difficult problem to others will in itself help you think about the problem more clearly from a different perspective.

General Lab Policies

Safety and Health

Your physical and mental health is always your priority.

Work Hours

In-person working in the lab is required. Working hours are flexible. If you are an early person, you may start the day earlier and wrap up earlier; if you are a night owl, you may start the day later and wrap up later. For lab managers / research staff, you are expected to align your in-lab working hours more closely with regular business hours (e.g., start from 9am or 10am) and expect to be present in the lab for 7 working-hours (excluding lunch breaks) per weekday.

Please aim to complete research goals efficiently. Stay focused when you work. You may find it helpful to work on one task at a time and turn off your notifications (e.g., phones, social media, emails). If you are stuck at a problem for a few hours, take a short break - it will help you think.

Time Management

Good time management is key to achieving your research goals. Some strategies you might find helpful include writing down your action items for a range of time scales – to-do list for the day, tasks for the month, and aims for the semester. It might be difficult to estimate how much time you need to complete a task so don't feel discouraged if you need to adjust your plan often or if you have not achieved the goals you have planned.

Writing down executable tasks also help with not forgetting urgent tasks (e.g., deadlines) and realizing how much you have accomplished when you look back. If a goal is big (e.g., completing data analysis or a manuscript), break it down (e.g., analysis for hypothesis 1, 2, 3, etc.; writing different sections of the introduction, such as motivation, literature review, existing challenge, present research overview, etc.). If a goal has a deadline (or self-set deadline), start with the deadline and plan backwards to see when you need to accomplish each component of the goal.

There are also strategies for using your time more efficiently every day, such as starting your day with working on the most challenging and important task (e.g., research, such as analyzing data or reading papers), then less important but urgent tasks (e.g., classes, such as homework), and finally less important and not urgent tasks (e.g., checking emails, TA related tasks). It may help to end your day by reviewing your accomplished goals today and your to-do list for tomorrow.

Don't feel discouraged if you find that you have not accomplished much in some days or some weeks. People's productivity fluctuates from time to time, and some of the most seemingly unproductive periods may turn out to be the most productive and necessary periods (e.g., when you are slowly learning new topics or methods). If you feel uncertain or unhappy about your research productivity, talk to Chujun.

Deadlines

As mentioned above, if you have a deadline, please plan ahead (i.e., break it down into small tasks and use backwards planning to identify the date by which each task should be completed) so that you are not rushing at the last minute. If your deadlines require input from others (e.g., obtaining feedback on a manuscript), please notify others ahead of time.

Please notify Chujun one to two months ahead if your deadline requires back-and-forth revisions between you and Chujun, such as manuscript submission and revision, statements for grad school/postdoc/faculty application, fellowship and grant submission, etc. Please notify Chujun two weeks ahead if your deadline does not require a lot of work, such as providing feedback on conference submissions, filling out paperwork, etc.

One-on-one Meetings

Each lab member will meet with Chujun one-on-one weekly for 1 hour. These meetings are for each lab member to have guaranteed, undivided attention from Chujun. They are an opportunity for you to update Chujun with research progress, make plans for next steps, discuss obstacles, talk about project ideas, your short-term and long-term goals, and any other personal and professional issues that you would like to chat about including mental health.

To facilitate a more efficient and organized one-on-one meeting, please document your weekly progress and plans. This document does not need to be formal - just list the content in bullet points. You will open this document when you meet with Chujun to go over what you have done in the past week together. Before the end of the meeting, you will add plans for next week to this document with Chujun. This weekly update could be the same as your goal document.

Do not skip these meetings even if you have not made much progress in a given week. These meetings will be a great opportunity to discuss the obstacles preventing your from making progress and potential solutions. If you don't have much to discuss for a given week, you could keep the meeting short.

Lab Meetings

Lab meetings will be held once a week for 1.5 hours. These meetings are for lab members to present their research ideas or/and data and receive constructive feedback. Each senior lab member (i.e., postdocs, grad students, visiting grad students) is expected to present at least once per academic semester. We will also discuss recent papers and invite speakers from other labs to present at our lab meetings. Lab meetings are mandatory. Please show up promptly.

The lab shares space with other labs, who use the same conference area within the lab space for their lab meetings. Lab members in the IMPACT Lab are not expected to attend these lab meetings. You can feel free to wear noise-cancelling headphones to stay focused as you continue to work in the open space while the other lab is having their lab meetings.

To facilitate bonding between lab members and encourage better mental health, Chujun will also organize non-work-related social events. These may include lab lunches and dinners, group sports such as hiking, visits to fun places such as zoos and museums, etc. Please let Chujun know your preferences so that we can make sure social events are inclusive, taking each individual's preferences into account. Social events are not mandatory, but you are encouraged to participate.

