Marine Biodiversity Lab
Policies and Procedures
[Draft – 10 October 2018]

Mission Statement

Our mission in the Marine Biodiversity Lab is (1) to understand the causes and consequences of changes in marine biodiversity, (2) to train scientists, (3) to communicate science to broader audiences, and (4) to have fun together as a lab community of mutual interests and respect.

Expectations

Lab members can expect the following from Prof. Bracken:

- To provide effective assistance and feedback on your research
- To balance feedback and involvement while allowing you the independence to make your research your own
- To assist with professional and skill development, including research techniques, protocols, and career development
- To advocate for you within and beyond the university
- To communicate clearly, including expectations, concerns, and encouragement
- To facilitate financial assistance in support of your studies and research
- To commit to a positive, collaborative, inclusive, safe, and rigorous work environment

Prof. Bracken expects the following from lab members:

- To conduct your research in a focused, diligent, creative, responsible, and safe manner
- To carefully consider feedback related to your research and career development
- To effectively manage your time, including setting and meeting deadlines
- To represent the Marine Biodiversity Lab in a positive manner both within and beyond the university
- To communicate clearly, including expectations, concerns, and encouragement
- To treat equipment and data with respect, including cleaning and maintaining shared gear and recording, annotating, and backing up all data
- To commit to a positive, collaborative, inclusive, safe, and rigorous work environment
- To mentor and assist other members of the lab community
- To be respectful of the time that others spend in assisting you with your research

Lab Safety

Research and other activities in the Marine Biodiversity Lab involve risks to your safety, and a primary goal of the lab is to minimize these risks. The following are important considerations related to safety:

- Make sure that your UC lab safety training is up-to-date and that you understand and follow the guidelines for safety in the lab
- Coordinate with Prof. Bracken or the lab safety delegate (currently, Genevieve Bernatchez) for lab-specific safety training
- Think carefully and act appropriately with respect to safety in the field, including the following:
    - Working by yourself in the field is potentially dangerous for a variety of reasons
    - Make sure that you always carry a first aid kit and a method for contacting emergency personnel
    - Even under the best possible field conditions, you will be traveling over rough terrain under potentially hazardous conditions, so always dress and plan for the conditions in order to minimize the possibility of injury
    - If you work at night, be sure you have multiple light sources
    - Make sure that you have obtained any necessary approvals for accessing your field site
    - Weather conditions can change, sometimes rapidly, so make sure you are prepared with additional dry, warm clothing
    - Anything you take into the field has the potential to get wet and/or physically damaged, so make sure that you pack your gear – especially safety-related equipment and supplies – to avoid water or other damage
    - Always bring food, water, and sunscreen
    - Always let someone who is not going in the field know where you will be and contact them when you return safely
- In the lab, field, and while participating in any activities related to your role in the Marine Biodiversity Lab, you are expected to treat others with respect
- The Marine Biodiversity Lab has a zero-tolerance policy with respect to sexual harassment, and resources are available in the lab to facilitate reporting

Creative Products and Authorship

In general, Prof. Bracken will be involved in reviewing all creative products associated with the lab. This includes abstracts, presentations, manuscripts, grant proposals, and fellowship applications. As an advisor, it is his job to ensure that you represent yourself and the lab as effectively as possible and to oversee the research output from the lab. Please allow the following lead times for feedback, and realize that most products require at least 2-3 rounds of back-and forth editing before submission. Prof. Bracken will need to see final copies of every creative product before it is submitted.

- < 1 page of text (e.g., an abstract): 3 days
- 1-5 pages of text (e.g., a short proposal): 1 week
- 6+ pages of text (e.g., a manuscript or long proposal): 2-3 weeks
- Lab feedback (e.g., distribution for discussion at lab meetings): at least 3 days prior to discussion of material

Publications are one of the most important creative products associated with science, as they provide a written, peer-reviewed record of research. Participation as an author on a publication is a privilege, and authorship should be discussed whenever a project is initiated in the lab. The default assumption is that the intellectual lead on the project will be the first author and Prof. Bracken will be the senior author (unless he is the lead). Additional co-authors may be added depending on their contributions to the work and based on discussions with other authors. Note that as an author on publications, Prof. Bracken is expected to contribute substantially to aspects of the work, not just fund the research or lead the lab group. Research assistance and feedback on products is typically acknowledged, but does not warrant authorship.

Letters of Recommendation

In order to provide the best possible recommendation in support of your applications for grants, jobs, graduate school, medical school, or other opportunities, Prof. Bracken needs lots of time and information. A strong, personalized letter will require at least 3 weeks of advance notice, especially if this is the first letter written for you. Subsequent requests for letters, if accompanied by all necessary information, may be made 2 weeks in advance. Requests should include the following:

- A draft of the materials that you will be submitting with your application
- A current Curriculum Vitae
- Specific requirements or requests regarding the content of the letter
- Information on how to submit the letter, including deadlines and method of submission
- Detailed address information, including name, organization, and snail mail address

Funding

Prof. Bracken will work with you to financially support your research, including publishing your work. If you require equipment that will remain in the lab after you depart, it is possible that it can be purchased using lab funds, especially if it can support other research in the lab and will be available for use by all lab members. If this is the case, you should prepare a budget and justification, send them to Prof. Bracken, and schedule a meeting to discuss the possibility. Note that funds in the lab are typically associated with grants and contracts, and funding that research takes priority.

If you require supplies, equipment, or travel support that are uniquely for your own research, you are generally responsible for obtaining funding for them. Prof. Bracken will help you to explore funding possibilities and assist with proposals.

Bio Sci 199 Undergraduate Research

Students participating in Bio Sci 199 Undergraduate Research ("Marine Biodiversity") in the Marine Biodiversity Lab will participate in meaningful research projects that will culminate, each quarter, in a presentation of their research at the Marine Ecology Undergraduate Symposium held during finals week. If you register for research credits in the lab, you are expected to do the following:

- Spend a minimum of 4 hours in the lab or field per week for every 1 credit you are receiving (this includes weekly lab meeting)
- Prepare a research proposal in collaboration with your mentor and meet with Prof. Bracken to discuss your proposed research
- Conduct your research project
- Meet with your mentor and Prof. Bracken to discuss the results of your research and the appropriate data analyses
- Analyze the data
- Prepare a 10-12 minute Powerpoint presentation
- Present at the symposium / celebration during finals week

Failure to Follow Policies and Procedures

A key goal in drafting this document is to ensure that everyone in the Marine Biodiversity Lab community is aware of our mission, expectations, and policies. Failure to follow these guidelines will reduce the benefits you receive from participating in the lab community. For example, if a draft abstract is provided without sufficient time for comment, submission and meeting attendance may not be possible. Similarly, if a request for a letter of recommendation is not received with sufficient lead time, it may not be possible for Prof. Bracken to write a letter in support of your application. More serious and/or repeated failures to follow the guidelines will precipitate discussions with Prof. Bracken regarding conduct and may result in restriction of access to laboratory resources.