
BioPath: Professional Development Program in Biology



Overview

BioPath is a two-year professional development program hosted by the Department of Biology at UTM. This program is open to all students registered in a biology program. The BioPath Professional Development Program aims to:

- Encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning by providing customized opportunities to design personal learning and career development plans
- Enhance students' awareness of career opportunities and research opportunities available in biology
- Facilitate the development of transferable skills that will help students to be successful beyond university
- Encourage students to become active members of the biological community

A core part of this program is the development of an e-portfolio that will showcase student learning, academic work, career development, as well as community experiences.

Our Partners:

- Department of Biology
- Robert Gillespie Academic Skills Centre (RGASC)
- UTM Career Centre
- Experiential Learning, Office of the Dean
- Erindale Biology Society

Faculty Advisors

Students in the BioPath program will have access to one of our faculty advisors who will be available during scheduled office hours to provide advise and guidance to students as they progress through the program. The faculty mentors include: Fiona Rawle, Christoph Richter, Sanja Hinic-Frlog, Marc Dryer and Steven Chatfield.

Enrolment

Students enroll through the Undergraduate Assistant, Stephanie do Rego in DV 3056 by November 1 of each year. Enrolment involves participation in a mandatory group intake session with the Faculty Advisors. Upon completion of the intake session, students will be enrolled in the BioPath Community on Quercus.

The Program

Students will participate in a variety of workshops and activities, grouped into modules, over the two-year program. Some workshops will be mandatory for all students; other activities will be chosen by the student and can be tailored to each student's particular goals for career and academic development as well as specific strengths and areas for improvement that need attention. Activities outside those listed in the program outline should be pre-approved by the department. The recommendation is that Modules 1-4 are completed in the first year of the program.

Throughout the two-year program, students will participate in small and large group forums (Milestones) with the Faculty Advisors and other BioPath participants to review progress, share and learn from experiences with other BioPath participants, re-evaluate personal learning and career development plans, and plan for next steps. Informal meetings with Faculty Advisor can also take place as requested.

ePortfolio

Students will create an ePortfolio using the provided template as part of the BioPath Program. The ePortfolio is a repository for students to catalogue their academic and career-related work, experience, resources, and ideas. Like the workshops in this program, the ePortfolios are highly customizable to showcase each student's personality, interests, strengths, and goals. These ePortfolios can then be pushed out to potential employers and supervisors when applying for research project courses and/ or employment. Students are strongly encouraged to fully develop their ePortfolios and make it a strong and visual representation of them.

Modules

To complete the BioPath program, students will spend time fulfilling module requirements and documenting their experiences in their ePortfolios. Each module has a minimum time commitment, and students will direct their activities from a required and optional list of module actions. Required items are bolded below.

Module 1: Resume Building, Interviews & Job Applications

Minimum time requirement: 5 hours

- **Career Centre Workshop: Resume & Cover Letter Workshop (2 hour)**
- **Career Centre Workshop: Effective Interviews (2 hours)**
- Career Centre Resume or Cover Letter Critique
- Career Centre CV Critique
- Other module-related activity (department approved)

Module 2: Career Development

Minimum time requirement: 4 hours

- **Career Centre Workshop: Learn to Network (1 hour)**
- **Other Career Centre Workshops / Events: Examples include Extern Job Shadowing Program, Your Science Degree Under the Microscope, Further Education for Biology Students, Med School Information Session (1 hour)**
- Other external networking events (department approved)
- Participation in an academic conference or other academic event (department approved)
- Other module-related activity (department approved)

Module 3: Academic Skill Building

Minimum time requirement: 4 hours

- **RGASC Workshop: Plagiarism (1 hour)**
- **Ethics Workshop: Internal or External (1 hour; Mentor approved)**
- **Other RGASC Workshop (1 hour)**
- Other internal or external academic skill building workshops (department approved)
- Other module-related activity (department approved)

Module 4: Health & Wellness

Minimum time requirement: 1 hour

- **UTM Health & Wellness Workshop: Topics could include stress management, anxiety management, peer health educator sessions (1 hour)**

Module 5: Community Engagement & Community Building

Minimum time requirement: 10 hours

- **Departmental Seminar Series (3 hours)**
- **External Seminar Series (1 hour; department approved)** - this seminar is external to UTM Biology
- Other UTM Options: Nature walk series, acting as a Peer Health Educator, Mentoring roles (FSG leader, UTM one leader, Preparation to Launch leader), administrative role in EBS, or other societies and clubs (department approved)
- Other External Options: Science Outreach, external mentoring opportunities, other significant volunteer opportunities (department approved)
- ~~Other~~ Other module-related activity (department approved)

Module 6: Experiential Learning

Minimum time requirement: 5 hours

- **Volunteering in a biology setting (5 hours; department approved)**

Module 7: Reflections and e-Portfolio Building

Minimum time requirement: 8 hours

- Each student is expected to complete reflections (based on provided templates) on all activities related to the BioPath Professional Development Program.
- Each student is expected to build and populate an e-portfolio related to their experience and learning as a biology student.
- Feedback will be given on reflections and e-portfolio submissions from one of the faculty advisors.

Module 8: Program Assessment & Interviews

Minimum time requirement: 3 hours

- Each student is expected to participate in intake and exit interviews as well as program assessment to help them learn about skill development and learning gains related to their time in the BioPath Professional Development Program.

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Module Number & Name:	
Workshop Name:	
Workshop Description:	
Date and Time:	
Student Name & Number:	
Professor/Supervisor Name:	
Professor/Supervisor Contact (phone & e-mail):	
Professor/Supervisor Signature:	

Office Use Only			
Entered date:	Module:	Section:	Credit Hours: