BcGSAVT Fellowship Guidelines
Facilitated by the Biochemistry Graduate Student Association

PURPOSE

This document defines the guidelines instituted by the Biochemistry Graduate Student Association (BcGSA) for awarding a $1000 BcGSAVT Fellowship to fellow graduate students per year. These guidelines are intended to maintain a judicious, unbiased, and rigorous review process of all BcGSAVT Fellowship applications.

OBJECTIVE OF THE PROGRAM

This Fellowship program is designed to support a deserving graduate student and promote their development as a mentor. The goal is to empower the graduate student to develop a research project with an undergraduate researcher who is already doing research in the lab, and mentor this undergraduate student throughout the duration of their project. This Fellowship will aid in developing mentoring skills, grant style writing, and improving communication skills of the awardee.

APPLICANTS

Both doctoral and master students (the mentor), who has a permanent lab position and project within the Biochemistry Department and are active members of BcGSA can apply for this Fellowship. The undergraduate researcher (the mentee) must be registered for at least 1 research credit for the applying semester. BS/MS students are eligible to apply as a mentee in their first year of their degree and as a mentor in their second. In this case, additional clarification will be needed in from the PI (see "document for faculty PI" section for more details). The mentor and the mentee must submit the following documents in PDF format together (one application for both individuals) by the given deadline to be considered for this fellowship:

Documents from mentor (graduate researcher):
   1. **Grant proposal:** One cover page with two-page proposal devised by both the graduate mentor and undergraduate mentee. The cover page should include project title, applicant team information, and project keywords. The two-page proposal should include a project description, goals, methodology, plan for evaluating project success, and timeline. A template will be provided.
   2. **Biosketch (Three-page max):** A template will be provided. This template has been modified from NIH Biographical Sketch examples for the purposes of this fellowship. Applicants are expected to use available resources to understand/construct the NIH Biosketch. They should also express their predilection for mentoring/teaching and expertise to fit proposal. Additional information about the NIH Biosketch is available at https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm.

Documents from mentee (undergraduate researcher):

1. **Letter of intent (One-page max):** This document should include: 1) research aims,

   2) brief research overview, 3) significance of the proposed research towards the scientific community, 4) how the mentee's expertise fit, and 5) how the mentor and mentee will benefit.

2. **Curriculum Vitae (Two- page max):** This document should demonstrate the applicant's ability to perform the proposed research; however, the student's academic year will not be weighted by the review committee.

Document from the Faculty PI

1. **Letter of support from the Faculty PI (One-page max):** This letter is intended to provide permission and/or recommendation from the faculty PI, with emphasis on the competence of the undergraduate researcher and the ability of the graduate student mentor participating in this program.

If the mentee is a BS/MS student, the PI must state in the letter how this student student and their graduate mentor's working relationship fits the objective of the program. Please note, the PI and the mentor should both share the responsibility of directly developing a project with the mentee and are not simply working together. It must be clear that the mentor (graduate student) is directly involved in project development and taking on considerable mentorship responsibilities for the duration of the proposed the project (typical day to day mentoring from one student to another does not count).

Submitted documentation that does not follow these guidelines can be disqualified by a majority vote of the fellowship review committee members and may not be considered for fellowship through the BcGSA.

DEADLINES

Applications submitted after the set deadline may not be considered for fellowship through the BcGSA. The deadlines for application submission for the 2022 year, beginning in Spring 2022 and ending in the Fall 2022, are listed below.

Deadline	Intended time span	Number of fellowships to award
March 1st, 2022	Spring 2022	1
May 15th, 2022	Summer 2022	1
September 6th, 2022	Fall 2022	1

REVIEW PROCESS AND PROCEDURES

The BcGSA fellowship review committee will consist of three faculty members and a faculty moderator for each round of fellowship application review. The responsibilities of this committee are to review all fellowship applications for that round, score, and rank each application based on the criteria outlined below in these guidelines, convene to discuss the applications, and ultimately decide the awardee from that applicant pool. The fellowship review committee will have a *maximum of two weeks* to review and score the applications.