Communication

The official language for communication in the lab is English. Channels for communication in the lab include in-person discussions, email, and Google calendar. If you have urgent issues to communicate with Chujun, knock on her office door (Uris 812) or email her.

In addition to the meetings mentioned above, if you would like to schedule more time to discuss certain issues/projects/ideas with Chujun, please feel free to let her know in-person or through email anytime.

Lab Maintenance

To ensure the security of personal belonging, equipment, and human subjects' information in the lab, please close exterior doors when no one is in the lab. For the security of electronically stored human subject's information, be cautious of scam that could compromise our electronic infrastructure such as phishing emails and suspicious websites. In particular, Chujun, or any other faculty and staff members will never send you emails with urgent requests for help.

Please keep the lab space tidy and clean. Keep items on your own desk and those in the common lab space organized. Please dispose of food waste and associated detritus to the trash cans outside promptly. Try not to spill liquid or food on the floor; if you do, please clean up promptly. Please treat lab equipment and furniture with care.

Most of your lab mates will be working in the open lab space, which is sensitive to noise. Please be cautious of the noise you may be producing. Use a headphone if you need to listen to audio in the lab.

Money

The lab is funded by Chujun's startup fund. If you would like to purchase research-related products or services, contact Chujun before making any purchases. Since there is limited startup fund and there are usually an abundant of suppliers providing the same products or services that you would like, please conduct diligent research to identify the supplier that offers the best possible price.

After any work-related purchases, remember to keep the receipt: if electronic, save it; if physical, take the receipt and keep a photo record of it.

Travel

The lab will support every lab member to travel to one conference per year when they are presenting research from the lab. The main conferences the lab engages in are SPSP (Society for Personality and Social Psychology), SANS (Social Affective Neuroscience Society), PMIG/SESP (Person Memory Interest Group and Society of Experimental Social Psychology). Attending conferences is important for your career development, helping you keep track of the most recent research topics and approaches and providing you with the opportunity to build connections with other researchers in the field.

For conference travel, the lab will cover expenses for flight tickets, ground transportation, conference membership and registration, and lodging. Meals are not covered. Please conduct diligent research to keep costs low, such as booking flights and lodging two months in advance, comparing different airlines and airports (e.g., check out Expedia), different options of ground transportation (e.g., bus, train, Uber, Lyft), and sharing lodging with others (e.g., share hostel rooms, hotel rooms, or Airbnb rooms).

If you are presenting at the conference, please apply for travel grants from the department or/and the conference organizer. These grants will be helpful additions to your CV and help with the funding situation of the lab.

Holidays and Sick Leaves

All lab members, including postdocs, lab managers / research staff, grad students, and visiting scholars enjoy holidays following the university calendar (<https://humanresources.columbia.edu/holidays>). In addition, lab members enjoy 3 personal days per year offered by the University, and 7 extra vacation days per year offered by Chujun.

To use these days, lab members need to notify Chujun in person or via email at least two weeks ahead. Lab members are free to use these days on separate occasions or use them accumulatively together with the weekends to get a two-week vacation. If you are using these days before important deadlines (e.g., grant deadlines for proposals relevant to the projects you are leading), please plan ahead to wrap up necessary work before you take off.

The lab complies with the University policy to provide all lab members the ability to accrue up to a maximum of 56 hours per year (<https://universitypolicies.columbia.edu/content/new-york-safe-and-sick-leave-policy>). Where the need for safe/sick time is foreseeable, please notify Chujun at least one week in advance; where the need for safe/sick time is not foreseeable, please notify Chujun as soon as practicable.

Professional Relationships

Chujun hopes everyone in the lab can feel friendly and supportive. However, romantic relationships between lab members and with members from other closely collaborating labs in the department are prohibited. Unfortunately, romance does not last as long as your intellectual ambition does – so let's keep it professional at the workplace.

When You Depart

Science advances quickly but each specific project may take a year or more to complete (i.e., producing a preprint). To protect you, Chujun, and other collaborators' creativity and efforts, and the funding Chujun invested in you and your project, if you depart the lab before you are able to complete your projects, please keep the corresponding project ideas, design details, data, and code strictly within the IMPACT Lab.

Once we wrap up your projects – at least completing most data collection and analyses, we are more than happy to share findings with the scientific community and the public through preprints, presentations, and open-sourced materials on the Open Science Framework.

If you foresee that you would not be able to wrap up a project you led within 2 years of your departure or that you are no longer interested in or have the bandwidth to wrap up the project, Chujun will involve other members of the lab to help push it to fruition. In this case, all members contributing to the project will openly discuss authorship of the paper together, and determine authorship based on the guidelines specified in the following sections.

