The Chemistry of Life Processes (CLP) Predoctoral Training Program is designed to foster the development of graduate student research and professional skills at the interface of chemistry and biology. Trainees in this highly selective, NIH-funded program benefit from a student-focused environment featuring a combination of didactic training, hands-on experience, and communal activities. Students participate in a broad range of career development activities and receive guidance from an array of diverse professionals.

Fostering Interdisciplinary Research Training

- **Dual interdisciplinary mentors**: Trainees select two mentors from a roster of highly interdisciplinary, productive faculty spanning the life sciences, chemistry, and engineering.

- **Laboratory rotations prior to advisor selection**: Candidates complete at least (2) 4-week laboratory rotations in two different labs in the graduate student’s home department/program before choosing his/her dissertation advisor. These rotations help students make an informed decision about their mentor selection.

- **Foundational training**: Students complete two courses that provide the intellectual foundation and hands-on experience needed to be successful in working across the chemistry-biology interface.

- **Cross-disciplinary immersive lab experience**: Trainees spend 10 or more weeks working on their thesis project in the lab of their secondary mentor. This is a unique opportunity to gain extra-disciplinary skills, learn new approaches to problem solving, and acquire the “language” of a second discipline.

- **CLP graduate research forums**: Students gain confidence and hone their presentation skills through participating in these monthly research forums.

- **Student-invited seminar series**: Trainees invite prestigious scientists from across academia and industry to give a lecture at Northwestern and serve as hosts throughout the day.

- **Entrepreneurship training**: The CLP Program plans meetings with the CLP Entrepreneur-In-Residence, as well as faculty and former students who have spun-out start-up companies.
Preparing Students for a Broad Range of Careers

• **Multiple networking opportunities:** Members of the CLP Executive Advisory Board from biotech, pharma and the chemical industry meet with trainees and offer advice and access to job opportunities.

• **Personalized coaching in identifying career paths and goal setting:** Program leadership and staff assist trainees in identifying their interests and strengths, aligning them with potential careers. Students receive support in developing specific goals, milestones and realistic timelines to ensure progress towards their dream career.

• **Breaking through barriers in communication:** Trainees participate in lively, interactive workshops designed to foster confidence and develop professional-level science communication skills.

Program Directors

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