



An Evaluation of Rutgers University Biotechnology Training Program

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The NIH prepares predoctoral trainees for careers that have a significant impact on the health-related research needs of the nation through T32 training programs. Rutgers University's comprehensive Biotechnology Training Program, which builds on its nearly 30 years of prior experience and continuous support from the National Institute of General Medical Sciences, is T32 funded. The T32 supports 13 predoctoral annual positions providing 2 years of funding to meritorious students. Trainees participate in all program activities for their entire graduate careers. The training program aims to continue producing highly trained graduates that apply the tools of science and engineering to significant research problems in biology and medicine.

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the success of Rutgers University's T32 training program in Biotechnology from the perspective of current trainees. In the Spring semester of 2021, a Qualtrics survey was developed and sent out to trainees along with focus group meetings to evaluate their perspectives. A survey was conducted to collect data and various focus groups were conducted to collect opinions. By comparing survey and focus group answers we can evaluate the program in its successes and shortcomings. Data is observed against the criteria and requirements for the training program provided by the NIH.

After comparing both survey and focus group responses, the evaluation revealed that the suggestions expressed by the trainees are reoccurring. The evaluation incorporates qualitative and quantitative analysis of the program to ensure an effective comprehension. The overarching themes addressed in this evaluation include mentoring, career development, and program structure. The program directors have reviewed the results of the evaluation and plan to devise action items in collaboration with the trainees. Their primary focus is aligning expectations and communicating the scope of the program and what it offers.

