



September 11, 2006

To our Incoming Ph.D. Students:

In the midst of the start of a new school year, there are many demands on your time and attention. And this is another one—but a very important one for students engaged in research.

Our department is once again conducting a “low-impact, high-importance” seminar on “Rights and Responsibilities in Research (RRR).” The seminar is organized by me and assisted by other department faculty. As a first-year student in our Ph.D. program you are expected to participate, and we think you will enjoy it. For one thing, there are some free dinners (with discussion attached). In addition, you will have an opportunity to meet student and faculty colleagues outside your own research group. Out of these discussions will emerge a shared understanding of the issues, good ideas for handling them well, and learn about where you can get help.

Here is the plan: In a series of three dinner meetings through the Fall term, we will address such important issues as:

- How is credit for my work handled? When should someone be a co-author on a paper? Could my supervisor submit a paper containing my work without telling me?
- What do I do if I discover a student colleague violating an important safety rule in the lab, placing others and me potentially at risk? How will people (faculty, other students, and lab staff) respond if I voice my concern?
- What happens when someone discovers a mistake in work, which has already been published? Who is responsible for fixing it? How is it done?
- How much power does my advisor have over my career? How is the balance maintained between my personal goals, and those of the advisor? How can I be sure that I will really be “finished” some day?

Included on the RRR website (<http://hackman.mit.edu>) are a few items for reading in preparation for our first dinner meeting on September 19, 2006 as explained on the accompanying schedule.

It is important to (i) send your e-mail address to Ms. Carolyn Collins (collins@mtl.mit.edu) so we know how to contact you, and (ii) RSVP to Ms. Collins by 6:00 PM on Monday, September 18 so that we will have enough food for dinner. I look forward to seeing you on September 19. Please contact me if you have any questions. For additional information contact: <http://hackman.mit.edu/RRR>

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "A. I. Akinwande".

Akintunde I. (Tayo) Akinwande
Professor of Electrical Engineering

Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science

Graduate Seminar: Rights and Responsibilities in Research (RRR)

Organizer:

Tayo Akinwande, Professor of Electrical Engineering
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This seminar is designed for first-year graduate students in the Ph.D. program. Participation is strongly encouraged, even though no academic credit is involved. The Faculty supports this activity, and will be participating in the various meetings and discussions.

There are three dinner meetings, each with its own primary subject. A typical meeting will include discussion of Scenarios which pose various types of problems, dealing with credit, errors, safety, and the advisor/advisee relationship.

SCHEDULE for the 2006 FALL TERM

September 19 Dinner Meeting 6:00 – 8:00 PM, 34-401B (Grier Room B)

Subject: How to Assign Fair Credit for Scientific Work

October 17 Dinner Meeting 6:00 – 8:00 PM, 34-401B (Grier Room B)

Subject: Scientific Responsibility: Dealing with Errors and Misconduct

November 7 Dinner Meeting 6:00 – 8:00 PM, 34-401B (Grier Room B)

Subject: The Advisor/Advisee Relationship

Please put these dates on your calendar.

<http://hackman.mit.edu/RRR>