Fall 2017

BCB Graduate Program

Introduction

www.bcb.iastate.edu
Staff Introductions

Dennis Lavrov  (dlavrov@iastate.edu) BCB Program Chair

Carolyn Lawrence-Dill (triffid@iastate.edu) BCB Associate Chair

Trish Stauble (tastaub@iastate.edu) BCB Program Coordinator
Program Overview

One of the first Bioinformatics Ph.D. programs in the US

With 50 Ph.D. students, one of the largest and strongest Bioinformatics Ph.D. programs in the US

About 15 core teaching faculty, but over 70 program-associated faculty (from more than 15 departments) with research projects in BCB

‘Wet’ and ‘dry’ lab research experiences and mentoring by a major and co-major professor (each in a different discipline)
Major Research Thrusts

- Structural Bioinformatics
- Comparative Genomics
- Transcriptomics
- Proteomics
- Predictive Plant Phenomics
- Metabolomics
- Machine Learning
- Image Processing
- Biological Data Mining, modeling and analytics
Outcomes from the BCB Program

Over 100 BCB alums have positions spanning the gamut including:

• 15 tenure-track professors
• 40 in postdoctoral or research associate positions
• 40 in industry – biotech start-ups, pharmaceutical or agricultural
• 5 in government positions
Examples of outcomes for BCB Alums

• Professor at Texas A&M Univ; College Station in Poultry Science
• Bioinformatics Director at Collaborative Health Initiative Research Program (CHIRP), Uniformed Services Univ., Bethesda, MD
• Staff Scientist, Roswell Park Cancer Inst; Buffalo NY
• Research Scientist; Dana Farber Cancer Inst., Boston
• Senior Research Associate at Oregon Health and Science University/Visiting Scientist at Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center
Sources of funding

First Year – Research assistantship (RA) provided by program

Afterward – RA (typically) arranged with major professor

Teaching assistantships (typically) arranged with home department

Competitive fellowships funded by internal as well as external sources as available
Questions on funding?
Training timeline

Year 1. Research rotations, finding a home
Years 1-2. Core Curriculum
Year 2. Define dissertation project, additional coursework
Year 2-3. Preliminary examination
Year 5. Ph.D.

Progress monitored by the program - interviews with BCB Chair
Getting Started

Each BCB student is advised by a temporary advisor during the first year.

Temporary advisor helps choose courses, and arrange research rotations.

Dennis Lavrov and Carolyn Lawrence-Dill are the current temporary advisors—additional members of the Supervisory Committee may assist.
Prerequisite coursework requirements

New students are expected to have a solid undergraduate training in at least one of the foundation disciplines: biology, mathematics, computer science, or statistics.

New students take prerequisite courses in computer science, statistics, or biology during the first year to complete their basic training.

In consultation with their advisor, they will register for the courses which will best prepare them for the Core Curriculum.
Prerequisite coursework

Computer Science
  Programming (Com 227, 228)
  Discrete Mathematics (Com S 230)

Statistics
  Stat 341, 342

Biology
  Genetics (Biol 313)
  Evolutionary Biology (Biol 315)

Mathematics
  Calculus and Differential Equations (Math 165, 166, 265)
  Linear Algebra
Background coursework

Computer Science
  Design and Analysis of Algorithms (Com 311)

Statistics
  Empirical Methods for Computer Science (Stat 430)

Biology
  Molecular Genetics (Gen 409)
Core course requirements

I  BCB 567  Fundamentals of Genome Informatics
II BCB 568  Advanced Genome Informatics
III BCB 569  Structural Genome Informatics
IV BCB 570  Computational Functional Genomics and Systems Biology
GDCB 511  Molecular Genetics
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Sample Course plans
Students Missing Computer Science Prerequisites, but with strong Biology background (Track 2)

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# Sample Course plans

**Students Missing Biology Prerequisites, but with strong Computer Science background (Track 2)**

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Questions on Training Timeline or Coursework?
Finding a home

Take Faculty Research Seminar (BCB 691)
Arrange Research Rotations
Choose Major and Co-major Professors
Your major professor’s department becomes your home department.
Major and co-major professors are responsible for research supervision, mentoring, and assistantship support.
Arrange Research Rotations

- Rotations include ‘wet’ and ‘dry’ lab research experiences
- Goal of rotations is to help identify major and co-major professors (each in a different discipline)
- Rotations will be completed with submission of evaluation form
Research Rotation opportunities which were available last year:

- Madan Bhattacharyya, Agronomy
- Anne Bronikowski, EEOB
- Hui-Hsien Chou, GDCB
- Julie Dickerson, ECPE
- Carolyn Lawrence Dill, GDCB
- Karin Dorman, Statistics
More Research Rotation opportunities available with following faculty:

- Oliver Eulenstein – Computer Science
- Iddo Friedberg - VMPM
- Xun Gu - GDCB
- Eric Henderson - GDCB
- Heike Hofmann – Statistics
- Matt Hufford - EEOB
- Robert Jernigan - BBMB
More Research Rotation opportunities available with following faculty:

- Dennis Lavrov – EEOB
- Allen Miller – Plant Path and Microbiology
- Walter Moss - BBMB
- Marit Nilsen-Hamilton - BBMB
- Julien Roche - BBMB
- Ravi Singh – Biomedical Sciences
- Jonathan Smith – Math
And More -- Research Rotation opportunities:

- Guang Song – Computer Science
- Geetu Tuteja – GDCB
- Nicole Valenzuela - EEOB
- Amy Vincent – USDA ARS
- Erik Vollbrecht – GDCB
And More -- Research Rotation opportunities:

- Justin Walley – Plant Path and Microbiology
- Steve Whitham – Plant Pathology and Microbiology
- Roger Wise – Plant Pathology and Microbiology
- Zhijun Wu – Mathematics
- Eve Wurtele – GDCB
- Edward Yu – Astronomy and Physics
Research Rotation Timetable

Deadline for submitting Rotation Planning form: Sept 10

Approximate dates for rotations:
- Rotation #1: Sept 14 – Oct 30
- Rotation #2: Nov 2 – Dec 18
- Rotation #3: Jan 11 – Feb 26

There is time for a 4th rotation:
- Feb 29 – April 15

Deadline for final lab decision: April 15

Deadline for filing Home Department form: May 1
Questions on research rotations and finding a home?
Research and Dissertation

Research Rotations
Thesis proposal and Preliminary Examination
Research and journal and conference publications
Ph.D. Thesis
Thesis Defense
Additional training opportunities

Participation in scientific conferences and symposia
Internships
International experiences
Questions on Training Requirements?
Resources – Graduate College

Professional Development

• **Individual Development Plan (IDP) to** provide a planning process that identifies your professional development needs and career objectives.

• **Regular professional development workshops** centered on core competencies; teaching, research, communication, career, and wellness.

• ISU is a member of **CIRTL** a consortium of 22 universities that makes available a broad range of online courses, webinars and discussions to prepare our graduate students to be better TAs and future faculty members.
Resources – Graduate College

Professional Development

• Leadership: The challenges our society is facing require a new generation of leaders who can build collaborations, work across disciplines, and forge stronger solutions from diverse perspectives. We are committed to developing these skills in graduate students and postdocs. Each year we gather a cohort of 20 young leaders in the Graduate College Emerging Leadership Academy (GC-ELA). Each cohort has broad career aspirations, industry, government, NGO, entrepreneur, and academia.

• We have one of the largest Preparing Future Faculty programs in the country. PFF prepares graduates for faculty careers through a combination of seminars, mentoring, and practical classroom and departmental service experiences.
Resources – Graduate College – website features info like:

Your Relationship with your major professor
• Critical for a successful experience in graduate school
• Find out and understand how your major professor operates
• With that knowledge, you can act in ways that complement your major professor’s work style or you may attempt to modify how your major professor interacts with you through:
  • Communication: Sharing concerns; seeking feedback on performance
  • Set Goals: make mutual concrete plans for each week, month, semester
  • Show Respect, but Challenge: Respectfully question advice or suggestions that don’t make sense
Resources

L.H. Baker Center for Bioinformatics and Biological Statistics
Organizes faculty research
Provides computer infrastructure
Home to computer support staff
Organizes campus-wide seminars and workshops

ISU Library – Heather Lewin, Science & Technology Librarian
http://instr.iastate.libguides.com/bcb
BCB program resources

BCBGSO
This student-led group coordinates many BCB activities and research opportunities. Get involved and benefit! Cameron Fay is the current president of the organization.

BCB Office
Trish can and does answer a lot of questions - I can help as well
Read through the BCB Graduate Student Handbook
Use the on-line version: www.bcb.iastate.edu/Handbook.html