All projects conducted and funded within the lab should be considered assets of the IMPACT Lab, not your personal assets. If your new collaborators (e.g., your new supervisor) are interested in conducting projects building on these projects – i.e., using some of the project designs, data, or code before the project is public as a preprint and the materials are publicly shared via Open Science Framework, please notify Chujun. Chujun will decide whether to proceed.

Role-Specific Expectations

Postdoctoral Scholars

Postdoctoral training is key to pursuing an academic career. Postdocs in the lab can expect to receive training in further developing their own research program / identity, learn new research approaches that are different from what they used in grad school and prior training, and connect with other researchers who share similar research interests as them.

Postdocs are expected to be passionate about the lab's research directions (i.e., naturalistic person perception) and have expertise (from grad school training) that is complementary to those of the lab. Postdocs will discuss with Chujun to identify research projects that applies their expertise to advance the lab's directions. Postdocs are expected to wrap up their grad school work before joining the lab. Postdocs are expected to lead 3-4 projects at a time and wrap up around 2 papers (publications or preprint) per year (at least 5 papers in 3 years).

As the most senior members in the lab other than Chujun, postdocs are expected to share their knowledge with the lab and set a good example for others. This may be implemented through sharing opinions in lab meetings, providing feedback on manuscripts and proposals, and offering help when other lab members encounter obstacles. Postdocs are not expected to mentor junior lab members on specific projects. Postdocs may mentor undergraduate RAs if their projects require RAs and if they prefer.

Postdocs can count on Chujun to provide extensive support for your career development. Chujun will be happy to work with you on your application materials, writing recommendation letters, workshopping your interviews and job talks, guiding you through the job negotiation processes, connecting you with other researchers through research collaborations and conferences, and supporting you for any award and grant applications that you would like to pursue.

Lab Managers/ Research Staff

Lab managers/ research staff are positions for students who intend to pursue grad schools in the near future and who aim to accumulate research experiences and publications. Lab managers / research staff in the lab can expect to receive training in research methods, including how to conceptualize research questions and designs, how to conduct research in a rigorous way, how to program in different languages and perform statistical analyses, and how to present findings verbally and in written manuscripts. They can expect to lead research projects and produce publications where they are the first author.

Lab managers/ research staff are expected to be passionate about the lab's research directions (i.e., naturalistic person perception) and have solid background in computational methods (JavaScript, R, Python). They will work closely with Chujun, where Chujun will conceptualize the specific research direction and basic design, and then they will work as the lead to contribute to every step of the research process and carry the research project from start to end under Chujun's supervision. Lab managers/ research staff are expected to lead 2-3 projects at a time and wrap up at least one paper (publication or preprint) per year.

Lab managers/ research staff can count on Chujun to provide extensive support for your career development. Chujun will be happy to help you identify your research direction for grad school, work with you on your grad school application materials, write recommendation letters for you, and help you workshop your interviews.

Graduate Students

Graduate school is one of the most critical periods for one's academic career. For most grad students, it is the first time they transit from "reading a book" (e.g., learning what prior research has found) to "writing a book" (e.g., conducting their own research to advance psychological science) – unless you are already a lab manager from Chujun's lab! It is an exciting time to explore one's passions, learn skills, and build connections.

Grad students in the lab can expect to receive training in research methods, including how to conceptualize research questions and designs, how to conduct research in a rigorous way, how to program in different languages and perform statistical analyses, and how to present findings verbally and in written manuscripts. The goal is to figure out your own research passions/identity and grow towards an independent researcher.

Grad students can also expect to receive training in important soft skills that will benefit your career in the long run. This includes problem solving skills (e.g., you may find results that are

unexpected and need to figure out why), resilience (e.g., you will encounter rejections but will also learn to embrace them), critical thinking skills (e.g., even published work has limitations), and management skills (e.g., time management and being organized).

To receive the above training, grad students in the lab are expected to prioritize their research projects over coursework according to the guideline below. Grad students will discuss project ideas with Chujun to ensure that projects are within the lab's directions (i.e., person perception). In addition, grad students are expected to attend departmental seminars as well as attend and present at academic conferences.

