

Hello everyone,

I would first like to take a moment to thank the audience members and the reviewers for taking time out of their busy schedules to provide valuable feedback into the BSc thesis work of Matthias Guggenberger. It is an important contribution to his education as a young scientist.

I had the pleasure to supervise Matthias during his stay in the Zikova lab during the previous academic year. After our first few meetings, it quickly became apparent that Matthias has the rare combination of scientific intelligence and curiosity. Not only was he able to quickly understand the theory behind new methods, but he also had a deep knowledge about methods taught in his coursework. This can only be a testament to good teachers or his excitement to fully comprehend how an experiment works, which for most students is often only realized after some valuable experience at the bench. Furthermore, Matthias' English is superb, so discussing scientific theory in detail was enjoyable. In fact, he has on more than one occasion corrected my spelling!

However, it is quite often that intelligent scientists are also quite lazy at the bench. So it was exciting that Matthias wanted to be in the lab working at the bench as often as his schedule would allow. I believe that this helped Matthias achieve a significant amount of results in a short period of time, especially for a BSc student without much pipetting experience. In fact, I would admit that had I had more time to spend with Matthias that he would have achieved even more in the lab, as he was often waiting for me to explain and develop the necessary reagents for the next step in his project. While I observed the passion Matthias had for his work, as a new scientist at the bench it was obvious that he needed to improve his pipetting skills. In the end, I think he made good progress in this aspect of bench work. However, I believe that his handwriting skills still need to be improved so that reagents can be easily identified not only by Matthias, but others in the lab that may need to use common reagents. Maybe this is more of a statement about his young laptop computer generation as a whole than a personal trait of himself.

Finally, Matthias was quite proficient in his writing skills as the rough draft of his thesis was probably more like other students 4-5th rewritten manuscripts. I was impressed with his ability to take all the individual components of his project and compile it into one comprehensible story. Each section had cohesion and contributed to the story. I was also extremely impressed with his ability to find relevant journal articles, extract the important information and then relate those facts in his own words. All this being said, I feel like he should have started the writing process much earlier and that another draft would have been preferable if more time allowed.

Overall, I feel that Matthias was very successful in the lab as a scientist and he is very congenial as a labmate. Though my sample pool as a supervisor is quite small, I would place Matthias in the top 5-10% of all BSc students I have been associated with. I wish him the best of luck in his future endeavors and I am sure he will become accomplished in whatever scientific path he chooses forward.

Brian Pan