

Summer Orientation Meeting for Truman's *Research-focused Learning Communities in Mathematical Biology program*

Welcome to the summer portion of the 2008 Research-focused Learning Communities in Mathematical Biology (RLC) program! You've spent a semester working with your research team preparing for these 10-weeks dedicated to investigating your question of interest. By now each team has a research plan and everyone is probably eager to get to work. Before we get started, we need to orient ourselves to the new expectations and rhythms of the summer program.

Your Primary Goal

This summer, your primary goal is to contribute to your team's efforts to illuminate your question of interest. In other words, **you need to get results**. The success of this program in our eyes and in the eyes of the National Science Foundation rests on scientific productivity of each team.

This means that everyone, students and their mentors, will be working, often side-by-side. **Everyone contributes**. Everyone produces. Everyone learns.

A secondary goal of the program (and primary purpose) is for teams to conduct their work in ways that require the life scientists to immerse themselves in the mathematical, computational, and statistical aspects of the team's work. Likewise, the mathematical scientists must immerse themselves in the biological aspects of the team's work. It is each team member's responsibility to make sure this happens in each team. To make sure each member acquires and exercises knowledge and techniques outside their primary domain. Such exercise develops and strengthens our **interdisciplinary ability** to work at the intersection of the life and mathematical sciences. This is the reason for this program.

Expectations for Students

Summer expectations for student participants in the program are laid out in the Agreement Form each participant signed in December or January. They include:

1. give an oral, multimedia presentation of your Research Proposal and an End-of-summer Technical Report in cooperation with your research team
2. regular attendance at weekly community meetings of the RLC program
3. prompt and thoughtful participation in program assessment and evaluation activities (e.g., weekly e-journal entries, event evaluations, end-of-summer satisfaction survey, national program assessment tool)
4. participation in a program field trip to industry sites (options: Spring, Summer, Fall)
5. devote full-time¹ work to your research project to the exclusion of all other employment and studies
6. live in the residence hall with other program participants
7. write up your results in the form of a Technical Report by the end of the summer
8. with your teammates, present the results of your work at Truman's 2009 Student Research Conference and at a national professional conference
9. in all talks and written reports or papers, acknowledging the importance of your mentors, your teammates, and of both the NSF and Truman's Mathematical Biology program

Questions about program expectations can be addressed to Prof. Jason Miller (Director), Prof. Pam Ryan, or Prof. Laura Fielden.

¹ By 'full-time' we mean *at least* 40 hours per week, probably more

Monday, May 19, 2008

Expectations for Faculty

The RLC program is time-intensive and very rewarding. **Each team's success depends upon its faculty mentors'** abilities to manage the work, anticipate and work through challenges, and foster interdisciplinary growth in their student teammates.

The long-term success of this grant-funded program depends on each team's ability to successfully articulate a research plan and carry that plan out successfully and fruitfully. Only the faculty members of each team have the experience, professional maturity, and vision necessary to manage team efforts toward this goal. For this reason, students will turn to their mentors first with questions about day-to-day expectations. It is important that mentors **make those expectations clear** to all team members at the start of the summer program.

Each team's mentors should make time to regularly communicate with one another about the progress of their project and clearly communicate work plans and anticipated ("best possible") outcomes of those plans. Each team must be allowed to operate in a manner that supports both the overall RLC program goals as well as the specific research goals of the team. The mentors are responsible for communicating those needs to the Program Director and students.

Important Dates:

Our summer program has a rhythm that is largely predictable. The STEP Office does everything it can to keep things running smoothly, but it's important that you know the summer calendar and the start-times of community events. Your participation is important for you and for others in the SURE program.

Some important, regular events:

- meals (!) - location varies, payment method varies; pay attention to the calendar
- weekly RLC Community Meetings - 1pm in Magruder Hall (MG) 1096
- weekly Lunch & Learn Workshops (STEP) - MG 2090 or SUB 3000
- Friday community lunches - varies in time and location

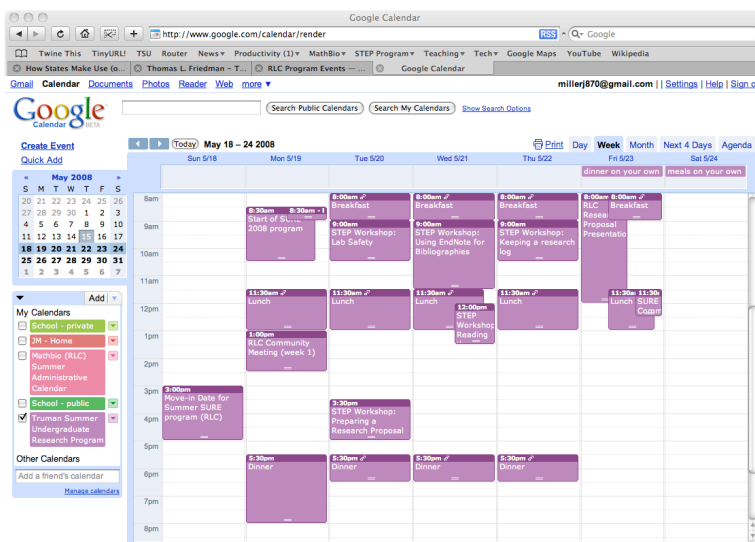
Some important one-shot events:

- first breakfast and opening meeting of the SURE 2008 program - 8:15am in a location TBA (look for a sign posted near the Science Departments' office)

- Research Proposal Presentations - 8am-noon in MG 2090.

- End-of-summer presentations - time and location TBA.

A **Master Calendar** for the summer is being kept as a public Google calendar. See the Research section of the mathbio portal (described below) for a link to this calendar. You can add your own events to this calendar, but if you do, please follow our convention for events. (Ask someone in the STEP Office what they are.)

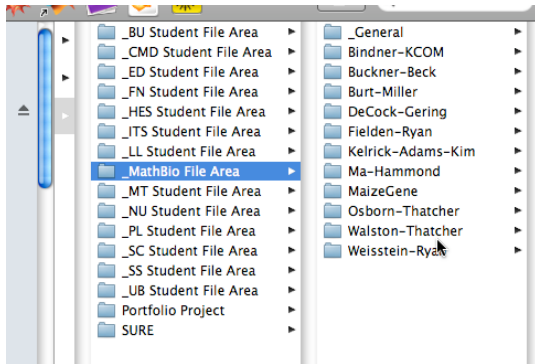


Printed calendars of program-related events will be maintained for community use in West Campus Suites and outside MG 2103.

Monday, May 19, 2008

Program Communications: email, the web, and network drives

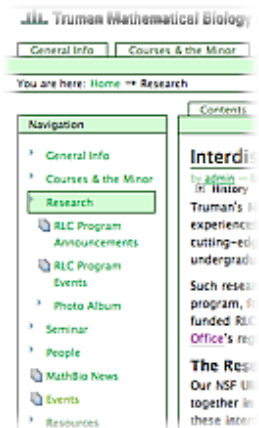
Program announcements are generally made via email, and emails will be sent to your Truman email account. If you use a different account, please make sure you automatically forward your Truman emails to that account.



Network Drives. The Mathematical Biology program has a folder on the U: drive (one of Truman's network drives) that contains subfolders for each of the current and past research teams to store documents relating to the team's work. Access to a team's folder is generally restricted to team members. If you do not have access to your folder, please notify Jason Miller (Director) who will resolve that issue for you.

The network drive also provides some share storage space that is accessible by the whole community. We use this to submit reports and copies of presentations, and to store digital copies of logos for the program, Truman, and the NSF.

Web Portal, mathbio.truman.edu We use the program's web site (or portal) to convey program related information during the summer. To find a listing of news and a listing of calendar events, click on "Research" in the sidebar. This will reveal clickable links for "Announcements" and "Events". Also notice that the summer calendar is on the portal's calendar. The master summer calendar is kept on Google (see below), and the mathbio calendar will be updated as necessary.



Email listservs. The STEP Office and the Mathematical Biology program together maintain several email lists to serve the summer undergraduate research community. All RLC students are subscribed to a list called SURE08students-rlc@pyrite.truman.edu. Important (and not-so-important) information will be sent to participants using this email list. Students are able and welcome to use the list to communicate with one another, too. A similar list, SURE08mentors-rlc@pyrite.truman.edu, is available for faculty mentors. Analogous lists are maintained for other summer research programs and the union of all participants. Anyone may send an email to these moderated lists. See <http://pyrite.truman.edu/mailman/listinfo> for a listing of the listservs available.

Supplies and Travel Expenses

Each program participant has funds available for travel to participate in a national professional conference with their mentors. Each team has funds for research supplies. Before making any purchase requests, both mentors should agree on how the funds will be used. Only mentors shall make supply requests, and supplies should be purchased using the STEP Office's requisition process.

This means that you need to fill out a Supply Request Form with very detailed information on what you want ordered so that the STEP Office staff will order it for you. If you are intending traveling, you should fill out a STEP Office Travel Stipend form (there is one for faculty and one for students) **well in advance** of your travel date. All student travel must be pre-approved by both mentors.

Some expenses incurred while traveling for the program (e.g., to a conference) can be reimbursed. To obtain reimbursement, fill out a University Expense Report Form **within two weeks** of your return and include receipts for all expenses. Turn in this material to STEP Office.

The forms mentioned above are available at the STEP Office (MG 2103) and on the MathBio portal.