- A first year paper: this is an empirical research paper consists of at least two studies; it does not need to be published by the end of your first year, but should be publishable (e.g., important questions, careful designs, good research practices help); you are strongly encouraged to discuss your project with Chujun before you join the lab.
- A second year paper: this is your second empirical research paper consists of at least two studies; it does not need to be published by the end of your second year, but should be publishable (e.g., important questions, careful designs, good research practices help); you are strongly encouraged to discuss your project with Chujun in the summer after your first year.
- Dissertation proposal: your dissertation will in general consist of your first and second year papers, and your third and fourth empirical papers that you will complete during your third to fifth years. This will in general save you from spending too much extra time on obtaining your degree apart from your career goal (i.e., working on actual publications that are critical for your academic career). You are encouraged to discuss your third and fourth empirical projects with Chujun during your third year. You are expected to develop a clear plan for your dissertation proposal by Sept 1st of your fourth year.
- Grad students in the lab are expected to graduate in 5 years. By the end of grad school, they are expected to complete 3-4 empirical papers where they are the lead author; during your first three years, please do not worry too much about how to tie together your research projects into a coherent program - a coherent program is never defined in a narrow sense and it is never difficult to tell a coherent story in retrospect; instead, when planning your projects, you are encouraged to focus on developing interesting research ideas and methods.

Considering that the first two years will be particularly challenging for grad students as you are trying to settle in grad school and fulfill your research, coursework, and TA requirements, grad students are not expected to mentor RAs in their 1st and 2nd year. This will also help grad students learn every aspect of completing a research project as they need to complete it by themselves. Starting from the 3rd year, grad students may recruit undergrad research assistants if their project has such a need (e.g., the project requires running participants in person).

Visiting Graduate Students

Grad students and scholars from other institutes around the world are very welcome to visit the lab. The duration must be at least one year. Visitors can expect to be the lead researcher, and thus the first author, for at least one research project. Besides research and technical skills, visitors can expect to receive training in important soft skills, including communication and organization skills (e.g., presentation, time management, goal planning), and build professional connections with other researchers through attending departmental seminars and regional conferences.

Visitors are expected to fully engage with the lab through conducting research, attending and presenting at lab meetings, participating in lab social events, and meeting with Chujun weekly. Visitors should be fully funded by their home institute for the entire duration of the visit.

Undergrad Research Assistants

Master students and undergrads at Columbia University and UCSD are welcomed to join the lab as research assistants. You will receive course credits for research assistantship. RAs can expect to receive training in research topics and methods, research procedures (in particular, open science practices), programming skills, statistical skills, communication skills (e.g., giving presentations), organization skills (e.g., time management, goal planning), and professional development (e.g., an academic career).

If you are interested in joining the lab as an RA, please teach yourself at least one of the following first: JavaScript coding for online experiments; R or Python for data analysis (e.g., mixed linear modeling, ridge regression, exploratory factor analysis). RAs will work directly with Chujun on research projects. RAs are expected to work in the lab for at least 12 hours per week (you need to be physically present in the lab), meet with Chujun for 30 minutes to discuss progress once a week, show up for lab meetings, and present at the end-of-semester lab meeting. Please keep a weekly progress document that keeps track of your to-do list every week and your progress.

General Research Policies

Research Integrity

The lab is committed to rigorous and reproducible research. When conceptualizing any new research projects, please devote sufficient efforts and time into addressing the following questions together with Chujun before collecting or analyzing any data.

- **WHAT:** What is the one big question that your project aims to address? How does this question advance the understanding of person perception? What are the sub-questions and your predictions / specific hypotheses?
- **WHY:** Why is addressing this question important? Why will your approaches advance literature? No one else has studied a question is not a sufficient reason to study it. New approaches that address prior limitations can make studying an old question important.

- **HOW:** How will you design studies, collect data, and analyze data to test each hypothesis? A psychology publication usually contains two to four studies. If you were a reviewer, how will you critique your designs and methods (e.g., confounds, limitations)?

To promote research rigor, most studies in the lab (e.g., except for small pilot analyses and pilot studies) should be preregistered on the Open Science Framework (OSF). The preregistration will address the above questions, justify sample sizes (e.g., based on power analyses, simulations, etc.), and clarify any contingencies (e.g., how analyses vary depending on the results from other analyses). For multiple planned studies within a project, preregister one study at a time.

To promote transparency and reproducibility, most study materials in the lab, including stimuli (if not from existing databases or participants who do not consent to share), experiment code, anonymized data, analysis code, and data usage instructions should be uploaded to the same OSF project as the project's preregistrations. So please be organized and make good documentations. To protect original ideas, you should keep the OSF project private and the preregistration under embargo until the publication of your project.

To promote accessibility, all papers in the lab will be preprinted on servers such as PsyArXiv before submitting to journals for peer review. The first author is responsible for updating the preprint every time the paper is revised / resubmitted up to acceptance at a journal.

