

Advisor's evaluation of Jiří Ťapal Bachelor's Thesis

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Jiří Ťapal was formerly a student in our laboratory. Given this statement, it should not come as a surprise that my evaluation of Jiří's stay in the lab is not favorable. I asked him to leave in the late Spring 2013 after he failed to make the deadline for handing in his thesis, resulting in this half year delay in his defense. In my opinion, this awkward situation in which I evaluate a former student is entirely due to his lack of discipline in completing the thesis on time.

This delay was needless because the data for which his thesis is based was already ready late spring 2012. Unfortunately, it was based on a project that did not yield: RNAi knockdown of an ortholog of Fis, a protein implicated in mammalian cells to be involved in mitochondrial fission. There was no RNAi discernable RNAi phenotype, most likely due to its extremely low expression: Northern blot analysis not being able to detect the *TbFis* mRNA. Given this situation, I approached him before the summer of 2012 suggesting he should start to write his thesis at a calm pace since the data was already available and we decided to abandon the project. He agreed. However, Jiří did not start his thesis until a few weeks before the original Spring deadline, resulting in a rushed thesis. He and his co-supervisor, Eva Horaková, decided to postpone the handing in of the thesis so he could improve upon it. I give Eva credit for making sure Jiří finished this on time and with improved quality.

In my opinion, Jiří's lack self-discipline makes it very difficult to evaluate his competence for science. His thesis was written with much help from Eva. The data generated for the thesis was done with much help from a very talented Mgr. Student, Lucie Hanzalková. I do not recall him taking a process from the start to finish by himself, such as generating PCR product for cloning into a vector, which I believe an motivated bachelor's student should be capable of even considering their time constraints. He often did not come to the lab, although admittedly it was due to his frequent illnesses; however, he was not willing to make up for this lost time in other ways such as coming weekends. He often came to me asking to do projects with colleagues in the lab he socialized with, and it is clear to me it was these social aspects and not the actual science that motivated him. The last time he did this, I suggested he switch projects and go with them; he declined this offer. Needless to say, this behavior was not motivating for me to put energy into development as a good advisor should. But from my perspective, it did not make sense to do this when the student was clearly not motivated.

I chose to conclude on a positive note though. First, this evaluation is not against him personally. Also, I was surprised to learn that he gave a junior bachelor's student excellent molecular biology advice during his tenure here. He is currently in Petr Kopacek's lab and I noticed his name in the porter's logbook on weekends, so he seems to be working harder now than he did when he was my student. So perhaps he found motivating environment and learned self-discipline.

I wish him luck in his future endeavors.

