

COMBINED PROGRAM IN THE BIOLOGICAL AND BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES (BBS)

55 College Street, 203.785.5663
<https://medicine.yale.edu/bbs>

Director

Craig Roy

FIELDS OF STUDY

The Yale Combined Program in the Biological and Biomedical Sciences (BBS) offers unprecedented access to Yale's extensive array of bioscience resources, encompassing everything the University has to offer in one comprehensive, interdisciplinary graduate program. BBS has no boundaries, either departmental or geographical. Students therefore have access to courses, seminars, and faculty labs in every department. Moreover, students can participate in research activities anywhere – on the main University campus, West Campus, or the School of Medicine.

Within BBS there are approximately 350 participating faculty, several dozen courses, and a great many seminars from which to choose. BBS is currently divided into eight interest-based “tracks”:

Biochemistry, Quantitative Biology, Biophysics, and Structural Biology
 Computational Biology and Bioinformatics
 Immunology
 Microbiology
 Molecular Cell Biology, Genetics, and Development
 Molecular Medicine, Pharmacology, and Physiology
 Neuroscience
 Plant Molecular Biology

Students apply to and, upon matriculation, affiliate with one of these eight tracks. It is important to note that, regardless of a student's home track, all courses, faculty, and research opportunities at the University remain available.

Year 1 Each track has a faculty director who helps first-year students select courses and find suitable lab rotations. Students typically take two to three courses per term and conduct two to four lab rotations over the course of the year.

Year 2 Just prior to the start of the second year, students select a thesis adviser in whose lab they will conduct their doctoral research. They also then leave their BBS track and formally join one of eleven Ph.D.-granting programs:

Cell Biology
 Cellular and Molecular Physiology
 Computational Biology and Bioinformatics
 Experimental Pathology
 Genetics
 Immunobiology
 Interdepartmental Neuroscience Program
 Microbiology
 Molecular Biophysics and Biochemistry
 Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology
 Pharmacology

Students in year 2 complete the course requirements for the graduate program they have joined, take a qualifying exam, act as teaching assistants in lecture or lab courses, and begin thesis research.

Year 3 and beyond Students focus primarily on thesis research, publishing their results, and presenting their work at scientific meetings.

The average time to degree is 5.5 years.

For the duration of their studies all students receive a stipend, full tuition, and health coverage. Financial support comes from Yale University Fellowships, National Institutes of Health (NIH) training grants, and grants from foundations and companies.

INTEGRATED GRADUATE PROGRAM IN PHYSICAL AND ENGINEERING BIOLOGY (PEB)

Students applying to the Computational Biology and Bioinformatics track, the Molecular Cell Biology, Genetics, and Development track, the Neuroscience track, or the Biochemistry, Quantitative Biology, Biophysics, and Structural Biology track of the BBS program may also apply to be part of the PEB program. See the description under Non-Degree-Granting Programs, Councils, and Research Institutes for course requirements, and <https://peb.yale.edu> for more information about the benefits of this program and application instructions.

MEDICAL RESEARCH SCHOLARS PROGRAM (MRSP)

The Medical Research Scholars Program bridges barriers between traditional predoctoral and medical training by providing both medically oriented course work and a mentored clinical experience to select BBS students. The course work provides a grounding in biomedicine, and the clinical experience enables students to interact with patients to learn firsthand about disease symptoms, treatment options, and the limitations of current therapies. This combination of medical knowledge and face-to-face interaction with patients and their doctors provides a new perspective to Ph.D. students and enhances the training in basic science already provided within the BBS program. Upon completion of their training, MRSP graduates will be capable of working much more closely with physicians and physician-scientists and will be better prepared to conduct clinically relevant basic research.

The MRSP is open only to students who have already been accepted into the BBS program, and a separate application is required. Five or six incoming students are admitted into the program each year. They remain in their BBS tracks but will participate in the additional MRSP curriculum. For more information see <https://medicine.yale.edu/bbs/training/nihprograms>.

Program materials are available upon request to Bonnie Ellis, Associate Director, BBS Program, Yale University, PO Box 208084, New Haven CT 06520-8084; telephone 203.785.5663; fax 203.785.3734; email, bbs@yale.edu; website, <https://medicine.yale.edu/bbs>.

COURSES

B&BS 640a / PATH 640a, Developing and Writing a Scientific Research Proposal Katerina Politi and Jean-Ju Chung

The course covers the intricacies of scientific writing and guides students in the development of a scientific research proposal on the topic of their research. All elements of an NIH fellowship application are covered, and eligible students submit their applications for funding. Enrollment limited to twelve. Required of second-year graduate students in Experimental Pathology. Registration allowed by prior authorization from course directors only.

B&BS 680b / IMED 680b, Topics in Human Investigation Karen Anderson and Joseph Craft

The course teaches students about the process through which novel therapeutics are designed, clinically tested, and approved for human use. It is divided into two main components, with the first devoted to moving a chemical agent from the bench to the clinic, and the second to outlining the objectives and methods of conducting clinical trials according to the FDA approval process. The first component describes aspects of structure-based drug design and offers insight into how the drug discovery process is conducted in the pharmaceutical industry. The format includes background lectures with discussions, labs, and computer tutorials. The background lectures include a historical perspective on drug discovery, the current paradigm, and important considerations for future success. The second component of the course provides students with knowledge of the basic tools of clinical investigation and how new drugs are tested in humans. A series of lectures and discussions provides an overview of the objectives, research strategies, and methods of conducting patient-oriented research, with a focus on design of trials to test therapeutics. Each student is required to participate (as an observer) in an HIC review, in addition to active participation in class. Consent of instructor required.

B&BS 879a / PHYS 530a, Theory and Practice of Scientific Teaching Rona Ramos

The course discusses the fundamentals of learning theory and practical strategies for teaching in the physical and life sciences. Students learn evidence-based teaching strategies, including engaging students through active learning, incorporating inclusive teaching practices, and developing effective assessments, while building a community of scientific educators. In the second half of the course, students (1) apply these principles as they develop and evaluate instructional materials for a college-level science course and (2) develop peer-reviewed teaching and diversity statements. Prerequisite: completion of one term of required teaching at Yale (n/a for postdocs).