In an effort to eliminate any false starts, I feel it is important to elucidate what I believe are the basic rules by which you should conduct yourself should we decide on a collaboration. While this document is not, by any means, a legal contract, you may interpret it as having that spirit; by giving you this document, I am also assuming that you consent to the issues and ideas presented here. That is, if you disagree with anything here, you should either clarify it with me or decide not to further pursue research with me; time is our most valuable resource, so do not waste yours or mine.

I take my work, my research, very seriously and I want that you understand my position and the role that you may play.

• Doing research is a privilege, not a right. If, at any time, you should forget this principle, you will be reminded; if you persist with this way of thinking, our collaboration will (unhappily) terminate. This idea translates to my expectation that you will be enthusiastic. If that is not your style, then perhaps you should not pursue research with me.

• Respect for me; either you will have it or you won’t. If I believe you don’t, then you will have to find another advisor.

• You must at all times be completely open and honest. If you make a mistake, I expect to hear about it. You may be reluctant to do this, maybe because it will be embarrassing, but depriving me of such information may well mean that I will someday repeat your mistake, and such a waste of time cannot be accepted. You should not in any way obfuscate any issue, no matter how small you think it is. It is an integral part of Science that it be self-correcting; we must therefore never let our personal feelings be more important that the Science that we wish to discover.

• You will be expected to sometimes explicitly follow my instructions without debate and sometimes I will expect you to question my reasoning; furthermore, you will be expected to use your judgment to know the difference. For example, if I feel that we need to repeat a portion of our work, perhaps to be absolutely certain of the results, you will simply have to do it. However, if I suggest a technique for accomplishing a particular goal, I expect that if you feel there is a better way, then you must argue your side. Another important example is when we co-author refereed journal articles, I will have the final word on content, style, and order of authors. (My general rule is that we are always co-authors, unless you do something
completely on your own, and the lead author is the one who actually writes the paper, which will might be me initially and you as time goes on.)

- I am “goal-oriented” so I do not care when you do your work, i.e. what hours you keep, but there must be quality and progress. To help with this, I suggest that we meet at the same time, at least once a week, maybe on Saturday mornings. Being late or unprepared will obviously not go over well.

- You will have to take it upon yourself to learn the graduate school rules, regulations, deadlines, forms, etc. I have suffered through that bureaucratic process and you will simply have to do the same.

So what are you getting from me? First of all, it should be clear that we must both be benefitting in some way by any collaboration or else one of us will not put forth sufficient effort. For you, I believe that I can offer to be:

- a scientific mentor, i.e., a person who presents problems to you of contemporary scientific interest, stimulates you to reason intellectually to solve such problems, and sets an example for you as to the scientific method.

- a help to you in finding a future position. From the list of past student collaborators, I suspect you will find that I have been an ally in this regard.

- a help in building your resume. By publishing papers with me, you are establishing internationally respected credentials (whether you believe that or not, it is really true. Several of my current international collaborations are due to my having published papers.) This will set you apart, in whatever professional career path you will choose.

Finally, I do not wish that you have gathered the impression from the above that everything will be either trouble-free nor as sterile. In any event, it must be your passion for science and willingness to sacrifice that need exist in order for us to succeed. Do us both a favor and think carefully about this before you agree to start to work with me. I believe that we will both gain allot from our collaboration, but only if you are persistent, able to take criticism, are honest, and willing to work hard.