Documentation

Please keep your research files organized. Some helpful strategies include creating different folders for different projects, creating different sub-folders within each folder for different components of a project, and giving each file a name that reminds you what the file is about.

Please keep your code, including experiment code and data analysis code, well commented (e.g., what each section of the code does, if any major changes were made and why). Always test your code using toy data for which you know what the outputs should be to see if it works properly.

Since each study within a project could involve many different components and steps, and may take months to complete, it is not uncommon to forget what one has done for a study after a few months. To free up your working and episodic memories, please keep a summary document for each study. This document should include but not limited to:

- Study design, such as how the stimuli were generated, in which folder they are stored, which experiment code you used to collect data and how it worked (e.g., what stimulus randomization was used, how the stimulus names were recoded, etc.)
- Data collection, such as how the sample size was determined, how the exclusion criteria were determined, when, where, and how the data was collected, how many participants were recruited and what their summary demographic statistics were

- Data analysis, such as how the data was preprocessed, how many trials / participants were excluded and why, what analyses you have done, why you did those analyses and how, where you stored the resulting files and plots

Data Storage

To ensure data security, please store and backup your research files onto the following devices:

- Your laptop: please make sure your laptop is password protected and securely stored.
- Cloud Storage: Every one of you should have free storage on Google Drive through Columbia. Please periodically upload all research folders/files on your laptop to Google Drive so that they are always backup.
- Lab server: whenever you collect new data, they should be stored in the lab server. Please contact Kola to set up your access. If you are collecting data online, set the data storage path to the lab server; if you are collecting data in-person, connect your laptop to the ethernet and write the data to the lab server via smb mount. Please properly name your data storage folder in the lab server: your name/project name/study name/data description and date.

Human Subject Research

You must be on an approved IRB protocol to be able to collect data from participants, analyze identifiable data, and be involved in other ways that could have consequences for human participants. To do so, please complete the CITI training through Rascal (<https://rascal.columbia.edu/>; click Human Subjects (IRB); click “Training Center” at the top). Most members will need to complete the Social & Behavioral Research - Basic/Refresher training course; you may also need to complete other training courses depending on the specific projects you work on. Upon completion, please save a copy of the training certificate and send it to Chujun. Once added as a personnel to an IRB, you may be requested to approve the IRB modification – keep an eye out for your email.

If your project cannot be covered by any existing approved IRB protocol in the lab, talk to Chujun about filling an amendment to an existing IRB protocol or submitting a new IRB protocol. You must wait till the amendment or the new protocol has been approved by the IRB to start running your study. So please plan 2 months ahead when you know you need a new IRB.

Authorship

Authorship determination in the lab follows the American Psychological Association guidelines,

“Authorship credit should reflect the individual’s contribution to the study. An author is considered anyone involved with initial research design, data collection and analysis, manuscript drafting, or final approval. However, the following do not necessarily qualify for authorship: providing funding or resources, mentorship, or contributing research but not helping with the publication itself. The primary

author assumes responsibility for the publication, making sure that the data are accurate, that all deserving authors have been credited, that all authors have given their approval to the final draft; and handles responses to inquiries after the manuscript is published."

The lab member who takes the lead at the start of a new project and follows through the project from start to end can expect to be the first author. The first author is expected to contribute the most to a project, including but not limited to designing the studies, preparing study materials, collecting data, analyzing data, writing the initial manuscript draft, and leading the revisions throughout the peer review process.

Senior lab members are expected to each lead their own projects, with minimal overlap with other lab members' projects. If there is change in the lead role in the middle of the project, first-authorship will be discussed openly among all parties involved. If a project is abandoned by the lead member (e.g., data are collected but not analyzed or written up) after 3 years from the end of data collection, Chujun will re-assign the project to other interested lab members.

Lab members who help out a project in substantial ways may be added to the author list. However, one-time contribution such as providing a few study materials, helping with a small analysis, or providing quick feedback generally do not qualify for authorship, and will instead be mentioned in the acknowledgement.

All issues related to authorship will be discussed openly, in particular, at the start of a new project, so that everyone has a clear expectation of their role and responsibility. If you are not sure of the authorship of yourself or any other lab members in a project, or if you want to modify current authorship status, please bring it up to Chujun. Chujun will typically be the last author.

Recommendation Letters

Chujun will be happy to write you letters if you have been in the lab for at least one year. This rule applies to undergrad research assistants as well. Exception can be made if you are a senior lab member and you are applying for fellowships or grants shortly after joining the lab.

If you need a letter, please let Chujun know as soon as possible with the deadline, application information, and a few bullet points highlighting the content you think are important to convey (e.g., your accomplishments, contributions to the lab, etc.; your goal document may be a helpful reference).