

Undergraduate Participation in Bioinformatics Training (UPBiT) General Guidelines

A. Academic Performance

UPBiT Trainees must be in good academic standing in order to participate in the program. All are encouraged to keep their GPA at 3.0 or above, which is the minimum admission requirement by many graduate schools, including UTEP.

B. Attendance

1. UPBiT is a year-long training program that lasts up to 36 months. All trainees are expected to participate continuously except possibly during the summer when they might be away from campus (e.g., attending internship outside of UTEP). Submit a written request ahead of time to take a leave of absence from the UPBiT program.
2. Each trainee should devote at least 9 hours to UPBiT every week except for the two weeks between December 21 and January 3 each year, which are university holidays.
3. If not in town during the breaks between semesters, please notify the mentors beforehand and request for assignments (e.g., reading journal articles, computer programming, writing reports) that can be accomplished during the absence.
4. When classes are in session, all trainees are required to attend a weekly UPBiT workshop every Friday afternoon.

C. Communication and Interactions

1. UPBiT program staff will communicate with trainees mostly by emails, so check emails at least daily. When responses to the emails are required, reply as soon as possible within 2 working days.
2. Trainees in lab-rotation and research-project phases have the responsibility to keep the faculty mentor(s) posted on the work progress and to seek advice as needed. In general, at least a weekly update in person is desirable.
3. For trainees in the lab-rotation phase, they are encouraged to spend as much time as possible in the lab to interact with not only the faculty mentor, but also other research staff and students working in the lab. Get to know the people as well as their research.
4. It is important to establish a good working relationship with the mentors and others in the research group. Having the support of other group members will make work easier and enjoyable.

D. Initiative and Professionalism

1. Keep all scheduled meeting times on the calendar and be punctual in attending them. If there are reasons to be absent or late, discuss them with the mentor as early as possible. In case of sickness or emergency, email or call the person in charge.
2. Stick to the scheduled UPBiT hours as much as possible and make up any missed hour.
3. Finish assignments on time. If this is not possible due to unexpected situations, request for an extension with good justifications and provide a realistic completion date.

E. Collaboration and Support

1. For trainees who are already in team projects, please be sure to do their share of the work and clearly document their own contribution to the project in reports and proposals,.
2. In any project-related communications, please include all team members involved. When using emails, the “cc” and “reply all” features can be very helpful.
3. UPBiT trainees are expected to support one another and to share their experience with others, especially those beginning trainees with less experience.

F. Plans, Reports, and Evaluation

1. At the beginning of each semester, each trainee will prepare a schedule of UPBiT hours. For schedule changes afterwards, please notify the UPBiT office. In addition, trainees are required to submit an
 - (a) online agreement to initiate each part of the lab rotation
 - (b) updated research proposal for the research-project phase.
2. To report the activities, each trainee will
 - (a) submit an online report within one week after the end-date of each lab-rotation period during the lab-rotation phase, and then contact the program director to discuss plans for the next UPBiT activity. The online report will be forwarded to the faculty mentor for evaluation.
 - (b) give a 15 – 20 minute presentation on the project about 2 weeks before the last day of class in the semester during the research-project phase. In addition, a written report must be submitted no later than one week after the last day of finals.
3. After the final semester grades are posted, each trainee will have an individual evaluation meeting with the program director to review the semester performance using the worksheet on p.3. A less than satisfactory overall rating may affect the trainee’s UPBiT stipend and continuation in the program.

G. Participation in Other Related Activities

1. Distinguished speakers are regularly invited to give research seminars in the bioinformatics colloquium series on Fridays. Announcements are sent to all UPBiT trainees. Please plan to attend.
2. There are many academic and research-related activities on campus (e.g., workshops on research ethics, time management, GRE preparation) recommended for UPBiT trainees.
3. Trainees are encouraged to apply for bioinformatics-related summer internships to enrich their experience.

H. Submission of Agreement, Proposal, and Reports

1. Online Lab-Rotation Agreement: www.bioinformatics.utep.edu/UPBiT/agreement
2. Online Lab-Rotation Report: www.bioinformatics.utep.edu/UPBiT/report
3. Research Project Proposal or Report: Only by email to UPBiT@utep.edu with a Word or PDF file as attachment.

Worksheet for Evaluation of UPBiT Trainees

Evaluation Criteria	Ratings		
	By Trainee	By Mentor(s)	By Mentor(s)
Grades and Ratings: A+ = Excellent (4.2); A = Very Good (4); B = Good (3); C = Satisfactory (2), D = Probationary (1), F = Failed (0)			
Communication and Interactions			
Prompt response to emails and phone calls			
Keep mentors posted of status of work assignment			
Seek appropriate advice when encountering problems			
Take suggestions and follow up			
Establish good working relationship with other lab members			
Initiatives and Professionalism			
Finish assignments on time, provide justification if more time needed			
Work according to schedule, make up missed hours			
Attend scheduled meetings punctually			
Take initiative to solve lab rotation related problems			
Technical Knowledge and Skill Development			
Improve in technical knowledge and skills			
Complete assigned tasks for the time period			
Learn about various research projects in the lab			
Identify possible bioinformatics related project for future research			
Submit lab rotation report on time			
Bioinformatics and Related Activities			
Attending bioinformatics colloquiums, seminars, symposiums, etc.			
Support less experienced UPBiT students (e.g., attend and evaluate their presentations, assist them in the lab)			
Summer internship (A+ for position secured; C for internships applied)			
Participation in other bioinformatics-related research projects			
Others : (please specify)			

Comments (use more paper if necessary):