Postdoctoral Mentoring Plan - Dr. John Drake

Mentorship Philosophy: My mentorship goal is to prepare emerging scientists to achieve their own self-identified aims as independent scholars. My laboratory is open to scientists seeking careers in academic, government, non-profits, or private industry and I believe that diverse career paths within the group result in benefits for all group members. Identifying those self-identified aims begins at the point of interview and continues when a postdoctoral associate begins an appointment in my lab via the creation of an Individual Development Plan (IDP). I believe postdocs require a balance of oversight and independence and I seek to calibrate the intensity of my interactions in accordance with their individual needs. Weekly lab meetings are held to ensure that the group develops a sense of camaraderie and common purpose, to socialize new postdocs into a local community of scholarship, and to ensure that all researchers benefit from the knowledge and skills each individual brings to the group.

Mentoring Plan: My current research group comprises one staff scientist (data analyst and visualization specialist), who provides quantitative assistance to all researchers in the group. In addition, there are four postdocs from diverse disciplinary and ethnic backgrounds (two postdocs with prior experience in applied math and two with prior experience in biology; two postdocs from India, one from Senegal, and one with indigenous North American heritage). At the start of employment, Postdoctoral Associates create a tailored IDP, following the FASEB model, as a guide for professional development throughout the appointment. Professional development will be promoted by a program aimed at enhancing skills & knowledge in seven areas: technical capabilities, laboratory & project management, written & verbal communication, professional networking, grantsmanship, teaching, & public education & outreach. Technical capabilities: Time & travel funds will be allocated for the Associate to attend training exercises to learn technical skills not taught at their institutions. This includes the Summer Institute in Statistics & Modeling of Infectious Diseases (http://depts.washington.edu/sismid/) or similar. Laboratory & project management: Most Associates involved with our research seek permanent positions as university faculty. To promote successful transition to lab head, the UGA Center for the Ecology of Infectious Diseases (CEID) sponsors workshops to discuss issues related to lab organization, personnel recruitment & management, ethics, time management, & communication, as well as to provide technical feedback about current or planned projects. Written & verbal communication: Associates are expected to produce publishable scientific research. To improve technical style & efficiency, the first manuscript with results from this research will be used as the basis for a writing program based on techniques developed by Swales in “Genre Analysis” and in Graff & Birkenstein’s “They Say, I say: The Moves That Matter in Persuasive Writing”. Associates will present research at lab meetings and meetings of the Center for the Ecology of Infectious Diseases. Written feedback will be provided on practice talks. Funding will be provided for Associates to attend & present at professional meetings such as the annual meetings of the Ecological Society of America. Professional

networking: Opportunities will be provided to meet with visiting scholars. Postdoctoral Associates will be encouraged to participate in the Center for the Ecology of Infectious Diseases, which exists to promote networking among quantitative scientists & is regularly attended by both academic & federal scientists. When appropriate, Associates will be provided leave & letters of recommendation to attend special postdoc networking meetings like the Gordon Research Seminars. Grantsmanship: Associates will be encouraged to attend workshops on identifying funding opportunities & writing competitive grant proposals sponsored by the UGA Office of Research. Teaching: To gain experience in the classroom, at their option, Postdoctoral Associates will be invited to develop & deliver guest lectures on topics of their choosing in both undergraduate & graduate classes. Associates will be given the opportunity to mentor undergraduate & beginning graduate students in research projects. Public education & outreach: Associates will be encouraged to participate in outreach. Associates will be encouraged to interact directly with collaborators & public health officials. Associates will also be encouraged to participate in local public science activities including outreach to high school students (UGA “Young Dawgs” programs), science fair judging, & through volunteering. Evaluation & assessment will be accomplished by tracking the progress of the Associate through the Individual Development Plan. The Associate will keep a professional development portfolio, including a log of career advancement activities, documentation of certifications received, & a record of leadership demonstrated. Written feedback will be provided to the Associate through annual evaluations.