To limit bias, if a faculty committee member has a student that is applying, they will be replaced for the review of their students' application by an unbiased faculty member. One faculty member will be appointed as the moderator by the BcGSA.

Responsibilities of the moderator include: 1) Finding volunteers for the fellowship review committee, 2) scheduling the committee meeting, and disseminating fellowship applications and review materials to the review committee, 3) maintaining discussion during the meeting, by ensuring the review committee is deliberating according to the BcGSAVT fellowship guidelines, 4) ensuring the mentor and mentee are both truly eligibility for the fellowship by meeting all outlined requirements, 5) averaging the scores from the review committee and disseminating the committee's decision to the applicants, and 6) in the case that the committee cannot reach a decision, the BcGSA faculty advisor will make the final decision.

Responsibilities of the moderator DO NOT include: 1) Agreeing or disagreeing with any comments or stating any opinions that may influence members of the review committee, and 2) voting at the time of the decision.

Responsibilities of the fellowship review committee include: 1) Reviewing, scoring, and ranking all applications based on the outlined criteria before the deadline, 2) sharing their applicant scores/ranking with the committee and participating in discussion during the committee meeting, and 3) determining who shall receive BcGSAVT fellowship award. All committee members should justify their scoring in the comments section and eliminate any bias towards the applicants.

SCORING PROCESS

The review committee is required to score each application for a total of ***200 possible points*** following a scoring sheet provided. This sheet is broken into several questions that the reviewer must answer about each application before the meeting. This system is used to: 1) organize opinions 2) provide a quantitative means to guide discussion, and 3) provide a thorough and equal assessment of each application. *Our department values quality and expects applicants to do the same, for this reason the scoring system will be used to set a minimum standard for awarded BcGSAVT Fellowship. If an award is available but an application does not meet the standards of the guidelines, the fellowship may not be awarded. To ensure equal use of this assessment, a student must score **an uncontested average below 160 points** to be removed from the selection process.* It is expected that each reviewer will follow the scoring process and be prepared to explain their decisions during the meeting. Failure for a member of the review committee to score all applications will lead to immediate termination and rescheduling of the meeting to either 1) give that failing member time to score each application or 2) select a new member with enough time for them to review all applications. All applying students have access to the scoring sheet on the shared BcGSA Google Drive as a part of the professional folder. Along with this, the scoring sheet will be sent out with every call for applications before the application deadline.

SELECTION PROCESS
1. A call for application for the BcGSAVT fellowship will be made.
2. Students submit required documentation before 5:00 pm on the preset deadline.
3. The moderator will collect all applications in a private google drive folder along with all application review materials.
4. The moderator will request a volunteer faculty member to be a part of the selection committee.
5. The fellowship review committee will be selected to consist of three faculty members of non-applying labs. The faculty member will be replaced if a student from their lab does apply by an alternative faculty member for their review. The moderator will share the folder with the fellowship review committee immediately after the committee is formed.
6. The fellowship review committee is required to turn in scoresheets with their comments by the set deadline to the moderator. The moderator will call for a meeting for that selection round.
7. All applications should be reviewed and scored by the fellowship review committee.
8. The committee will meet to discuss the applications and decide the graduate student awardee(s) for that selection round.
9. After a decision has been made, the moderator will notify all applicants of the outcome of their submission.

10. Award recipients will receive funding following the guidelines outlined below and will be prompted to complete all requirements following the meeting.

AWARD MONEY

$1000. Funding may not be used for student or faculty salaries. Use of funds must be cleared with the BcGSA treasurer and the department's financial coordinator. These funds are reimbursement based— recipients must coordinate reimbursement with the financial coordinator within one year of the award's acceptance.

AWARD RECIPIENT REQUIREMENTS

Recipients of BcGSAVT Mentoring Fellowship will be required to submit a short report to the BcGSA executive board and help construct thank you/promotional materials (including a donor thank you video). The project summary report is due to the professional committee, *one month* following the award period.