**2013-14 BBSP Rotation Calendar and Deadlines**

**Fall:** Monday Sept 3- Tuesday Dec 3 *(OK to start before Sept 3)*

***Rotation Choice form due to BBSP by August 30th***

**Winter:** Thur Jan 2-Friday March 7

***Rotation Choice form due to BBSP by Nov 1st***

**Spring:**  Monday March 10-Monday May 12

***Rotation Choice form due to BBSP by Jan 31st***

**Guidelines for setting BBSP Rotations**

It is critical, especially this year with a large number of students seeking thesis labs, that we as a community do all we can to maximize students’ options at the end of the year. We have seen repeated instances of certain rotation choices that ultimately lead to a good student not finding a lab home. Below are some basic guidelines on accepting students for rotations that should help avoid some of these circumstances. The BBSP is similarly advising students on how to effectively choose rotations.

* **A student should not rotate in a lab they have no intention of joining.** If it’s clear to you that this is the student’s plan, you should not accept such a rotation. Examples of this type of rotation:
  + The student just wants to learn a technique from the rotation (*even if they tell you they have an offer already from another lab*).
  + The rotation is simply an ‘extension’ of a previous rotation (*such as with a collaborator, often at the suggestion of the previous rotation PI*) with the same or a closely related project. An exception to this would be if you fully intend on taking a student as well and if the student genuinely would be interested in joining your lab.
  + The student only wants to join one lab (e*ither a lab they already rotated through where they got positive feedback, or a lab they have yet to rotate in but is ‘the only one they want to work in’*).
* **Faculty should not, under any circumstances, accept a rotation student if they have no reasonable possibility of financial support for that student on the following June** (this includes supporting them at the BBSP stipend level, which is currently $27,500).
  + It is okay to have a rotation student if you have a grant submitted and are waiting for a score, and you want to take a student if the grant is funded. *However*, you should inform them upfront of these circumstances and expect that some may be uncomfortable with that level of uncertainty.
* **Faculty should avoid rotating many students in one academic year.** While there is no formal rotation cap, it is good practice to realistically scale the total number of rotation students to the number of slots you have available in the lab (2-3 students per funded slot for a student). It is important to be open with students if you anticipate a large number of rotation students, so they can make informed choices.

**Two other notes regarding rotations.**

1. If a student would like to rotate with you but you cannot accept them, many faculty will suggest similar labs for the student to consider.  This is very helpful to the student and we encourage you to do so.
2. Students who rotate in the summer have the option of joining a thesis lab in March (after the winter rotation). Faculty are under no obligation to accept a student on that early timetable. If you have a rotation student lined up for the spring rotation and want to wait and make your decision in May, the student who did the summer rotation can do a spring rotation with no penalty to them.

**Minimum Rotation Expectations:**

* Students should be in lab during normal working hours when they are not in class. Since science rarely fits into a 40-hour workweek, successful students will often come in early, leave late, work on weekends, or work from home as their experiments and deadlines dictate.  *(If personal issues, e.g. children, limit their schedule to a 40-hour workweek, we have encouraged them to discuss this in advance with the PI, and to be fully engaged and productive while in the lab).* It is good mentoring to talk to the student before the rotation begins about your expectations for the hours they are in the lab.
* Students should focus on science and experiments when in the lab.
* Students should prepare for their rotation by reading papers suggested by the PI, and continue to read papers during the rotation.
* Students should attend lab meeting whenever possible *(many PIs will move the lab meeting to accommodate student class schedules).*
* Students should engage fully in their rotation project and in the lab’s work.   
  To be engaged, a student should:
  + Ask questions to clarify anything on their project that they don’t understand
  + Ask questions and be interested in projects other than their own.
  + Participate in scientific discussions with lab members, even outside of lab meetings
  + Strive to understand how a particular experiment fits into the context of the larger research question
  + Continuously think about “what’s next?”, i.e. in what direction should their experiments go?
  + Process and think about their data before talking to the advisor/PI and suggest experiments that should be done next
* Students should make a strong effort to fully understand their project – the way it fits into the larger context of the lab, how to analyze and understand the data, and how to move the project forward.
* Students should work towards independence with respect to techniques required for the rotation – mastery is not initially required, but efforts to attain mastery are. A student should not ask multiple times how to do an experimental protocol.
* Students should exhibit good interpersonal and lab citizenship skills during the rotation.
* While publication-quality data are not a requirement of any rotation, putting forth good effort is. Students should work hard to get data and to troubleshoot experiments that may not be working.
* Student and PI should meet as often as is mutually desirable, but at a minimum there should be a midterm meeting to evaluate progress and an end of rotation meeting to discuss overall performance *(PIs – please do NOT avoid telling a student that they are not meeting your expectations. They need the honest feedback so they have the opportunity to improve.)*