

UMBC U-RISE PROGRAM
UMBC TRAINING PROGRAM FOR UNDERGRADUATES
PURSUING CAREERS IN BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Undergraduate Research Training Initiative for Student Enhancement (U-RISE) is a grant-funded training program sponsored by the National Institute of General Medical Sciences and National Institutes of Health (NIGMS/NIH). The U-RISE Program at UMBC seeks to develop a diverse pool of well-trained undergraduates who complete their baccalaureate degree with skills to successfully transition into and complete a biomedical research-focused higher degree program (e.g., Ph.D. or M.D./Ph.D.). As the preeminent undergraduate research opportunity, this residential program supports full-time juniors and seniors who intend to pursue a Ph.D. The program is not intended to support students who plan to pursue a MD only. For more information on how NIH defines underrepresented groups in the biomedical sciences, please see: <https://diversity.nih.gov/about-us/population-underrepresented>

If funding continues from NIGMS/NIH and Trainees remain eligible for the program, their appointment will be renewed for an additional year of undergraduate study.

Trainees must maintain a cumulative 3.2 GPA each semester to remain eligible for participation in the program. Guided by the U-RISE Scholarship Program staff, all Trainees must meet all requirements for program activities, course work, and various group meetings. Each Trainee will do a sustained research project with an area faculty researcher selected according to his or her interests. Research usually begins the summer prior to the Trainee's junior year and continues as a part-time experience during the Trainee's junior year. The research training will expand to a more in-depth experience usually during the summer between their junior and senior years. Training will continue part-time into the Trainee's senior year unless a special exception is granted. Trainees may also do off-campus research with the program's approval. Trainees must successfully complete a Research Conduct and Ethics course and a two-credit scientific writing course.

Recruitment targets sophomores from nationally underrepresented groups at UMBC and eligible students who have transferred or plan to transfer to UMBC from community colleges and other higher education institutions. Members of the U-RISE Steering Committee will review eligible applications to select students for interviews. Members of this committee will make the final selection of Trainees and decisions about renewal and/or dismissal of Trainees.

For consideration, eligible applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Be a citizen, noncitizen national, or permanent resident of the United States.
- Have a minimum of 60 university or college credits at the time of entrance into the program, and the ability to earn an undergraduate degree from UMBC in a declared major in two years upon entering the U-RISE Program, unless the U-RISE Steering Committee grants an exception.
- Have a 3.2 cumulative GPA with a major related to biomedical sciences (Biological Sciences, Chemistry, Biochemistry & Molecular Biology, Psychology, Biopsychology, Bioinformatics

& Computational Biology, Environmental Science, Mathematics and Statistics, Engineering, or approved interdepartmental studies.)

- Plan to pursue a Ph.D. and a career in biomedical sciences. (Students who plan to pursue MD/Ph.D. will be considered.)
- Submit letters of recommendation from two or more professors who taught one of your classes in the Sciences, Psychology, Mathematics, or Engineering or with whom you have conducted research, who are able and willing to comment on your potential as a biomedical sciences researcher.
- Clearly demonstrate an interest in the value of a diversified biomedical sciences research workforce.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Individuals who meet the eligibility requirements are encouraged to apply to the U-RISE Program at UMBC. This residential program has been designed to enable highly able undergraduates to pursue their Ph.D. and careers in biomedical sciences, through financial, academic, and administrative support. Support is intended to allow students to devote full attention to their studies. Students must agree not be employed in any manner during their participation in the program. Continued participation requires each participant to earn a minimum 3.2 GPA each semester during his or her appointment period and maintain their intention to pursue a Ph.D. and a career in biomedical sciences. Trainees must reside on campus housing at UMBC, as assigned (with the exception during the COVID pandemic).

EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT

- Monitoring of academic progress
- Personal advising and counseling to foster outstanding academic achievement
- Assistance with preparation for and application to graduate school

ACTIVITIES

- Orientation and regular group meetings with the U-RISE Program cohort and staff
- Travel to one off-campus scientific conference per year during the Trainee's participation in the U-RISE Program (only when UMBC COVID travel restrictions have been removed)
- Attend monthly U-RISE Research Seminars
- Graduate School preparation workshops
- Mandatory, one-credit course in Research Conduct and Ethics
- Mandatory, two-credit course in Scientific Writing
- Present research at the UMBC Undergraduate Research & Creative Achievement Day (URCAD)

MENTOR PROGRAM

Trainees will have and must maintain a sustained independent research experience with a UMBC Faculty Mentor. Some summer research experiences may be off campus. The intention is to familiarize students with research methodology and enhance their ability to be accepted into top graduate programs.

ACCOMMODATIONS

UMBC is committed to eliminating discriminatory obstacles that may disadvantage students based on disability. Services for students with disabilities are provided for all students qualified under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, the ADAAA of 2009, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act who request and are eligible for accommodations. The Office of Student Disability Services (SDS) is the UMBC department designated to coordinate accommodations that would allow for students to have equal access and inclusion in all courses, programs, and activities at the University.