

BIOTRAIN 899: Internship and Experiential Learning Internship Mentor Guide

Course Director:

Calla Telzrow, PhD (calla.telzrow@duke.edu)

Term:

Summer 2026

Grading Basis:

CR/NC

Overview:

Most doctorate-level biomedical trainees pursue non-tenure track careers after completing their PhD ([NIH Biomedical Research Workforce Working Group Report](#), 2012). Duke University's Office of Biomedical Graduate Education (OBGE) offers BIOTRAIN 899 to enable School of Medicine (SoM) PhD students to deeply explore diverse career sectors, preparing them to make more informed career path decisions. Through this course, students will participate in real-world internship/experiential learning opportunities. To be eligible for the course, students must independently secure a paid summer internship/experiential learning opportunity, as the course content is the experience itself provided by the host organization. Through this course, students will experience real-world work settings; build sector-specific technical skills and professional connections; gain additional mentorship; enhance their leadership, communication, and teamwork skills; and explore interests and specializations not available in their doctorate training.

Course Competencies, Objectives, and Student Learning Outcomes:

OBGE Competency: Resilience and Survival Skills – Motivation/resilience and persistence

- Objective: To enable students to deeply explore and clarify personal career paths.
 - Learning outcome: Assess interest in sector goals and day-to-day tasks, as well as alignment with interpersonal dynamics and overall work culture in the sector.
 - Learning outcome: Develop both short-term and long-term goals for professional growth in the sector.
 - Learning outcome: Understand professional and personal challenges that may arise in the sector.

OBGE Competency: Collaboration and Team Science Skills – Disciplinary awareness/integration/team skills

- Objective: To provide opportunities for students to collaborate and cultivate a professional network in sector.
 - Learning outcome: Share expertise and technical skills from graduate training to contribute to ongoing projects/initiatives in the organization.
 - Learning outcome: Work as an effective team member by clearly communicating with colleagues and supervisors in the organization, implementing their feedback to enhance the quality of work.
 - Learning outcome: Pursue mentorship with supervisors and establish connections with colleagues through networking activities to gain insights into professional growth in the sector.

OBGE Competency: Leadership Skills - Organization and planning/problem solving/vision

- Objective: To provide opportunities for students to build sector-specific technical skills.
 - Learning outcome: Learn and apply relevant technical skills to contribute to ongoing projects/initiatives in the organization.
 - Learning outcome: Troubleshoot and solve technical problems with minimal guidance or, when possible, independently.
 - Learning outcome: Identify any professional or personal areas that may require further development to reach professional goals in the sector.



Expectations of Stakeholders:

Expectations of Students:

- Students are expected to develop a clear understanding of the host organization's policies regarding proprietary information and adhere strictly to them.
- Students are expected to work on internship/experiential learning tasks and activities during the designated internship/experiential learning hours.
- Students are expected to follow the attendance expectations of the host organization.
- Students are expected to conduct themselves in alignment with the [Duke Community Standard and Student Conduct](#) throughout the internship/experiential learning experience.
- Students are expected to complete all course requirements to receive credit for BIOTRAIN 899, including:
 - Writing a brief (~500 words) Internship/Experiential Learning Report reflecting on their experience at the conclusion of the internship/experiential learning period. These reports are stored on a Duke University-secured platform. They are reviewed by the student's PhD advisor and the BIOTRAIN 899 course director; with student permission, they are also made available to view by current SoM PhD students.
 - Committing to one (1) engagement activity the following academic year:
 - Recording a 10-15 minute "flash talk" about their internship/experiential learning experience and submitting it to the course director. These recordings are stored on a Duke University-secured platform. With student permission, they are also made available to view by current SoM PhD students.
 - Serving on the student intern panels for Duke University SoM's internship preparation course. With student permission, these panel discussions will be recorded, the recordings will be stored on a Duke University-secured platform, and they will be made available to view by current SoM PhD students.
- Students are expected to complete a Student Internship/Experiential Learning Evaluation on Qualtrics at the conclusion of the internship/experiential learning period.

Expectations of Internship Mentors:

- Internship mentors are expected to provide an internship/experiential learning experience that aligns with [NACE guidelines](#) and the BIOTRAIN 899 objectives and learning outcomes.
- Internship mentors are expected to ensure the host organization pays the student the stipend and follows the payment schedule agreed upon with the student, provided the student successfully completes the internship/experiential learning experience.
- Internship mentors are asked to complete a Mentor Internship/Experiential Learning Evaluation on Qualtrics at the conclusion of the internship/experiential learning period.